

Title of Session: Evaluating WebQuests

Moderator: Bernie Dodge

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Room: After School Online Room

BJ: Welcome to tonight's Webquest discussion.

BJ: We're privileged to have Bernie Dodge leading this discussion on Evaluating WebQuests

BJ: we usually start all the discussions with introductions

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

BernieD: I'm Bernie Dodge, a professor of Ed Tech at San Diego State University.

ClaytonK: I'm an art teacher in Texas. 6-8

KimberlyRo: I'm an elementary school teacher, and student at Cal State.

ClaytonK: I'm also working on my MTT / master's in Ed Tech

BernieD: Where, Clayton?

KimberlyRo: Cool.. Me too.

ClaytonK: Outside of San Antonio, TX

BernieD: In an open field somewhere?

BJ chuckles

ClaytonK: and you make peanut fields sound bad...lol

BernieD: OK... shall we begin?

BJ nods and enthusiastically waits for tonight's session

KimberlyRo: Sounds good.

BernieD: Tonight's topic is the evaluation of WebQuests. How do you do it? Why are there so many not-so-hot WebQuests? What are the critical dimensions to look for? Well grapple with all these questions and conduct a hands-on evaluation ourselves.

BernieD: A good place to start is to see what experience you have had with WebQuests. How many of you have created your own WebQuest? And how many of you have used someone else's WebQuest with your own students?

BernieD: Anyone? Bueller?

KimberlyRo: I created a WebQuest, but my main problem is finding a server.

ClaytonK: I've used other folks and am currently working on an eval. sheet for teachers on my campus to evaluate websites.

KimberlyRo: I created mine in Word. I didn't have Win Zip, so that

ClaytonK: in the hopes of getting a few webquests on our server

KimberlyRo: ooops, so that's why I created it using Word.

BernieD: What's your WebQuest about, Kimberly?

KimberlyRo: I've wanted to use some of the WebQuests out there, but there are too many dead links to some of them.

BernieD: Alas.

KimberlyRo: My WebQuest is on teaching teachers how to create a WebQuest.

BernieD: Excellent.

ClaytonK: I am looking to create one for continuing ed for our staff on things like copy right, etc. Our campus is looking to bring everyone kicking and screaming into the 21st century..."the computer is your friend" kind of stuff

SusanR joined the room.

BernieD: Copyright has just the right fuzziness for a WebQuest.

BernieD: Let me throw the opening questions out to you all. What do you think are the most critical attributes of an excellent WebQuest? What do you look for to determine what's good?

BernieD: Welcome, Susan.

BarbK: Clarity, and challenge.

ClaytonK: Good sites ... something evaluated so I know I'm not wasting my time or others

KimberlyRo: Something that challenges the students and keeps them thinking, not a worksheet.

SusanR: Greetings

BernieD: Clarity of the task and the steps in the process, and a task that stretches them to think. Good.

BarbK: Has to be fun also

ClaytonK: clear purpose

SusanR: should engage the students

BernieD: Fun? FUN!? Bah humbug. There's no time for that.

ClaytonK: hmmm ... fun in education...who would have thought

BernieD: I am, of course, kidding.

BernieD: Over the years I've developed several rubrics to capture my own answers to the question.

BarbK: I'm doing my first webquest for Ken Decroo's class. It is an exciting adventure.

BernieD: Here's the evaluation rubric I use with my own classes. It covers the things I think are important (or at least what I thought was important a few years ago when I made it.

SusanR: and should elicit thinking that goes beyond rote comprehension

BernieD: <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/webquestrubric.html>

ClaytonK: What type of thought structure do you suggest to prevent it from becoming a worksheet?

KimberlyRo: Hello Barb, I thought that was you. Welcome!

BernieD: Click on the blue and take a look.

BarbK: Hi, Kim!

BernieD: What do we think about the rubric?

BernieD: Notice that not all dimensions are created equal. Some count for more than others. Can anyone suggest changes in the ways things are weighted? Or new dimensions I might add? Or some to leave out?

ClaytonK: Maybe something that discusses the number of modalities used for the quest. I found one last week that was great ... used sound and visual

KimberlyRo: I like the links you have within the rubric.

BernieD: Good idea, Clayton.

BarbK: Can this rubric be used to judge our own as we are constructing it?

BernieD: That taps into both multiple intelligences and the desirability of going beyond text to pull in ELD learners.

ClaytonK: I like the reference to the HOTS. Maybe break it down similar to the finer points links you have? More points for moving higher up the taxonomy

CarolGst6 joined the room.

BernieD: Barb... yes! I have my own students use it that way. They also peer review each others to get a fresh point of view.

ClaytonK: sounds like a great self-checking idea Barb

BarbK: This will really help me as I am currently constructing my first quest!

BernieD: It takes around 10 minutes to use this rubric. Not too bad, but 10 minutes is sometimes too long.

BernieD: So... there's a quicker version for use once you're familiar with this one.

ClaytonK: 10 minutes of prep time isn't too long at all ... takes me that long to set a still life

BernieD: I've made a condensed version of the rubric to encourage more people to provide feedback to others about their WebQuests. The best way to get to it is by going to the matrix of newly submitted WebQuests. The range of bad to excellent is widest there.

BernieD: Let's all go to <http://webquest.org/matrix0.php>

KimberlyRo: Bernie, would you mind if I used the rubrics as a part of my IRB that I need to submit for my thesis?

BernieD: These are WebQuests that I haven't evaluated myself yet so they aren't tagged as "Top" or "Middling". Some are great, some are..... not yet great.

BernieD: Use away, Kim.

BernieD: As an exercise, click on the grade 6-8 Art/Music cell.

BernieD: You'll see 40 WebQuests that aren't yet evaluated.

KimberlyRo: Thanks, On the mechanics part I noticed you had 5 broken links. I've personally found that if I find more than two depending on the size of the WebQuest, I won't even consider using it.

BernieD: Notice the words "Rate It" next to each one.

BernieD writes down Kimberly's input.

BernieD: Click on Rate it for "The Art of it All".

BernieD: You can see that this is greatly compacted, but I think it's still pretty valid.

BernieD: Let's take a few minutes and actually evaluate this WebQuest. OK?

ClaytonK: sure

KimberlyRo: This is a little off topic, I'm not sure if you are going to talk about this.. Do you have a WebQuest, or know of one for P.E. that will perhaps let you keep record of how your class is doing compared to another one?

BernieD: I DO know of one. Write me afterward and I'll dig it up.

KimberlyRo: Thanks

BernieD: Everyone looking at the Art of it All?

CarolGst6: yes

ClaytonK: do we follow the link?

BarbK: Yes but how do you know the score to put down?

BernieD: Use your best judgment, one step at a time.

CarolGst6: I found a few broken links so this makes it hard for the students to use. If they come across a link that does not work properly, they are unsure as to what to do.

BarbK: The overall aesthetics look good. Great pictures.

ClaytonK: I have a problem with advertising ... like the weight loss ad on one of these links...is there anything in the rubric for addressing advertising?

ClaytonK: sorry the fortune city link

BarbK: Great question, Clayton

KimberlyRo: I noticed the My Works of Art link under Meaning of Art had a black background and small print, it was very hard to read.

BernieD: Go ahead and actually submit an evaluation.

ClaytonK: <shrug> middle schoolers believe everything on the web

BernieD writes down Clayton's point about ads for the next revision of the rubric.

BernieD: No one has clicked submit yet.

KimberlyRo: Bernie, you just want us to type into the rubric and do what, sorry I'm a little confused.

KimberlyRo: How fast did you say we should be able to evaluate them. I feel like I'm taking a long time.

ClaytonK: The site assumes knowledge of rubrics ... my kids use them for critiques in class but I know a lot of my teachers do not use them in class...

BernieD: Kimberly... I wanted you to use the form here:
http://webquest.org/wqdb/rating.php?wq_id=843

ClaytonK: critiques even...

BernieD: Should take no more than 5 minutes.

BernieD: Good! 4 of you have submitted.

BarbK: Originally I printed up the form. Now, after completing it, I see the ratings are in a drop-down format. Very easy to access. Sorry for the premature question, Bernie.

BernieD: The scripting takes your ratings and turns it into a number from 0 to 50

KimberlyRo: I'm having a hard time because I don't know what the standards are for that grade level.

BernieD: And you wouldn't find them in this WebQuest, either.

BernieD: Barb gave it a 33.

BernieD: Carol gave it a 40.

BernieD: I gave it a 25.

BernieD: and someone who is nameless gave it a 17.

BernieD: I think it takes some time to calibrate yourself on this.

ClaytonK: wow ... phantom grader is rough.

BernieD: And that would be you, no?

ClaytonK: no....I listed as C. kilduff

ClaytonK: just popped mine in as you posted that four had submitted

BernieD: Ah... there you are. Clayton gave it a 28.

BernieD: And someone else gave it a 46.

BernieD: So... clearly I need to provide some graded examples to minimize the spread.

KimberlyRo: Did you get mine? I think that one is mine. I know I rated it fairly high, but I didn't put a name on it.

BarbK: Especially to those of us new to webquests, we are easily impressed.

BernieD: That would be you, Kimberly.

ClaytonK: I think some of it depends on what your state guidelines are like, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills would only have a few problems with the way this was written.

KimberlyRo: Oh good.

BernieD: Yes... that's why I ask who the evaluator is, too. I may end up weighting the scores based on experience.

BarbK: That makes sense.

BernieD: What I'm working on is a system that would list these scores next to each WebQuest in the database.

ClaytonK: kind of like a consumers report for webquests?

BernieD: Over time I think the ratings would begin to converge so that a 20 means the same thing.

BernieD: Yes. Or like Amazon.

ClaytonK: <nodding>

BarbK: Did you say the ratings go from 0-50?

BernieD: Turns out, though, that kids occasionally post evaluations and use it as an opportunity to say how much life sucks.

BernieD: Yes, Barb.

ClaytonK: and a 50 quest reaches out of the screen and opens the child's head and pours information in right?

BernieD: Yup.

BarbK: Can you suggest a couple 50's for us to explore later?

ClaytonK: good question Barb

BernieD: So... because of the vandal issue, I'm going to have to clean up the existing ratings (there are 2500 of them so far) and check each new one before it goes public. Just what I need: another obligation!

BernieD: Hmm... let me look.

BarbK: Thanks, Bernie.

BernieD: Here's one that someone gave a 50 to. I know the author and agree with the rating.

BernieD: <http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/kearny/forensic/>

KimberlyRo: I just went back to look at one of the ratings, could you put a pull down menu, so that the evaluator could entry how much experience they've had with WebQuests? Something along the lines of they've never done them before, or used them 1-3 times.

BarbK: Wow! Even the opening page is a "grabber!"

BernieD: This one got a 50, too. Haven't had a chance to look at it.

BernieD: <http://www.eccentrix.com/members/mrreed/wq/wq.htm>

ClaytonK: Like the bones site....very CSI

SusanR: what grade levels is this one for, Bernie

BernieD: High School.

BernieD: Finally, here's a directory of the WebQuests created at the U of Richmond. They mostly get high ratings, deservedly so:

BernieD: <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/academics/education/projects/>

BarbK: The Vietnam era music site is fabulous. So creative. Kids learn history by practicing songwriting. How fun!

BernieD: Good idea, Kimberly.

BernieD: So... with that, our time is about up.

BernieD: (Everyone lost in Richmond?)

BarbK: Thanks so much for your time and for sharing all your experience. It was enriching to me a novice webquester!

KimberlyRo: What's the best way for us to e-mail you? I'm sure you have a lot of e-mail accounts.

BernieD: bdodge@mail.sdsu.edu. (If you forget it, just type "Bernie" into Google.)

BarbK: Will we receive a transcript of this? Or should I quickly jot down the links?

BernieD: You'll get a transcript if you send me \$20.

ClaytonK: LOL....my \$20 is in the mail

BarbK: Do you accept email virtual money?

KimberlyRo: Thank you.

ClaytonK: would it be alright to contact you Bernie?

BernieD: Sure, if you'll accept a virtual transcript.

BernieD: Sure.

ClaytonK: Thank you

BarbK: You are great, Bernie. I Now see why Ken Decroo raves about you!

BernieD: Seriously, though, Tapped in will send you a transcript as soon as you log off.

BernieD blushes.

ClaytonK: Have a good night everyone.

BarbK: Wonderful. Take care & thanks for everything you've done over these years.

BernieD: Good night all.

BarbK: Bye bye everyone.

SusanR: Thanks Bernie. Lots to peruse!