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What is WebQuest and why is it good for learning?

The WebQuest is a didactic strategy in which the student becomes an active protagonist of his/her own learning process. Let's find out how WebQuest works and what its strengths are.

WebQuest is a teaching strategy that allows students to obtain information from the Internet through a teacher-led process. In other words, WebQuest is a research- and inquiry-oriented learning method that fosters critical thinking and **collaborative learning**.

Suggesting students to carry out a **search on the web** is a widespread and risky practice, since there are many sources available on the web and the teacher cannot have control over the authoritativeness of the materials used by students.

From this point of view, the WebQuest proves to be an invaluable tool because it is the teacher who selects the materials to be used and this allows students to work critically and consistently on the web.

WebQuest: how it works

The WebQuest consists of six steps:

1. **Introduction**: the teacher explains the objectives and aims of the assignment;
2. **Task**: the teacher explains the assignment (problem solving, report, video, research, project implementation, etc.);
3. **Resources**: the teacher gives the sitography (the list of sites to be used to find information) and any criteria for using materials outside of those provided;
4. **Procedure**: the teacher suggests the work steps to follow;
5. **Assessment**: the teacher explains how the students' performance will be assessed;
6. **Conclusion**: students present the work and reflect on the whole process.

WebQuest: the teacher's role

Through the WebQuest, the **teacher** builds a **structure between the student and the internet**, in order to allow the student to concentrate on the task rather than searching for information. The teacher's task will therefore be to organise the work in advance, choosing the most suitable sites for the assignment and formulating the delivery in a clear and comprehensive manner.

At the same time, the teacher assumes the role of **mediator of the interaction and learning processes** of the students and must intervene to encourage dialogue and confrontation in the event of moments of impasse or loss of motivation.

Advantages of WebQuest

The WebQuest is based on the **constructivism** paradigm, according to which knowledge is conceived as the personal construction of the learner. This means that the learner becomes an **active protagonist** of his/her own learning process and does so in a cooperative dimension where he/she is stimulated to interact among peers. In this way, the acquisition of knowledge and skills takes place through cooperation, overcoming conflicts and sharing work and results.

This didactic strategy therefore also involves **transversal competences** and improves the students' ability to analyse, synthesise and evaluate.

The WebQuest also adapts to all disciplinary areas and strengthens the motivation of the students, who respond to this didactic proposal with greater interest than the classic **"erogative" lesson** because they feel they are active protagonists in learning and in the continuous self-evaluation of the methods and products realized.

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