

This is just some food for thought—from Linda

There are three basic types of web assignments, and they can be mixed and matched with a little creativity and a few inter-changeable parts.

1. Go For It--Deal With It--Bring It Back, (GDB).

When teachers begin to create their own web assignments, they usually begin with **GDBs**. Basically, a **GDB** assignment sends students out to the web to find something, then they do something with it, and finally, they bring it home to the classroom. Whether it's simple information retrieval or taking a virtual field trip, the process is the same.



GDB assignments are the easiest to construct, accomplish, and grade, and students like doing them. Each new assignment opens up another window on the world, and that sure beats "Section Review."

2. Absorb It--Build It--Share It (ABS).

One of the most gratifying educational experiences for students is to publish their own **web page**. **ABS** is fun and can be tailored to any subject and most grade levels. Students especially enjoy having artistic control of web elements such as color scheme, graphics, etc. Also, a web page project is a good exercise to fulfill that "writing across the curriculum" goal. Furthermore, imagine the pride students feel when they realize that the whole world can see what they have created!!!



ABS is a long-range project, but it is easily broken down into measurable units with enough tasks for everyone to have something to do (a.k.a. meeting students' individual needs). The variety of tasks involved in web page design also helps to keep the project from getting stale. Finally, **ABS** becomes a bonus because it can be pursued independently from other class work.

The beauty of **ABS** is that the teacher now has a new teaching tool for next year's class, some valuable experience of what worked and what didn't, and the opportunity to watch a web site grow as each new class updates and expands it.

3. Reach Out, Jump In, Party On (RJP).

It is not uncommon for students to feel trapped and/or isolated. They are "trapped" by things like homework, family chores, and the inability to go where they want, when they want. It should surprise no one that students attempt to escape by spending as much time as possible on the telephone or in chat rooms where they can reach out and communicate.

After awhile, web work can also become a kind of trap if it only involves one-sided action. Even many of the sites labeled "interactive" are nothing more than an illusion, a swindle. Any response to the user is activated by the user him/herself. There's no "inter" about it because there's no real person at the other end to respond.



An RJP assignment effectively utilizes such wonders as e-mail, and online conferences, to allow students to dialogue with a variety of *real* people, with or from whom, they can learn and grow, and students love it.

RJP assignments come in various formats, from simple to sophisticated. One of the best presentations of RJP has been written by Professor Judi Harris. Get her book, *Virtual Architecture: Designing & Directing Curriculum Based Telecomputing*, or visit her online site at

Virtual Architecture: <http://ccwf.cc.utexas.edu/~jbharris/Virtual-Architecture/> .

If you can't exactly visualize what an RJP is, go to the online Chapter 2, where you will find a broad outline of Prof. Harris' RJP categories and models.

Some Other Uses for Classroom Computers

Quick Note:

If you have computers in your classroom, you also need to have an LCD projector. It is an essential tool for any computer based class presentation, and don't settle for, "Just sign it out when you need it."

Half the fun of having computers in your classroom is being able to spontaneously show or demonstrate something to the whole class at the exact moment a question is asked or an interest is voiced. Also, lesson plans are often led astray by things like

fire drills. The day you signed out the LCD won't be the day you need it anyway. Possession *is* important. **You can't use it if you don't have it!**

A partial list of other classroom computer activities include:

- Show and tell web sites
- graphing
- word processing
- playing with graphics (art for report covers, etc.)
- modeling student writing (LCD is great for this)
- peer editing
- group notes
- classroom newsletters/newspapers
- presentation programs (Power Point and Hyper Studio)
- e-mail
- Other???