

WHAT IS A WEBQUEST?

Webquests are usually defined as any inquiry oriented activity for students where most or all of the resources can be found on the internet. A good webquest will also meet other criteria. Click on the link below to learn more about what characteristics are important in a webquest.

Webquest.org lists important characteristics:

A real WebQuest....

- is wrapped around a doable and interesting task that is ideally a scaled down version of things that adults do as citizens or workers.
- requires higher level thinking, not simply summarizing. This includes synthesis, analysis, problem-solving, creativity and judgment.
- makes good use of the web. A WebQuest that isn't based on real resources from the web is probably just a traditional lesson in disguise. (Of course, books and other media can be used within a WebQuest, but if the web isn't at the heart of the lesson, it's not a WebQuest.)
- isn't a research report or a step-by-step science or math procedure. Having learners simply distilling web sites and making a presentation about them isn't enough.
- isn't just a series of web-based experiences. Having learners go look at this page, then go play this game, then go here and turn your name into hieroglyphs doesn't require higher level thinking skills and so, by definition, isn't a WebQuest.

Tom March and Bernie Dodge were the pioneers and champions of the webquest concept. Here's [Tom March's](#) definition:

"A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes."

This means a good webquest is a collaborative activity in which students cooperate to produce a transformational product. It should not be an product easy to achieve without the webquest format. Students engaged in a webquest use higher level thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to transform the information they acquire into their product.