

Title of Session: WebQuests from Mars

Moderator: Bernie Dodge

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JulieF: I am here for webquests, one of my favorite lesson formats

BJ: Bernie is the person to listen to then, Julie!

JulieF: I was fortunate to be a part of a conference with him here in Missouri and I learned a lot

BJ nods...I wondered if you were able to participate in that conference

BJ: He's quite a character

AliciaN joined the room.

BJ: Hi, Alicia. Welcome

SuzanneC: Webquests are so much fun

AliciaN: Thank you

AndreaHa joined the room.

BernieD joined the room.

BJ: good job, Andrea

BJ cheers and waves hi to Bernie

BernieD waves to crowdette

AndreaHa: Thanks, please tape me down if I leave!

ElaineS: Hello Mr. Dodge.

DebbiePa joined the room.

BernieD: Hi Elaine and all

SuzanneC: Hello Mr. Dodge!

BJ: Welcome to WebQuests from Mars, everyone!

AndreaHa: Good evening

BJ: we usually start the discussions in Tapped In with brief introductions

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

JulieF: I'm a fourth grade emints teacher in southwest Missouri

BernieD: I'm Bernie Dodge, a Democrat in San Diego.

AliciaN: I teacher computer applications at Springhill High School in Louisiana

SuzanneC: Hello all, I am a preservice student currently attending U of Houston

DebbiePa: I'm a grad student in elementary ed in NYC

ElaineS: I am an instructional technology facilitator from Alexandria, Louisiana. I work at the district level.

AndreaHa: I am a third grade teacher and right now I am working on my first webquest for my nightclass.

JillA: I'm Jill Andrus a journalist/graphic designer in Lake Charles Louisiana.... working on my Masters in Instructional Technology.

LynneW joined the room.

BJ: Guess you didn't get any political vibes from the Democrat comment, Bernie

BernieD shrugs

BJ: welcome, Lynne. We're just finishing up introductions

LynneW: Hello All!

BJ: I'd vote for you, Bernie

Jilla: We're used to the Demo "thing" by now... so we overlook it... lol

BJ chuckles. Bernie, are you ready to start?

BernieD: I'm ready.

BernieD: Welcome to you all, or, given the geographic center of gravity here, y'all.

BernieD: Tonight will provide an opportunity to look over the range of WebQuest possibilities by taking a single topic and look at all the ways in which it might be treated with a WebQuest. The topic we'll play with is the mysterious red planet Mars. We'll look at existing Martian WebQuests and brainstorm additional ones not yet born. I'm going to end with a web site about Mars and ask everyone here to come up with some ideas for WebQuests they might create around that site.

BernieD: I like Mars as a topic. It's inherently interesting across the board, especially lately.

BernieD: before we begin, it might be useful to look at a couple of ways to categorize WebQuests. Since the Task is the single most important part of a WebQuest, let's start there. Here is a page laying out 12 types of tasks we might ask learners to accomplish. 11 of them require higher level thinking and are thus in the sweet spot of solid WebQuests.

BernieD: Here's the Taskonomy: <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/taskonomy.html>

BJ: click on the hyperlink to open a new window

BernieD: KlickenSie on the blue words.

BJ . o O (if you have a popup blocker, press control too)

BernieD: Everyone seen this before?

ElaineS: I have

AndreaHa: yes

JulieF: I have too

SuzanneC: Yes

BernieD: I think it's one of the most useful pages on my site.

BernieD: Especially if it inoculates you against retelling.

BernieD: Another, more recently developed way to categorize WebQuest is by design patterns. Here's the page that lays those out:

BernieD: <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/designpatterns/all.htm>

BernieD: Take a look at the design patterns page for a minute. There will be a quiz in a few minutes.

BernieD: Any questions on the design patterns page?

ElaineS: This is wonderful. I just spent time today looking for ideas for webquests. This site gives me lots to work with

BernieD: cool!

BernieD: I've found that it cuts development time in half.

BernieD: Other questions or comments?

SuzanneC: I love the templates

JulieF: I've tried using the design patterns and would have to agree that it cuts down on the time spent developing and also helps make my task more clear

AndreaHa: I love the way it pinpoints exactly what you want the students to do. Makes it so much easier to develop.

BernieD: As we go through the range of examples, I'll be asking you if you can categorize each one both in terms of its task type and its underlying design pattern.

BernieD: Our first stop is The Mystery of Mars.

http://www.scican.net/hall/library_files/marswebquest.html

BernieD: Take a few minutes to explore the lesson. What kind of task is this? What design pattern comes closest to describing it?

ElaineS: This makes developing a webquest so much easier.

BernieD: Which of the 12 task types is this?

JulieF: I would think it is a journalistic task

AndreaHa: Is it in Beyond the Book?

BernieD: Tell us why, Julie.

BernieD doesn't think so.

JulieF: or creative product because it focuses on a certain genre

BernieD hands Julie a crisp 10 dollar bill.

ElaineS: I think that it would fall in the generic pattern.

JulieF: thanks Bernie

SuzanneC: Is it In the style of?

BernieD: Maybe, Elaine. It's a little like the genre analysis in that it has you create within a given genre, but it doesn't do much structured teaching about the genre itself.

SuzanneC: sorry I meant genre analysis, oops

BernieD: It's not Beyond the Book because it's not based on any one book.

BernieD: Ah.

AndreaHa: I saw that after I said it oops

SuzanneC: too much pressure

BernieD hands Suzanne a \$2 bill.

SusanR: it's much more open-ended and emphasizes creativity and self-expression

SuzanneC: I'll take it

BernieD: Yes. It would probably be fun for the kids.

BernieD: OK... ready for another Martian lesson?

BernieD: Next, let's take a trip. <http://eprentice.sdsu.edu/J03OP/hughes/wq/s-trip2mars.htm>

BJ thinks this eager group is ready for anything, Bernie!

BernieD: What task type is this? What design pattern?

AliciaN: Is this a travel account?

BernieD: Yes!

NicoleM: What are the design pattern choices? It looks like a normal set up for a webquest

AliciaN: I never knew there were so many styles!

BernieD: Nicole, the choices are here: <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/designpatterns/all.htm> there are 26 of them now, going on 40.

BernieD: Do we like this one?

SuzanneC: I do like this one

JulieF: Is it a design task?

NicoleM: In the one I'm designing now, I am linking the different sections together. I think it having too much on one page can get confusing for kids.

BernieD: It was developed in a six week course last summer. We have 130 future teachers go through it online and it worked out pretty well.

AliciaN: I like the fact that it is presented step by step

SusanR . o O (Collaborative Design)

NicoleM: so all the patterns are from preservice teachers?

BernieD: Nicole: I agree. Ordinarily I have my students develop it in the one-page way until they're done, then on the last day of class we cut and paste it into frames.

CynthiaGG: Did that

AndreaHa: I like this one. Students can really take off on their own.

ElaineS: I like this webquest because it makes students do more than merely repeat facts that they've found.

JulieF: I was wondering about everything in one page

BernieD: No... the patterns were mostly developed by me, and some were done by some experienced teachers at workshop a few years ago,.

SuzanneC: Yes, they go beyond knowing just facts to imagining I agree Elaine!

BernieD: And that is a critical attribute of a real WebQuest, not these phony "WebQuests" you see all too often.

NicoleM: I don't see any standards listed, isn't that a requirement for webquests?

BernieD: Standards should be on the teachers page.

ElaineS: I am trying to take my model lessons that I create for teachers to the level of essential questioning

NicoleM: oops, sorry.

BernieD: Good place to take them.

BernieD: Let's look at another Martian lesson.

JulieF: what do you mean "level of essential questioning"

BernieD: Ready to take the floor, Elaine?

JulieF: if this isn't the time, I'll ask later

ElaineS: Posing a question that makes the student use critical thinking skills. More than just finding facts

ElaineS: It

JulieF: gotcha

BernieD: Do you see any conflicts between that and WebQuests, Elaine (or anyone)?

NicoleM: I think that has been the hardest part about creating my webquest, coming up with a meaningful task.

ElaineS: No, I don't. I see them working perfectly together.

JulieF: I agree with Elaine that webquests are an excellent tool/format to promote higher level thinking

JeffC: What is your webquest Nicole?

BernieD: Certainly they both ask kids to go beyond regurgitation.

ElaineS: In fact, I think it makes the webquest more meaningful.

NicoleM: I see so many webquest that have students create a powerpoint, and I'm trying not to do that as their task

BernieD: If there's a difference between the two approaches, it's a matter of emphasis.

AndreaHa: I think they fit together perfectly. That's what we want from our students now the higher order thinking skills not rote. It's what our standardized tests are striving for.

BernieD: Essential questions are about "answers". WebQuests are about accomplishing tasks that embody the answers.

NicoleM: My webquest is for students to read a civil war historical novel. They have to find parts in the story that should be based on history and then they have to research them to see how true they are

ElaineS: Well said, Mr. Dodge

BernieD: It's a subtle difference, I suppose.

JulieF: when our emints trainers speak of essential questions they speak of what you want kids to know for the rest of their life

JillA: I think webquests help students learn to be good informational gatherers... then they can synthesize the information, and learn to formulate their own ideas, beliefs

JulieF: for that reason I think they go hand in hand because in a webquest I try to not only give them information or content knowledge, but have them evaluate, apply etc. that knowledge so that it will benefit their thinking for life

NicoleM: I agree Julie

BernieD agrees with all this, but...

AndreaHa: Exactly

CameronB: I am an IMET student who just saw the infamous Bernie Dodge's name online and had to see what was happening

BernieD: I think there's a danger in getting too "schooly".

JeffC: Nicole... take a look at: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/leems/histfic.html>

AliciaN: It seems webquests allow us to think about topics in ways we have never thought before

JillA: do you mean that you think it diminishes the novelty of it?

JulieF: what do you mean schooly?

JeffC: schooly=preachy?=didactic?=teacher centered?=boooooorriinnnggg? (just a guess)

BernieD: No... that focusing exclusively on questions and answers is a high-verbal activity that schools are full of, and it stops short of applying the insights. WebQuests go that next step.

NicoleM: Thanks for the resource. It has a lot of similar things in the webquest that I am creating

JillA: they're adventurous...

JulieF: okay, I see what you're saying and agree

BernieD waves northward toward Cameron.

CameronB: smiles

BernieD: This is a great discussion. Shall we apply it to another Martian thingy?

AliciaN: certainly

SuzanneC: Please

JulieF: ready

BernieD: <http://www.the-solar-system.net/webquests/colonize-mars-webquest.html>

AndreaHa: Let's look

BernieD: This is one of a bazillion WebQuests created by a guy in South Africa. Look it over.

NicoleM: I still have a question, how do we get away from power point presentations?

BernieD: Move to Mars, I think.

BernieD: Actually, I don't believe that PowerPoint is the Great Satan. What matters is the content.

NicoleM: I liked the last webquest. I liked the task

JulieF: is this comparative judgment?

BernieD: Could be. Not a clean fit.

AndreaHa: My third graders love Powerpoint and they love to create them. I think it is great at their level

ElaineS: I think it is the persuasive message

Jilla: Is it Persuasive Message

JulieF: Nicole I think you just have to decide if PowerPoint is the best possible product for your task, if it is use it, if it isn't use what is

SuzanneC: I agree

SuzanneC: persuasive message

MelissaAS joined the room.

BernieD: It's got elements of Persuasion but I think the emphasis is on making the decision itself. I like the way he scaffolds the decision making process. Lots of great tools there.

JulieF: it kind of has elements of policy briefing

BernieD agrees with Julie.

CameronB: The cool thing about the Mars Webquest is the Author's use of Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide to building the Quest itself

CameronB: higher level thinking

BernieD: Bloom is immortal. Hard to believe the original came out in the hula hoop era.

JulieF: I think it took us a long time to catch up to Bloom in the classroom

BernieD: Still in progress, I think, and we're taking steps backward under NCLB.

NicoleM: Sadly there are still teachers who can't move into that higher level thinking

JulieF: testing is a four letter word

AndreaHa: Now that's a whole new discussion

SuzanneC: I don't like the testing, but I like the state standards

BernieD: Depends on your state.

AliciaN: And now there's grade level expectations

BernieD: In the interest of moving even further up Blooms Taxonomy, I'm going to give you a challenge now.

NicoleM: I agree, there is a need for standards, but there are so many other variables within the testing aspect

NicoleM: UGH - GLE

SuzanneC: Challenge ready!

ElaineS: Ready, set, challenge away

BernieD: Here's a site that was the topic on the Art Bell program the other night. It exemplifies a whole lot of the kind of stuff you see online or on TV.

BernieD: <http://home.cfl.rr.com/aichip/marsfoss.htm>

BernieD: The author is technically qualified, but not in the field that he's talking about here. How much credibility do we give this? How can we turn this into a WebQuest?

JeffC: For starters... never trust anyone who does a site using center alignment...

BernieD laughs

BernieD: At least it's not all in CAPS

BernieD: Any ideas?

ElaineS: Use his links to NASA?

BernieD: OK... what's the task for the kids?

CameronB: Task: too validate the information on this website

JeffC: or invalidate it

CameronB: A grad studies web Q

BernieD: OK... You're a reporter for the National Skeptic and you want to look closely at this site and give it a thumbs up or down.

JeffC: or both... no reason to force students towards one hypothesis or the other for the sake of the task, right?

BernieD: Right.

BernieD: The guy's technique is to download NASA images and run them through PhotoShop to bring out hidden details. You could have kids do the same thing.

ElaineS: I am stumped on this one.

BernieD: And maybe you could do the same thing with pictures of your Aunt Sally's dentures and see if fossils emerge from that, too.

JeffC: Perhaps you could find a way to use the "face in Mars" phenomena... which turns out to be just a mountain formation... but have students learn that our minds play tricks on our eyes... with the proper encouragement...

JulieF: that would be good thinking and analysis for the kids (poor Aunt Sally)

AliciaN: You could definitely use your imagination with this idea

JillaA: so this becomes a lesson in analyzing data... or websites?

BernieD: Or... assume he's correct and fill in the details. Describe a day in the life of a Martian critter seen in one of these fossils. Describe the water, the sky... make it an exercise in creative writing.

AndreaHa: oh the possibilities

BernieD nods at Alicia & Jill.

BernieD: I see this as an opportunity to get kids looking more critically at media stories like this one.

JulieF: I think that is critically important, especially as we use the Internet more and more in the classroom

AliciaN: I think this is important because too many time students take things at face value

JillaA: I think that's a superb idea... too many people believe if there's an internet site about something, then it must be true, accurate, real...

BernieD: And, given that scientists are grappling with the same images right now, there's a certain excitement and authenticity that comes with this topic.

JulieF: kids need to know how to analyze the credibility of a site and not just assume because it's published on the Internet it is true

ElaineS: Not only the internet, but magazines as well

AliciaN: There is a similar lesson plan on the New York Times site

BernieD: Ah... great minds.

JeffC: or textbooks...

JillaA: you're right Jeff... that's an important point...

JulieF: good point Jeff

BernieD: Well... I see by the clock on the wall that our time has slipped by yet again.

JulieF: analyzing for bias

BernieD: or analyzing for BS

AliciaN: actually, not the same topic, just another example of analyzing for credibility

JillA: Bernie.. I think you should do one of these things for beginners like me...

SuzanneC: Good idea!, me too!

JillA: on Webquests...

BernieD: I'll put it on the list.

AliciaN: by the way, what was the pattern in the Mars folktales? I was just beginning to understand.

JillA: As if you didn't have enough to do.

BernieD: A combo of genre analysis and dunno.

AliciaN: That sounds like something I would develop. Thank you so much for letting us learn from your ideas.

ElaineS: Thanks, Mr. Dodge, for taking your time to have this discussion. I really enjoyed it.

BernieD: Well... we have to vacate the virtual room muchachos y muchachas. Thanks to you all (y'all) for coming.)

AndreaHa: Goodnight and thanks for the ideas!

LynneW: Thank you

JillA: Thanks for the design patterns link... very handy

SuzanneC: Thanks for a great discussion, Mr. Dodge. It was fun

JulieF: thanks Bernie, I appreciate the stimulating conversation

BernieD: Hope to see you next month when the topic is: (drum roll) WebQuests without web editing.

AliciaN: Thanks for letting us know in advance. I'll try to be there.

ElaineS: Great topic!

JulieF: that sounds exciting, I can't wait for that

SuzanneC: I'm marking my calendar now!

AliciaN: Goodbye and good night.

BernieD: Nite all.

CameronB: nite

JeffC: Thanks Bernie

CameronB: thanx for letting me join in