LIST OF SUGGESTIONS AND QUESTIONS TO HELP TEACHERS GENERATE THE TASK

A. March's suggestion

Once you have a topic and some curricular goals in mind, you have to generate the TASK of your WebQuest. To help you with this, first you can follow what Tom March (1999) proposes. So, you should begin by asking yourself:

"What's educationally most interesting about this topic?"

Could it be:

1. Its *parts* and what it's made of?

2. *Opinions* people have about it?

3. How it *functions, happens, or interacts* with other things?

These three approaches may give you an idea of the sort of TASK you could propose for your topic.

B. Dodge's list of questions

On the other hand, Bernie Dodge (1999) provides a list of questions connected with the nature of the topic; so that answering to those questions that are relevant for the specific topic may help us to generate the TASK:

Populations: What collections of relevant things, people, institutions, etc. are there in this topic?

Stories: What stories are there in this topic? (Personal accounts, myths, legends, life stories, anecdotes)

Events: What important events are associated with this topic that are worth knowing about?

Disagreements: What issues in this topic are there disagreements about?

Choices: What kinds of important choices and decisions are associated with this topic?

Principles: What important if-then or cause and effect relationships are there in this topic?

Problems: What are some examples of problems to be solved within this topic?

Complexities: What are some of the difficult to understand ideas or systems within this topic?

The answers obtained in the previous step constitute the raw material for developing the TASK.

Apart from that, Dodge (1999) proposes the following prompts to make us think about a possible TASK in relation to a specific topic:

a. Could you ask your learners *to recreate some important event* in the form of a newspaper account or documentary or play?

b. Could you ask learners to *compile a database of important items*? An address book of important people or places? A calendar of important events? *A collection of* stories, jokes, how-to's, advice?

c. If there was a compilation of data about individual people or events or institutions, could you ask your learners to *make some generalizations about the data,* or to look for patterns in it?

d. Does anyone who works with this topic *act like a detective*? Could you recreate a mystery or puzzle that would let your students experience the puzzle-solving process?

e. Is there some *product your students could design*? Some process or event they could plan?

f. Could you ask your learners to *make a decision, a choice* among competing alternatives? A rating?

g. Could your students *take the information in this topic and move it into a completely different form*, like a poem or a painting? A flowchart or org chart?

h. Can you *put students into the roles of people with contending beliefs* or interests who have to come to some degree of consensus? Who?

i. Could your students *create a metaphor* for some complex thing and explain it?

j. Could your learners *make something new* by combining old things in new ways?

k. *Are there predictions your learners could make*? Hypotheses and hunches they could test?

l. Could you ask your students to *walk in someone else's shoes* by creating a fictional journal? Could you ask them to become someone else and portray them around a meeting table?

m. Is there some *form of communication (written, oral, multimedia) that is used by adults* who work with this topic that you could ask your students to create?

n. Are there *individuals who should be interviewed* by your students?

o. Could your students be tasked with *trying to change someone's opinion*? Whose?