

WIT 2001; <http://webinstituteforteachers.org>

Managing the Use of the Internet in the Classroom

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

Each of the questions posed in the What is your situation? phase of this module represents one factor influencing how you will utilize the Internet in your classroom. They cannot be discussed separately, for it is the combination of all these factors that determines how you are able to use the Internet.

Now, use the completed questionnaire to consider the options you face in utilizing and managing the Internet in your classroom. The options on this page are grouped by classroom, teachers, computer labs, and activity structures.

Classroom

Your classroom puts limitations on how you can use the Internet. Its size, furniture, number of computers, number of occupants, and connectivity play a role.

The types of activities you do with your students depends on the level of your access to the Internet.

If you have no access to the Internet, you cannot do any Internet activities involving classroom use of the computer. But, even with limited access, such as in a teacher prep area, at home, or in a public library, the Internet can be used to support classroom learning. Downloading images, data, and/or other information relevant to classroom topics and then sharing these with students is one step toward integrating the Internet into your classroom.

Even with no Internet usage by students, the Internet can be used by the teacher to:

- create class web pages with information designed to be accessed by parents from home or at work.
- access resources to support instruction.
- communicate with students, parents, and colleagues via email.
- participate in mailing lists and list serves (requires the use of email).

With the Internet available in the school computer lab only:

- Teachers can create web pages to guide student Internet use, to be published on the school server or some other server (such as the CUIP server).
- Student work can be published on the Web for the world to see, either on the school server or some other server (such as the CUIP server).

- Students can participate in Internet-based educational projects such as Middle Passage, Maya Quest, and GlobaLearn (may require email).
- Classes of students can use the Internet on "Lab Days" to access resources and conduct research (enhanced with student email)
- Teachers can create paper-based guides for student Internet use.

With One Internet-linked PC or Mac in the classroom:

- Teachers may write, maintain, and regularly upload changes to class web pages.
- Teachers may regularly download lesson plans and other resources.
- Teachers and students may access the Internet as a small part of instruction.
- Small groups of students may rotate using the computer as a resource (much like the globe, atlas, encyclopedia, or large dictionary) for class projects.
- Teachers and students may communicate with parents via email.

With One Internet-linked, projected instructor station in classroom:

- Teachers can regularly build Internet-based resources (text, images, multimedia) into lessons.
- Teachers can prepare notes and lesson plans on web for projecting in class, publishing them to the school server or some other server (such as the CUIP server).
- Students can prepare presentations to present to the class, and can publish them to the school server or some other server (such as the CUIP server).

With an Internet-linked computer for every student:

- Email can become a major means of communication among parents, teachers, and students.
- Students can submit their assignments via email or publishing them on the server.
- Class web pages can become the primary communication vehicle - homework, class assignments, assessments, upcoming events, and so on can be posted on these pages.
- Teachers can send assignments and assessments to students via email or by publishing them on the server.
- Eventually, some texts may be accessible via the Web

Teachers

Having more than one teacher (or assistant) in the room can greatly improve classroom management. It is possible, however, to involve students in Internet use even with only one teacher who may be less familiar with the Internet than the students. Proper planning is the key. But even better is for the teacher to get the training s/he needs to become familiar with the tools and resources of the Internet. WIT 2001 is one resource for this training.

The best way to learn how to manage the Internet in the classroom is to collaborate with a teacher who has implemented Internet use in her classroom. Make use of the WIT mentors and participants to make contacts with colleagues who have already used the Internet in their teaching. You may be able to set up a time to observe such classrooms.

CUIP has a number of resources that can assist you. If you need more assistance with basic computer skills or with web searching, contact your CUIP TRA or, if you are not in CUIP, ask your principal to arrange assistance for you.

Computer Labs

If your Internet access is only in the computer lab, collaboration with the computer lab teacher is essential to maximize Internet use by your students. Review your long range plans and choose a big topic (Civil War, dinosaurs, Egypt, transportation, life cycles, and so on) and share your teaching goals on that topic with the computer teacher. Together, you will be able to find web resources that will support your teaching. Once the resources are gathered, you and the computer teacher can plan for your students' learning.

Activity Structures (instructional models)

There are a number of relatively easy-to-manage "activity structures" or general techniques for using the Internet in your teaching. The following models are taken from *Teaching with the Internet: lessons from the Classroom*, by Leu and Leu:

Internet Workshop: The teacher sets a bookmark on student computers (or creates a simple web page with links) and develops a short assignment for students to work on for about 30 minutes (making notes on paper), followed by a reporting activity at the end of the work time. (The reporting time is referred to as the "workshop" and is essential to the success of the Internet activity.)

Internet Project: Teachers create a collaborative project with teachers in other classrooms or schools, in which each classroom reports on its own situation or research and makes comparisons with the situation or research of another classroom.

Internet Inquiry: Develops independent research skills in students as they pursue a question of special interest. Consists of Question, Search, Analyze, Compose, and Share phases.

WebQuests: Often include a web page with Introduction, Task Definition, Description of the Process, Information Resources, Guidance in Organization, Information, and a Concluding Activity. See the Wit modules on WebQuests.

There are a number of other models as well as those you create. Try several; then refine those that work best in your situation!