

## WEBQUEST OVERVIEW

**WebQuest Title:** Computers Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

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**WebQuest URL:**

<http://www.eagles.k12.mo.us/sullivan/middle/young/webquests/comphistory/index.htm>

**The Big Question:** Where have we been, where are we now, and where are we going in the world of computers?

### Description

- Grades 6-8
- Subjects: Technology, Social Studies, Science
- Learning Goals:
  - Students will analyze important events and people in computer history over the past 100 years, judge which points are most important, and use those points to create a timeline
  - Students will identify how computers have effected society in the past and present
  - Students will predict how computers will change 30 years from now and how those changes will effect the lives of future generations

### Summary

In this WebQuest, groups of three students will design two different artifacts for an imaginary time capsule. First, they will create a historical timeline showing the history of modern computing over the last 100 years. The timeline will also contain a section briefly describing how we use computers today. In addition to the timeline, the students will also develop and represent predictions of how computers will be used 30 years from now. These artifacts will be designed to give future generations an idea of where we have been, where we are, and where we think we are going in the exciting world of computers.

### Connection to Standards

Missouri State Grade Level Expectations (GLEs)

Strand 8: Impact of Science, Technology and Human Activity

1. The nature of technology can advance, and is advanced by, science as it seeks to apply scientific knowledge in ways that meet human needs (Concept Grades 6, 7, 8)

**A. Designed objects are used to do things better or more easily and to do some things that could not otherwise be done at all** – This standard is met in the “Computers Today” section of the timeline when students are asked to identify how computers affect our daily lives. This is assessed in the “Computers Today” section of the evaluation rubric.

**C. Technological solutions to problems often have drawbacks as well as benefits** – This standard is met when students are asked to make predictions about the future uses of computers and the effects that future development will have on our society. This is assessed in the “Future Predictions” and “Prediction Logic” portion of the rubric.

2. Historical and cultural perspectives of scientific explanations help to improve understanding of the nature of science and how science knowledge and technology evolve over time (Concept Grades 6, 7, 8)

**A. People of different gender and ethnicity have contributed to scientific discoveries and the invention of technological innovations** – This standard is met in the timeline portion of the WebQuest in which students list events, people, and inventions that have affected the history of computers over the past 100 years. It is assessed in the “Historical Points” and “Historical Facts” portion of the rubric.

3. Science and technology affect, and are affected by, society (Concept Grades 6, 7, 8)

**B. Social, political, economic, ethical and environmental factors strongly influence, and are influenced by, the direction of progress of science and technology** – This standard is also met in the “Computers Today” section of the timeline when students are asked to identify how computers affect our daily lives. This is assessed in the “Computers Today” section of the evaluation rubric.

## **Evaluation Results**

In building my WebQuest, it is rather hard to identify a separate “evaluation” process because I continuously evaluated and changed my WebQuest as I went along. I was also very fortunate to have discovered a wonderful tool for creating WebQuests on Bernie Dodge’s own website. The QuestGarden tool was much more than just a template, but rather a step-by-step guide to creating an effective WebQuest. The guide contained questions as you went along to ensure that you were staying on track. As a result, I was constantly reflecting and modifying my material after completing each step. Also, having had experience in this class with evaluating a poorly written WebQuest, it was much easier to keep in mind what was required to be effective. Overall, the creation of this WebQuest was a very cyclical process involving design, evaluation, and modification.

I did receive some excellent feedback from my classmates. I was complimented on the ease of navigation and the scaffolding I included. I also made a few changes based on

their recommendations. First of all, I was able to fix a couple of technical errors like a broken link and a link that was not opening in a new window. Due to the length of content, I also added some navigation aids to the “Process” page at their recommendation. The rest of the changes were simply made for the purpose of clarification.

One of the biggest challenges for me was creating the evaluation rubric. Although I have used rubrics in the past, this was the first one for such a large scale project that I created from scratch. I used the Rubistar.com tool which was a big help, but I still don't know if it is as effective as it could be. I'm sure, however, that my skill in this area will improve with practice. In fact, I was very surprised to realize that the entire process of creating a good WebQuest is very much a skill that has to be practiced. While studying the theory certainly helped me produce a better product than if I had made an attempt before taking this class, I realize that my final WebQuest will still appear rather raw to an experienced WebQuest creator. I look forward to improving my skills in the future.