

Title of Session: Blogs and Wikis as WebQuest Tasks

Moderator: Bernie Dodge

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BJ: Welcome to the WebQuest discussion led by Bernie Dodge

BernieD: Welcome to you all!

BernieD: What a dedicated group this is to be showing up here during summer break. This session is a follow-up to one I did last week in New Orleans at the NECC conference.

BernieD: Shall we start with introductions?

CelinaA: Hello I'm from Brasil

SuzannePT: Hi all! I'm a high school biology teacher from Houston, TX

PaulV: I'm one of Carol's students.

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

AdrienneH: I'm Louisiana webquest fan, university prof at a state u.

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

GayleK: Hi! I'm a middle school library media specialist in Wilmington, NC.

JeffC: Education Technology Specialist, laid off in Oregon.

AnnePD: I work at Georgia State University - instructional technology.

ChristinSS: Hi! I'm a substitute teacher from Cincinnati. I'm also one of Carol's students.

JuanitaBe: Tech Integration Specialist, 7 - 12. Puerto Rico

BarbaraJC: I am a HS science teacher in the Cincinnati area

KyleGst4: I am a middle school teacher in Cincinnati

CarolBe: I'm an Ed Tech instructor at the University of Cincinnati

SusanR: K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario

GregS: student at University of Cincinnati

LaniR: hi I'm from east of Cleveland, OH, newly retired, worked with juniors and seniors in a teaching professions high school program

StacyN: Hello...I'm a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati

StevenHo: Political Science Professor from Bakersfield

CelinaA: I'm math teacher in Brasil

TriciaSI: I am a pre-service teacher at UC one of carol's students

CelinaA: São Paulo - PUC

BernieD: An interesting and diverse group! (I keep hearing the theme for WKRP in my head.) Bom dia, Celina.

BernieD: OK... let's start.

CelinaA: Boa noite Bernie! Aqui é noite

BernieD: My bad.

BernieD: The overall message of tonight's session is this: the WebQuest model has evolved over the nine years of its existence and that's something that will continue. That evolution comes from two sources: 1. the things I pick up from creative teachers as they stretch the format in new directions. When I see a good idea that generalizes, I try to

capture it so that others can take advantage of it. 2. The web itself is evolving. That second source is evidenced by the addition of framed templates a few years ago.

BernieD: Earlier this year, I did a workshop and used the WebQuest About WebQuest activity that you can find on the training materials page on my site. That's always a successful exercise, and I never know exactly how it's going to turn out. In this particular workshop, though, something occurred that was even more surprising than usual. One of the participants didn't like any of the 5 WebQuests that they were looking at. None!

BernieD: Why was he so grumpy? Turns out he was a professor of computer science and that given all the brouhaha about WebQuests he was expecting to be impressed technically by the pages. There's no interactivity, he kept saying.

BernieD: That's a legitimate observation, of course. Most WebQuests consist of static web pages with pictures and links. No forms to fill out, no fancy JavaScript thingies, nothing that would ring the chimes of a CS professor. That's because from the very start I was intent on providing a format for ordinary teachers without great technical skills. That simplicity is what made the format take off, I think.

BernieD: Meanwhile, though, the web has evolved in ways that make it easier to provide more interactivity. Ways that allow learners to author pages without any more technical knowledge than using a browser. Two new formats, blogs and wikis, allow that kind of two-way web and now's the time to see how we can make use of them.

GregS: why do they always involve groups of kids, not just one kid

BernieD: Greg... two reasons.

BernieD: 1) there aren't enough computer to go around.

BernieD: 2) The real learning takes place away from the computer screen when kids argue with each other or explain their thoughts or teach each other what they read.

BernieD: They can be adapted to one-kid, though. For homeschooling, for example.

BernieD: But I digress.

BernieD: Do you all know what a blog is? Anyone have any blog experience they'd like to share?

PaulV: Yes, thanks to Carol.

LydiaO: No I don't

StacyN: We just learned what they are in class last week

CarolBe: could you direct us to the NECC blog?

BernieD: Has Carol made you set up a blog, or just shown them?

SuzannePT: I have to blog for a class I am taking at U of H. I'm not sold on it yet as a useful tool for my bio students.

BernieD nods to Carol. Momentito.

JuanitaBe: I know what they are, but have never used them. I'd like to with my high school students

AnnePD: I have a weblog which I use to talk with other educational webbloggers and I have done a couple of projects with elementary students and one with preservice teachers.

StacyN: just shown them, so far

BrookW: I am a physical education teacher in the elementary level and do not know what a blog is

ChristinSS: I set one up for class, but haven't really used it.

LydiaO: I have no idea what a blog is

BernieD: OK... lets look at a few just to get the concept down.

StacieS: We just learned about blogs last week and had a chance to investigate them with Carol, but I have never created one.

BernieD: Here's a blog that was set up just for people to compare notes during last week's conference.

BernieD: <http://necc.edweblogs.org/2004/>

KyleGst4: I learned about them, but never made one

BernieD: Click on the little blue text and have a look.

GregS: there and back

LydiaO: yes I got it

StacieS: Yes, I got it and took a brief look.

BernieD: As you can see, this is a special purpose blog. It was heavily used during the conference and my guess is that it will fade into obscurity fairly quickly.

CelinaA: I need to learn about blog

BrookW: I got it also. Is blogging something that I could possibly use in my classroom?

BernieD: Let's look at another example.

SuzannePT: got it.

BJ: Bernie, do you think blogs are a good thing for ESL?

BernieD: When my son started high school, he found that five other classmates of his had already started a blog before that.

CelinaA: Blog is the task in WQ?

BernieD: Yes! I think anything that encourages writing is good for ESL.

BernieD: No... we'll get to that, Celina.

BJ nods. Thanks

BernieD: <http://www.deadjournal.com/users/potterish/100850.html>

BernieD: Take a look at this one by a 16 year old young lady, one of my son's classmates.

CarolBe: I think blogging in general has the potential for being a good assessment tool.

JuanitaBe: Done.

BernieD: I love how you can peer into the adolescent mind by reading these things. Plans, emotions, hopes, etc.

BrookW: That is really neat. It's amazing what students know how to do with a computer.

LydiaO: So its like jotting ideas?

AnnePD: I agree, Bernie. anything that encourages writing is good for ESL. One of my blog projects combined native English speaking students and ESL students. Using blogs for writing is great as it gives us a way to make writing the focus - students are not spending enough time writing due to focus on skills for testing. The kids I have worked with really felt that people cared about what they had to say - it gave them a voice.

BrookW: Do blogs usually belong to only one student or are they shared between multiple students?

BernieD: Blogs are personal, unlike many web pages. They have a point of view and don't pretend to be objective.

BernieD: Usually they have one author, but it's easy to set up a class blog where everyone contributes. I do that in two of my classes.

BernieD: Here's my personal blog.

BernieD: <http://webquest.org/bdodge/>

GregS: I had a student who had a blog, but she wouldn't share it. It wasn't school related

BrookW: Do you feel it is something that maybe a high school health educator could use with her students?

BernieD: Again... it's got a point of view. I'm not pretending to be a reporter. But it gives me an outlet for writing and expressing myself.

BernieD: Perhaps, Brook.

CelinaA: Can I use blog in WQ for do the task?

BernieD: I'll show you in a bit, Celina.

JessicaMM: can blogs be used in place of journal writing (like in a notebook)?

BernieD: Let's move on to wikis. Does anyone here have any experience with wikis?

LydiaO: no

BernieD peers into the silent room.

JuanitaBe: No experience with wikis

BrookW: No, sorry?

ChristinSS: We looked at a wiki in Carol

BarbaraJC: A strange name, what are they?

StacieS: Can you tell us how you post pictures onto your personal blog?

SuzannePT: nope

LaniR: not with wikis

StacyN: very briefly discussed them in class with Carol as well

BernieD: Blogs are a hot topic now. Wikis are just appearing on the radar for most people.

StacieS: We looked at a wiki in class with Carol.

CarolynDE: I stumbled upon Wikipedia. Is it related?

CelinaA: I don't know wikis. Here is a very good fruit

BernieD: Let me show you the definition of a wiki written by the guy who created the idea.

AndriannaJ: I have read and added the the Wikipedia as well as one other. Just a couple time

ChristinSS: We looked at a wiki but it didn't make a whole lot of sense to me.

BernieD: <http://wiki.org/wiki.cgi?WhatIsWiki>

CaraF: I believe a wiki is a blog where people can modify, add, delete comments? Right?

AndriannaJ: It is a nice way to collaborate toward a final product, but it can be intimidating and confusing to change other people's previous work

GregS: how about an example

BernieD: Essentially, a wiki allows people to create web pages without knowing anything about web editing. So do blogs, for that matter. The amazing difference is that in a wiki anyone can edit anyone else's page.

GregS: isn't that a problem

BernieD: To which you may well say: with kids? Are you crazy?

BrookW: A wiki sounds like something I could actually do without messing anything up

BernieD: It's a problem and an opportunity, Greg.

SuzannePT: Why would you want someone else to edit your webpage?

GregS: someone will turn Mr. Jones is great into Mr. Jones is a jerk

BernieD: To make it better.

SuzannePT: Can you give an example?

BrookW: Are there limits on the editing that can be done?

StacieS: Which grade levels would you recommend the use of blogs and wikis?

BernieD: The idea behind a wiki is that everyone has a stake in the product. We all own it and we can improve each others work.

AndriannaJ: You can set up the wiki to track changes and restore old versions if bad changes are made, but yes it can be a problem. Amazingly it's usually not.

BernieD: If someone messes things up, it's trivially easy to replace it with an earlier version of the page.

JessicaMM: like open source - Linux?

CarolynDE: Would the wiki be accessible only to the group of people working on a project, for instance?

BernieD: Most wikis are written with open source software, yes. It's like open source information,.

ChristinSS: What stops people from making inappropriate remarks on it? Is it monitored in any way?

BrookW: So for example, if a student creates a web page and there are numerous spelling and grammar mistakes and another student notices them, they can go in and change the m?

BernieD: Yes, you can restrict access if you like

BernieD nods to Brook.

AndriannaJ: Greg, you wouldn't really use aWiki for content you didn't want to allow others to change, but for group work, compiling knowledge.

BernieD: Here's an example:

BernieD: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

BernieD: Wikipedia is an encyclopedia with tens of thousands of authors. It has over a quarter million entries.

JeffC: I'll jump in with one comment (actually several), but have to run (taking the kids to the park). 1) Blogs are very easy to get started with and use. I use <http://ujournal.com> but there are a myriad of possibilities 2) Whatever you're used to you will use. I've been trying to get Tim Lauer to use Tapped In for a while... he's been trying to get me to blog! Consider changing your pattern of Net behavior... also consider what sort of *support* you will get in this shift 3) Blogs like NECC seem to be time sensitive. I've posted a couple comments *after NECC 2004 is over... and haven't seen anything from anyone else. Some blogs definitely transcend time. 4) Use <http://www.bloglines.com> to keep track of all your blogs (one stop shopping. 5) There are a myriad of blogging tools (overwhelm even *me*)... so... start slow... get help (hopefully)... enjoy!

BernieD: Go ahead... look something up.

BernieD: Thanks for the comments, Jeff. Sorry to hear about your job change.

JeffC: You're welcome Bernie... yeah... budget cuts in Oregon... I'm for hire:

<http://snurl.com/cooperebay>

JeffC waves bfn

SuzannePT: So...if this is an "encyclopedia" with thousands of authors...who is checking for correctness of information?

BernieD: So... as an example, I added "WebQuest" to Wikipedia last week.

BernieD: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Webquest>

BrookW: This is my first time using Tapped In and I must say it is really neat to hear about things that are being used in the regular classrooms today. Being a physical educator I don't hear about a lot of the current technology being used other than what I personally use myself

BernieD: A few minutes after I posted it, someone went in and made a small correction to my punctuation. Whoever they are, they made it better.

StacieS: What grade levels would you recommend blogs and wikis for?

AndriannaJ: Suzanne, no-one and everyone... Some Wiki's do have Moderators or section leaders that are responsible for checking, but they may not do everything

CarolynDE: In that case, was your wiki available to the masses who read it?

SusanR: Bernie, one can start with three easy steps here at blogger

<http://www.blogger.com/start>

BernieD: I've gone in and modified entries myself. Why? Because I benefit by having a free resource like this and I want to make it better.

BernieD: There was an article on the BBC site last week that described 7 year olds blogging. Personally I'd start later with blogging and probably not until high school for wikis.

BernieD: But you guys are the experts on your kids. Use your own judgment.

BrookW: Wow Susan, those really are three easy steps

AndriannaJ: Bernie, hope I didn't miss this earlier, but is there a particular blog creator you think is better for k-12? esl?

CarolynDE: Back to Suzanne's question: Who checks for correctness of information?

BarbaraJC: Interesting, maybe I will give this blog thing a try with my students next year, but I am sure that could teach me a thing or two about blogs.

BernieD: Blogger is what I use personally and with my students. It's amazingly easy.

ChristinSS: It seems like some of the blogs I've looked at contain too much information. Shouldn't kids be careful about what they post online?

AndriannaJ: Carolyn, did you see my answer above?

StacieS: What grade levels would you recommend using blogs & wikis with?

BernieD: Stacie... scroll up. I answered that.

CarolynDE: Thanks, AdriannaJ, I just spotted it. This is moving fast.

BernieD: Everyone: if you haven't detached your chat window, you should.

BernieD: That will let you see more of the conversation at once.

StacieS: Bernie: Thank you. I thought I wasn't doing this right, but I guess I am ok!

BernieD: So...

BernieD: I've been in this field for almost 30 years and one thing I've noticed is the tendency for people like us to pounce on new technologies just because they're cool. I'm as guilty of that as the next guy, and I've already seen conference presentations in which teacher report trying a blog or wiki with kids and having mixed results at best. Why mixed? Because they didn't really think through what the pedagogical purpose was for using those new tools.

BrookW: Bernie is there a particular website that gives detailed information on how this works and what you need to do to get started? I really think some of my teachers at school would love this

CelinaA: good

AnnePD: I have used blogs with 4th and 5th graders. They did just fine, but you need to have a purpose and guidelines for them. I wouldn't use it as a diary type blog for this age group. I like having them report on current events, their opinions, and then inviting responses. You really have to give some thought to what you are trying to accomplish.

JuanitaBe: But how and when do we use it with high school students, for example.

BernieD: I can give you a URL that will lead you to other teacher-bloggers.

BernieD: <http://www.weblogg-ed.com/>

CarolynDE: If someone challenges the accuracy of a wiki, what happens then? How would the originator know?

CarolBe: I think blogging is a good reflective tool for teachers as well as students.

BernieD: Follow the links from there and you'll find a lot of info.

BernieD agrees with Carol.

AnnePD: Here is a site that I created as a resource for many of the questions you are asking:

AnnePD: oops pushed enter too soon

BernieD: That's why I have my preservice teachers do it. For example:

BrookW: Thank you Bernie.

BernieD: <http://edweb.sdsu.edu/Courses/EDTEC470/sections/S04-05/faces/faces.html>

AnnePD: <http://anvil.gsu.edu/NECC2004> Weblogs in Education: The Possibilities Are Limitless!

JuanitaBe: Bernie, is it a requirement for your students?

BernieD watches URLs zing through the air with wonder.

BernieD: Yes, Juanita. It counts for 10% of their grade.

CarolBe: what a neat idea

JuanitaBe: I teach grad students also, and this sounds like a great activity for them.

BernieD: Read Andrew Hinds if you're only going to look at one. A very clever writer.

BarbaraJC: I checked out the last blog site you gave, as a beginner I was appreciative to see that they can be simplistic.

PaulV: Are there any Legality Issues?

LaniR: do you see the potential for pre service teachers and others in the reflective writing or the interaction possible from comments

StacieS: Thank you for the site: weblogs in Education, Anne

BrookW: I think that is a really good idea Lani. We had to do so much writing during that period in our beginning career.

MartinDR: reflection in any form is valid

AnnePD: Bernie, I really liked your recommendation of having kids look at a complex issue, forcing them to work together in some way to come up with recommendations. You gave us lots of food for thought at NECC for using blogs and wikis in a pedagogically sound way.

BernieD: There are legality issues. You have to be careful about what you say. One of my students got into trouble that way. BUT.... the reflection and the community building make it worth while in my opinion.

BernieD: Anne... thanks for the segue...

CelinaA: Tanks BernieD .I have to read about everything

BernieD: Let's get on to using blogs and wikis within WebQEsts.

BrookW: Sounds difficult, but let's go for it

MartinDR: I know blogs, but what is wiki?

BernieD: What's the solution? I think embedding blogs and wikis in the WebQuest format will make it likelier that actual learning will take place.

BernieD: these formats have a lot of potential, but to make sense as teaching tools we need to embed them in some kind of larger pedagogical structure. One way to do that is to look over the list of WebQuest design patterns, a set of structures based on existing successful lessons.

SuzannePT: thus the "interactive " element of the webquest?

AndriannaJ: Martin, we discussed them earlier. They are a form of collaborative webpage.

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

BernieD nods to Suzanne.

BernieD: By looking at these design patterns, you can see several that seem tailor made for blogs and wikis.

SuzannePT: found this site when I was writing a paper for one of my classes...great stuff!

BernieD: Three that seem immediately applicable to blogs are Simulated Diary, Travel Account, and Historical Story. Imagine, for example, if the Experiencing India's Caste System WebQuest was wrapped around a collection of blogs, one for each caste, and pulled together under one master page as in The Spot.

BernieD: Here's Simulated Diary.

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

BernieD: And here's the India Caste WebQuest

BernieD: <http://teachers.eusd.k12.ca.us/mguerena/castewebquest/index.htm>

BrookW: Those sites make it so easy to follow along.

BernieD: (time is flying)

BrookW: Only 10 more minutes to go

CelinaA: I have my WQ there "Ajude a salvar a natureza!"

<http://www.webquesteducambiental.hpg.com.br>

BernieD: In the interest of time, let me direct you to a page where I've summarized the whole NECC presentation. It has more links for you to explore later.

JuanitaBe: Blogs could be used to store information to complete a task.

BernieD: <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/necc2004/blogs-and-wikis.htm>

BernieD: Bookmark this and poke around. I think you'll get lots of ideas!

BrookW: Thanks for the site. It tells us everything you discussed tonight in case we forget

BernieD: And with that, I'm afraid I have to go. I'm late for a face-to-face meeting.

BarbaraJC: Bye and thanks

PaulV: good bye!

JuanitaBe: Thanks, Bernie!

CelinaA: Tanks Bernie

GayleK: Thanks, Bernie!

AdrienneH: Thank you so much.

AndriannaJ: Thank you, bye.

BrookW: You're cutting us early. Thanks for everything Bernie!!

AnnePD: Thanks, Bernie!

CelinaA: Até breve!

BernieD: Thanks for coming! See you in September, I hope.

CaraF: Outstanding, as usual!

CarolBe: Thanks!

CraigN: Hope the jazz at Preservation Hall was good thanks for all your info

ChristinSS: Thanks! This was a neat experience.

LydiaO: thanks

SuzannePT: thank you Bernie. I'm a great fan of webquests!

BJ: while I still have most of you here...a reminder about the Tapped In Festival on July 21

StacieS: Thanks Bernie!

BJ: <http://ti2.sri.com/tappedin/web/festival/>

CarolynDE: Thanks to everyone for the great links! I'm just learning about both blogs and wikis. This has been very helpful!

SusanR: Great session..sounds like blogs, wikis and webquests were the main focus at NECC

JuanitaBe: Very informative session. Good night , all.