

**Title of Session:** Rethinking WebQuest Tasks and Design Patterns

**Moderator:** Bernie Dodge

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Room: WebQuest Group

**BjB:** we usually start the Tapped In discussions with introductions. Please tell us where you are located and what your interest is in WebQuests.

**BernieD:** OK... so who are we?

**NinaH:** Hi, I'm Nina, I teach 6th grade science in Silver Spring, Maryland

**BjB** sighs...same thing with fewer words      Much better.

**GordonB:** I'm a 5th grade teacher in Mamaroneck, NY.

**BjB:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

**JoMC:** I'm Jo from Wichita Falls, Texas - Midwestern State University - and I teach jr. hi ESL.

**CamilleL:** Hello, I'm a reading teacher in the Bronx, NY on sabbatical working on her masters in ed technology

**BernieD:** Me: ed tech professor in San Diego

**BernieD:** How many of you have created a WebQuest?

**NinaH:** I have created a few of them

**CamilleL:** I have

**SusanR:** Sue from Ottawa, Ontario and facilitator of the K to 3+ Great Resources sessions here at TI..and always looking for ways to infuse webquests into the curriculum

**BernieD:** No one else?

**GordonB:** Never created a "real" webquest. Have used others.

**BernieD:** Tell us about yours, Camille.

**JoMC:** We've just started WebQuests in Tech Integration

**SusanR** . o O ( more of a user..created a jigsaw quest )

**CamilleL**: Mine are on your Quest Garden, on My eCoach, Filamentality and Teacher Web.

**BernieD**: Ah. Then you know what's happening with QuestGarden.

**CamilleL**: I think I do, yes.

**BernieD**: I've been moving it to a new server for 4 days now and I'm not quite done. It's been unavailable since early Sunday.

**BernieD**: The new server is much much faster.

**BernieD**: For those who don't know about QuestGarden...

**BernieD**: here's a link:<http://webquest.org/questgarden/author/overview.htm>`

**BernieD**: QuestGarden launched on Sept 1 last year and it's taken off like a rocket.

**BernieD**: We have over 19000 registered users.

**BernieD**: So many that my web host asked me to leave.

**NinaH** . o O ( Nina's jaw drops at the number )

**BernieD**: My site was slowing down all the others.

**CamilleL**: how rude

**BernieD**: Actually, it was a little rude of me to expect to stay on a \$10/month shared server this long.

**BernieD**: So now we've moved on up to a virtual private server with a lot more oomph.

**NinaH**: Is it your own server?

**BernieD**: Not quite.

**BernieD**: A Virtual Private Server acts like a dedicated one but it's still shared by a few others.

**BernieD**: My old site had 131 other web sites on the same machine.

**BernieD**: So.... to the topic du jour.

**BernieD:** For the 11 years since WebQuests began, I've been trying to make it easier to create good ones.

**BernieD:** QuestGarden is an attempt to take care of some of the logistical techy issues.

**BernieD:** But in addition, it's there to help people conceptualize what a good constructivist lesson should look like.

**BernieD:** That, in fact, is the harder challenge.

**BernieD:** Five or six years ago I realized that it would be helpful to give names to the kinds of tasks a WebQuest was wrapped around.

**BernieD:** That led to the WebQuest Taskonomy page, which many have found to be very helpful

**BernieD:** <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/taskonomy.html>

**WilliamSi** joined the room.

**BjB:** welcome, William.

**BernieD:** The main benefit of this page was to distinguish between Retelling tasks and all the others. Many of the really bad WebQuests are bad because they focus on retelling. Very low level.

**WilliamSi:** howdy

**BernieD:** Hi William. Where are you from and what do you teach?

**BjB:** we're looking at <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/taskonomy.html> William.

**WilliamSi:** From Florida and I teach computer applications

**BernieD:** Great. Welcome.

**BernieD:** Any questions about the taskonomy?

**WilliamSi:** I found that web site and have it as a link on my school machine

**BernieD** applauds

**WilliamSi:** I have to build a webquest for a grad class

**NinaH:** Yes, what do you mean about "retelling"

**WilliamSi:** and am trying to learn as much as I can in the shortest amount of time

**BernieD:** Retelling looks like this: OK kids, read these 5 WebQuests and then make a PowerPoint presentation about them.

**BernieD:** It's only asking them to summarize or distill. Very low on Bloom's Taxonomy.

**NinaH:** oh, thanks, that's a waste of time, you are right

**BernieD:** Not good enough for a WebQuest.

**BernieD:** Very common, though, in "WebQuests".

**NinaH:** students should be researching and analyzing what they research, then present to their group and class

**BernieD:** And synthesizing and evaluating and problem solving.

**CamilleL:** If we ask our students to produce something at the end of the quest is that considered under your "Creative Designing"

**BernieD:** Depends on what kind of thinking was required to get to that point.

**BernieD:** It's all about that. The final product is really just a side effect.

**CamilleL:** I guess here in New York we're always forced to validate everything we do.

**JoMC:** I like the "seeing" through the eyes of the role the student is taking

**BernieD:** Sure. All states do. But it's important to focus on the thinking required and not just on the artifacts of that thinking.

**BernieD:** So...

**BernieD:** a few years later I noticed some commonalities among good WebQuests and developed another way of thinking about them.

**BernieD:** That led to the Design Patterns page.

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

**CamilleL:** Oh, I love the concept of collaborative design -- hot issue here.

**BernieD:** That turned out to be very helpful because each pattern has its own template. If you can pick a design pattern that works for your content, the lesson is half written for you.

**NinaH:** I never knew about the templates, they are great!

**BernieD:** I noticed in my own classes that when we switched to the design patterns templates rather than the old one-size-fits-all, the amount of development time was cut in half.

**WilliamSi:** I have seen the site ---- and bookmarked it or copied it to my machine

**BernieD:** So QuestGarden has these design patterns baked in. When you begin to create your WebQuest, you first settle on a design and then all the prompts from that point on are based on that decision.

**CamilleL:** that's so convenient. only thing I need to do though is make the rubric simpler for my kiddies.

**GordonB:** Just wondering, but help me understand how this example off your design page is not "retelling" [http://www.wws.k12.in.us/wis/projects/ice\\_frame2.htm](http://www.wws.k12.in.us/wis/projects/ice_frame2.htm)

**BernieD:** There are 20-something designs, and I figure that if there were 40 or so it would cover just about every possibility.

**BernieD:** Good question. Let's look at it.

**SusanR:** I'm a big template user..time constraints

**GordonB:** You have to choose info. to put in the brochure??

**GordonB:** Rather than regurgitate it?

**BernieD:** OK... so this is the archetypal "brochure" task. You're right, William, it's pretty close to retelling.

**BernieD:** The thinking involved is about making choices, as Gordon said. And ideally there's

**BernieD:** an element of creativity involved in arranging the information.

**GordonB:** OK. Got it.

**NinaH:** RubiStar (<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>) is a great website to help create rubrics for ALL different grade levels, subjects, and projects

**CamilleL:** thank you Nina

**BernieD** agrees

**BernieD:** So... onward.

**BernieD:** If there were 40 design patterns, it would be way too much to keep in ones head.

**BernieD:** Even the 23 we have are too many.

**BernieD:** So I've been thinking about ways to reorganize and chunk them so that their meaning is more clear.

**BernieD:** I've settled on an approach and I'd like to run it past y'all.

**CamilleL:** I'm listening.

**BernieD:** It's based on this: it seems to me that you can summarize what's going on in your classroom by asking yourself what the dominant verb is at any given time.

**SusanR** listens intently!

**WilliamSi:** patiently

**BernieD:** There are verbs that only happen in classrooms. Schooly stuff that only teachers ask.

**BernieD:** And there are verbs that happen in the outside world of work and life.

**BernieD:** So good WebQuests, it seems to me, ought to focus on those.

**CamilleL:** Absolutely

**BernieD:** Here's a diagram.

**BernieD:** <http://webquest.org/workshops/verbs.jpg>

**NinaH:** I agree! Especially on having students solve real-world problems, such as How can we improve the health of the Bay?

**NinaH:** LOL - I like the title

**BernieD:** It's tongue in cheek. I usually show this on a slide right after Bloom's taxonomy.

**NinaH:** Bernie, I think that many teachers already use some of the verbs in the Life section like analyze, predict, create, decide

**BernieD:** I'm not sure if this is all the verbs we'll need, but so far it's working for me.

**BernieD:** Any thoughts?

**WilliamSi:** still listening

**GordonB:** Nope

**WilliamSi:** I am all ears!

**BernieD:** Many teachers are already doing this, no doubt, Nina.

**CamilleL:** seems like a good start to me

**HeatherBu . o O ( I'm all ears...oops eyes )**

**BernieD:** So... I'm planning to use these verbs as a way to chunk the design patterns.

**BernieD:** The way it would work is that you first pick a verb that dominates what you'd like the kids to be doing.

**CamilleL:** only one?

**NinaH:** I do agree that when we mix school and real life then students are more able to APPLY what they have learned to a real-life situation and EXPLAIN why things are happening the way that they are

**BernieD:** Then, that leads to a number of design patterns you might try to apply.

**NinaH:** Ah, that's a good idea

**BernieD:** I took all the existing design patterns to see if I could put them into that kind of structure.

**BernieD:** and they fit!

**CamilleL:** did it work?

**CamilleL:** good show me how.

**BernieD:** Here's how it looks so far:

**BernieD:** <http://webquest.org/workshops/newtaxonomy.gif>

**BernieD:** You heard it here, first.

**CamilleL:** is this too small or am I too old =)

**BernieD:** Looks OK here and I'm definitely too old.

**NinaH:** Camille, click one time on the jpg

**NinaH:** then, if you click again, it will get smaller again

**BernieD:** Depends on your browser and monitor size.

**CamilleL:** it's not working now -- I'll ask my internal techy the husband later =)

**BernieD:** So... I'm hoping that this will help me find new patterns.

**NinaH:** and also help you determine where you might need more templates, which sections only have a few items in them

**BernieD:** And that it will be easier for novices to find their way to a useful design.

**NinaH:** Are there many webquests out there for computer classes in middle schools?

**BernieD:** Could be that there will be an uneven distribution, Nina. Depends on the curriculum in a very abstract way.

**BernieD:** Hundreds.

**BernieD:** Thousands.

**NinaH:** . o O ( Nina laughs )

**GordonB:** I'm finding a hard time putting myself into the situation where I could pick one "verb." I want the kids to do all of them! I guess you need to pick the best for what you want for that topic of study??

**NinaH:** Gordon, I feel the same way, but Bernie stated previously, the "dominant" verb

**BernieD:**

[http://webquest.org/search/webquest\\_results.php?curr=currtech&grade=grade68&Submit=Search+Matrix](http://webquest.org/search/webquest_results.php?curr=currtech&grade=grade68&Submit=Search+Matrix)

**GordonB:** ok

**BernieD:** Yes, G.

**NinaH:** Thanks!



**BernieD:** I think, somehow, that focusing on a single verb at first will provide some clarity for the kids. Too often they lose track of what they're doing.

**GordonB:** yup

**BernieD:** That's all I have. The floor is open.

**CamilleL:** O.K. I finally figured out how to see your new design -- duh as we say here in NY -- seems my preference is for the "Creative design"

**GordonB:** So we can't look at questgarden because it's down?

**BernieD:** Creative tasks are fun. I find myself gravitating towards Design tasks.

**BernieD:** Correct, Gordon. Up tomorrow, I hope.

**CamilleL:** That's the math teacher in you.

**BernieD:** And the engineering major. And instructional designer.

**BernieD:** 7 minutes left before the Kiwanis take over the room.

**BjB** smiles

**WilliamSi:** how about the reverse engineers? We seem to be the boon to all existence.

**BernieD:** Backward design is a good thing.

**CamilleL:** Well thanks for the site. Comes just in time for a workshop I'm doing on webquests at Fordham U on April 1st -- I'm beginning to think I'm the Bernie Dodge of the east now =).

**BernieD:** Just send me my usual 15%.

**CamilleL:** o.k.

**BernieD:** (it's the old zero times table again)

**BernieD:** Other comments or questions?

**WilliamSi:** thanks .....

**NinaH:** Thanks Bernie for the wonderful and informative discussion!

**CamilleL:** not now but where can we reach you later?

**GordonB:** Like you 4 nets for searching!

**BernieD:** [bdodge@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:bdodge@mail.sdsu.edu)

**BjB:** Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to do this, Bernie

**CamilleL:** thanks so much!

**SusanR:** QuestGarden is going to become fee based, Bernie?

**BernieD:** El gusto es mio.

**BernieD:** After Sept 1 it becomes \$20 for a 2 year subscription.

**SusanR:** . o O ( very well worth the price )

**CamilleL:** tis nothing -- teacher web charges \$25, I think.

**BernieD:** All the other stuff will always be free.

**GordonB:** I'll be looking for it this weekend. Thanks and goodnight.

**GordonB** left the room (signed off).

**SusanR:** I like your template offerings..very usable

**BernieD:** Well... back to Dreamweaver and phpmyadmin.

**CamilleL:** will it also be easier to access other teachers' quests?

**JoMC:** We'll be using your expertise in Dr. Coe's class over the next few weeks. Thanks

**BernieD:** Good night all.