

Sub theme:
Digital trends

Using interactive whiteboards and WebQuests effectively in class

by Anna Wierstra

Abstract

In ‘Using interactive whiteboards and WebQuests effectively in class’, Anna Wierstra, reports that more and more schools are able to provide technology in the classroom through interactive whiteboards and tablets for example. Students like using IT, but is it always effective? Teacher educators need to be aware of the options available but, more importantly, of how to use technology in the classroom effectively.

This paper looks at two aspects of technology in the classroom: the use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) and WebQuests. Interactive whiteboards are a great tool, but teachers need to be made aware of the risk of a classroom becoming IWB-centred instead of student-centred despite the teacher not speaking at all! What is more, after a while the novelty of an IWB and all its bells and whistles might wear off which means teachers always need to be able to motivate their students and the IWB is simply one of the tools, not the only one. Similarly, using the internet and asking students to do WebQuests for example seems fairly straightforward: give the students some questions, a link, a device to access the link and Bob’s your uncle! It might seem it is light on preparation, but the opposite is true.

For an effective WebQuest, it is important to stage this lesson like for any other lesson, with a warmer, preparation, the task itself, presenting to the class, and evaluation. This allows students to not only do better searches online but also use the information they found which mimics real life.