

Webquest: The year 2004 magazine teacher's guide and evaluation

Topic: News and news stories

Aims:

The aims of this webquest are:

- To encourage learners to read authentic newspaper articles on the Internet
- To familiarise learners with the BBC Archives news site, and to encourage them to return
- To encourage learners to use new vocabulary from these articles in their own writing
- To practise article writing skills
- To practise oral presentation skills
- To encourage small collaborative group work
- To produce a tangible product ('**The Year 2004**' magazine) to show other groups

Level: From upper-intermediate level.

- This webquest is especially suitable for exam preparation classes, where learners need to be able to write brief newspaper articles, or summaries of new events, or to do short oral presentations.

Introduction:

This webquest is based around the BBC Learning English News archive. The stories in the archive are in both text and audio format. This webquest will involve learners in reading and or listening to articles from the BBC News archives, orally presenting a summary of two news articles each, writing two articles each and together producing a magazine called 'The Year 2004'.

Procedure

- Take a few example Sunday newspaper supplement magazines to class. Ask your learners what they are, and if they read them. Which ones do they read?
- Explain to your learners that they are going to work in small groups of 3 people to produce a Sunday supplement- type magazine, which will be called '**The Year 2004**'. The magazine will consist of a number of articles of important events from 2004. They will use the BBC News Archive website to find articles from 2004.

Process 1

- Put the learners in pairs for this activity.

Think back over the year 2004. What important things happened in the news? Make a list of *three* important events that happened in 2004, and compare with a partner. Have you chosen any of the same events?

- Put the learners in groups of 3, and direct them to the [BBC News site](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/archive_2004.shtml) archives for 2004.

Choose two important news stories from the [BBC News site](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/archive_2004.shtml) for each of these categories. You can click on each story's headline to read a bit more about it. http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/archive_2004.shtml

Process 2

- Assign each group members a letter: A, B or C, and ensure they understand that they each need to choose two articles to go with the following categories:

Student A - politics, health

Student B - sport, space exploration

Student C - business, crime

- Encourage the learners to write a short summary in their own words, using at least three key words from the bottom of the article.
- Learners are going to present their four news story summaries to an editorial board. The editorial board is another group in the class. Give them plenty of time to first write their short summaries, and then to practise giving their summaries verbally, before presenting it the editorial board. The editorial board must approve **one** news story per category.

Process 3

- Learners write one article of 200 to 250 words for each of their categories. Help them with language as appropriate, and remind them that they can find out more by clicking on 'Listen to the story', or on 'Read more about this story' at the bottom of the article, and to include their three key words in each article.
- Encourage group members to give each other feedback on their articles.
- Help with rewriting and correcting.
- You may point your learners to photos or illustrations on the Internet which they can use to illustrate their articles. Some suggestions are:

- Yahoo news photos:
<http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=index&cid=705&/>
- News photos website: <http://www.newsphotos.com.au/>
- Reuters: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/photoalbum/?via=lnav>
- Google images: <http://images.google.com>
- BBC photo library: <http://www.bbcresearchcentral.com/photo.html>

Process 4

- Learners need to edit and produce '**The Year 2004**' magazine in the same groups of 3.
- Put all the magazines around the class, and ask learners to look at the others groups' magazines. Conduct open class feedback on the magazines: Which articles appeared in more than one magazine? What differences in style and layout were there?
- You may decide to award a 'Journalist's Prize' to each of the magazines, using categories such as: The best illustrated; The most original layout and design; The longest articles; The most colourful; etc. Ensure that each magazine receives a 'prize' for something!

Evaluation

Encourage learners to fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire, and take them in. You can provide overall feedback on the questionnaires (what people felt they had learnt; what was easiest/most difficult for the majority, etc) in a subsequent class.

Teacher’s Evaluation

You may use the following guidelines to evaluate each ‘**The Year 2004**’ magazine, and to give your learners feedback and an overall mark. If you are using the webquest with exam classes, you may decide to use the relevant Examining Board’s criteria.

	weak 1	average 2	good 3	excellent 4
Summaries	Disorganised and difficult to follow; little data, few conclusions; intrusive errors of vocabulary and grammar; no photos or illustrations	Clearly written, logically organised, including a representative range of facts and some conclusions; grammatical and lexical mistakes do not impede overall intelligibility, few or no photos or illustrations	Carefully planned and checked text, including introduction; a good range of facts, and conclusions; logically linked and accurate in terms of grammar and lexis; good range of vocabulary displayed; good photos or illustrations	Engaging, original and well organised text, consisting of introduction, data (extensive) and conclusion. Few errors of grammar or vocabulary; consistent and appropriate style; photos or illustrations relevant and clear
Presentation	Presentation simply read aloud; not easy to follow, poorly illustrated, and/or under-rehearsed; questions not handled	Presentation organised into stages, clearly illustrated and sufficiently detailed to give a general idea; evidence of rehearsal; some reading aloud, but some improvised “telling”; questions adequately handled	Well organised presentation, with clear rationale, showing evidence of thorough research and rehearsal; attractively illustrated; some reading aloud, but some improvised “telling”; questions handled well	Presentation presented in an engaging, even entertaining, way; technically impressive, well resourced; even distribution of work, each contribution harmoniously linked to make a coherent whole; report delivered with notes but not read aloud; questions handled effectively and spontaneously
Articles	Articles are confused and/or short and/or difficult to follow, poorly researched and/or minimally exemplified; intrusive errors of vocabulary and grammar and/or large chunks copied directly from website	Articles are basic but sufficient to present main arguments; divided into clear sections and generally easy to follow; research not exhaustive but sufficient; grammatical and lexical mistakes do not impede overall intelligibility	Articles are thorough and clearly laid out; research has gone beyond the most basic source and there is ample evidence of original writing; high level of accuracy and a broad lexical range	Articles are exceptionally well argued, often committed, based on thorough research, clearly articulated and accurately expressed
The Year 2004 magazine	Short, clumsily put together; inaccurate to the point of unintelligibility; work not well distributed between group members; little apparent liaison or collaboration, no illustrations or photos	Sufficiently detailed, balanced appraisal, covering all main categories; evidence of sufficient group collaboration even if workload not evenly distributed; grammatical and lexical mistakes do not impede overall intelligibility; few but sufficient illustrations or photos	Detailed, accurately and coherently written; all points covered and some in considerable depth; work well co-ordinated and evenly distributed; well illustrated	Extremely insightful detailed and well-rounded account; balanced and informed; written in engaging, accurate and stylistically appropriate style; visually attractive and original
Total mark.....				