THE K. PATRICIA CROSS ACADEMY

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Teaching Technique 32

Online Resource Scavenger Hunt

ACTIVITY TYPE	TEACHING PROBLEM ADDRESSED	LEARNING TAXONOMIC LEVEL
• Active/Engaged Learning • Game	• Low Motivation/Engagement	• Application: Problem Solving • Caring • Foundational Knowledge

Online Resource Scavenger Hunt

In an *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt (ORSH),* students use the Internet to engage in fact-finding and information-processing exercises using instructor-specified library and Internet sources.

1 Clarify your teaching purpose and learning goals for the *ORSH*

2 Identify the learning task's underlying problem and craft the prompt

3 Set assignment parameters

4 Develop a plan for learning assessment or grading

5 Communicate assignment instructions to students

6 Implement the technique

7 Reflect upon the activity and evaluate its effectiveness

Step-By-Step Instructions

In this section we provide you with guidance on each of the seven steps involved as you consider this technique.

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

Because *Online Resource Scavenger Hunts* are so versatile, you'll want to carefully consider your reason for using them so that you can best target the assignment to help students achieve the learning goals. Because the hunt prompts can be crafted in a way that is suited to a wide range of contexts, this technique is appropriate across disciplines and fields. It can be used as an individual or team assignment.

The *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt* allows students to achieve multiple learning goals. It challenges learners to locate and think about course-related information as they explore essential resources that will be useful or required for their future study. In addition, the answers they find to the questions expand their foundational knowledge and understanding of content in an engaging activity that also helps them to become more effective users of research resources. In addition, students typically enjoy the assignment, so it is a good way to hook them in to caring about the content.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

- Determine the type of knowledge you want students to develop through doing the *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt.*

- Choose a set of resources that are relevant to the content area.

- Then create a list of items that students can search for within the resources you have selected.

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

Decide whether students will answer the prompts simply by listing the answer or item, or whether they should write in more complete sentences. Determine how they will access the hunt list and whether they will turn in the assignment and if so, how.

STEP 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OR GRADING

You can score this assignment with a simple plus or minus system (accurate or inaccurate). You can use it for a grade or alternately count it as evidence of student participation.

Step-By-Step Instructions (CON'T)

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS

A handout with instructions as well as a list of the scavenger hunt items is typically a good idea.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

- Identify journals, websites, or databases that students should know to effectively complete course assignments.

- Find at least one specific fact or detail within each resource that is beneficial for learners and construct a corresponding question.

- Create additional questions that challenge students to process the information.

- Craft final questions that require students to evaluate which resource would be best for a specific task.

- Create an assignment that includes directions and questions and distribute the assignment to students.

STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

When reflecting on the activity and how effective it was, consider the following questions:

- Did the technique match the course learning goals and objectives?

- Did it meet my goals for this learning module?

- Was it appropriate for the students?

- Did the technique keep the students engaged?

- Did it promote student learning?

- Did it provide me with information about student understanding?

If you answer yes to all or most of these questions, next consider how you might improve the activity for the next use.

Support Materials

The materials in this section are intended to help you with the process of implementing this technique.

SAMPLE SCAVENGER HUNT QUESTIONS

Consider the following sample questions on page 6 to help you implement *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt* in your class.

SAMPLE SCAVENGER HUNT QUESTIONS
From Technology and Higher Education
(to ensure a basic computer knowledge and common vocabulary for the course)

- What are at least 4 components that all computers have in common?

- What is the Internet?

- What is a database?

- What is a search engine?

- Why is bandwidth important to Internet users?

- What is a hotspot?

- What is a network?

- What is a firewall?

- What is a bit? How many bits in a byte?

- How many megabytes of data can a factory-made audio CD hold?

- What does HTML stand for and what is it?

- What is a blog?

- What is social media?

- What is Web 2.0?

- What is a podcast?

- What are some reasons for getting a 404 error?

- What is spyware?

- What is a DoS attack?

- Who put the @ symbol in email addresses and why did he do it?

- What is net neutrality? Why does it matter?

- What is the digital divide? Why does it matter?

- What is a digital native?

Technique Template

Following are two templates to assist you as you think through how you might implement this technique in your own class. The first is a completed template, providing an example of how Claire Major adapted *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt* in her course, *Technology in Higher Education*. The second is a blank template for you to fill out to tailor this technique for your course.

Technique Template

THE K. PATRICIA
CROSS
ACADEMY

Sample *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt* Completed Technique Template: Content from Claire Major

Technology in Higher Education
Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS

What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

This is a graduate level elective course intended for students who will work as higher education administrators. I have approximately 15 students per semester. The course meets once per week for 3 hours, and I use a course Learning Management System (LMS) for assignments and grading.

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

Why are you choosing this technique? What do you hope to accomplish?

Students need to have some background knowledge about technology to be successful in the course, including some historical knowledge, familiarity with basic terms, and familiarity with current resources. I use Online Resource Scavenger Hunt as an engaging activity to ensure that they have this foundational knowledge.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

What is the question you want learners to address, or problem you want them to solve?

I choose prompts that take students to the relevant content. The prompts ask students to find individuals, dates, definitions, and so forth.

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

What are the assignment logistics? For example, will this be assigned individually or is it group work? How long will the assignment take? Will students be submitting a product? What materials, resources, or additional information do you anticipate needing?

I typically have students complete this assignment as an out of class activity. They complete the work as individuals and post their responses to the course LMS.

STEP 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OR GRADING

If you decide to assess learning, how will you determine that learning has occurred? For example, will you use a simple +/check/- grading system? If you use a rubric, will you use an existing one or create one? What will be your criteria and standards?

To assess student work, I use a simple plus (accurate) or minus (inaccurate) scoring system. I count this assignment as a small percentage of their course grade.

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS

How will you communicate assignment parameters to students? For example, through a handout? A prompt on a presentation slide? Assignment instructions in your online course?

I create a handout in a word processing file and share it with students. It has instructions as well as the scavenger hunt items for them to complete. I've included a version I've used in the past in the "support materials" earlier in this document.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

How will you adapt steps/procedures for your students? Are there any additional logistical aspects to consider?

To implement the activity, I announce it in class and tell students how to access the document in the LMS. I ask them to complete the work and post it as an assignment prior to the next class. In class, we compare answers and talk about any differences.

STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Note: This step will be completed after you have implemented the technique.
Did this technique help you accomplish your goals? What worked well? What could have been improved? What might you change if you decide to implement the activity again?

Before using the assignment each year, I assess the questions for whether they are still relevant. After the assignment, I look for any questions multiple students had trouble responding to and try to determine where the problem arises. I also talk with the students about the value of the assignment. They always seem to enjoy it and appreciate what they learn through the activity.

Technique Template

THE K. PATRICIA CROSS ACADEMY

This template is intended for use when planning to implement *Online Resource Scavenger Hunt* in your class. Fill in the blanks below, and use the information provided elsewhere in the Instructor's Guide to assist you in your thinking.

_____

Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS

What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

Why are you choosing this technique? What do you hope to accomplish?

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

What is the question you want learners to address, or problem you want them to solve?
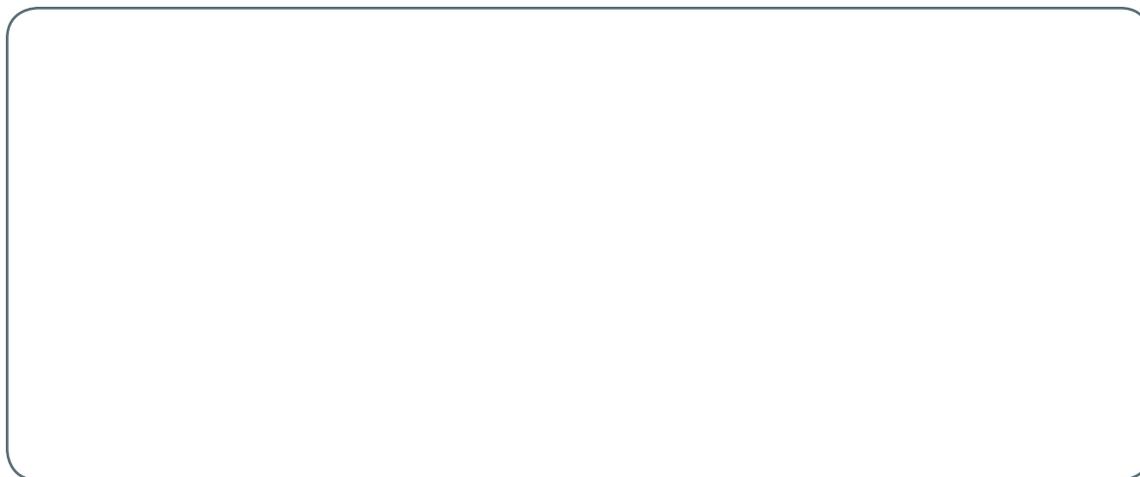
STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

What are the assignment logistics? For example, will this be assigned individually or is it group work? How long will the assignment take? Will students be submitting a product? What materials, resources, or additional information do you anticipate needing?
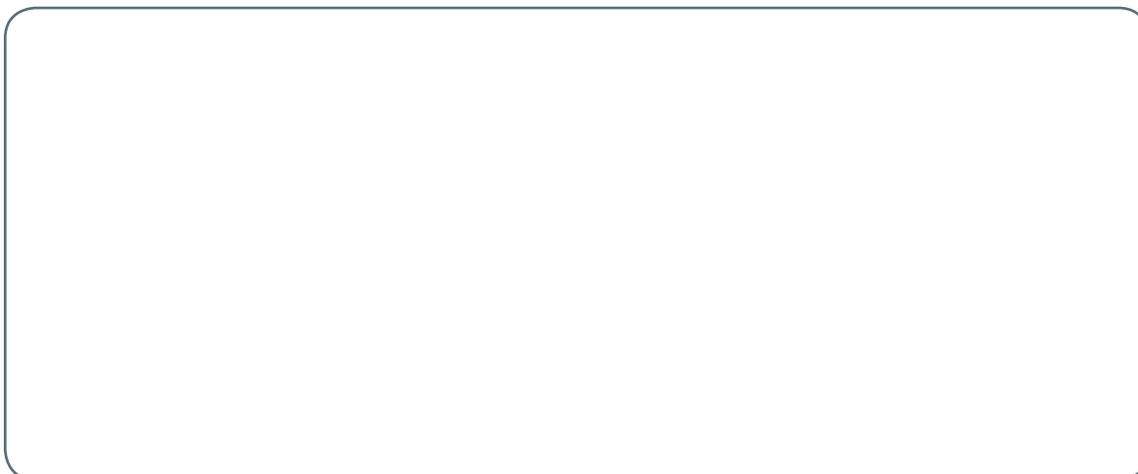
STEP 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OR GRADING

If you decide to assess learning, how will you determine that learning has occurred? For example, will you use a simple +/check/- grading system? If you use a rubric, will you use an existing one or create one? What will be your criteria and standards?

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS

How will you communicate assignment parameters to students? For example, through a handout? A prompt on a presentation slide? Assignment instructions in your online course?
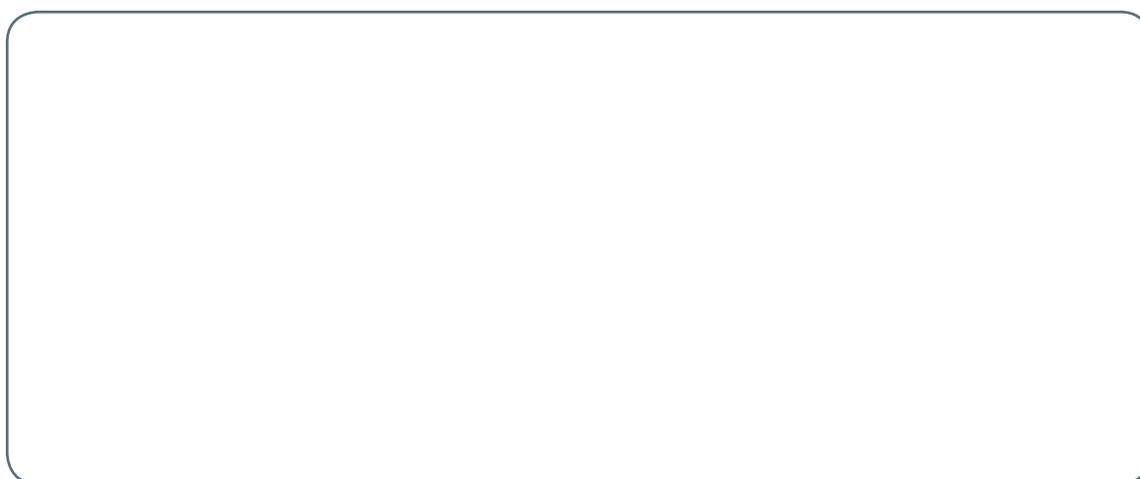
STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

How will you adapt steps/procedures for your students? Are there any additional logistical aspects to consider?
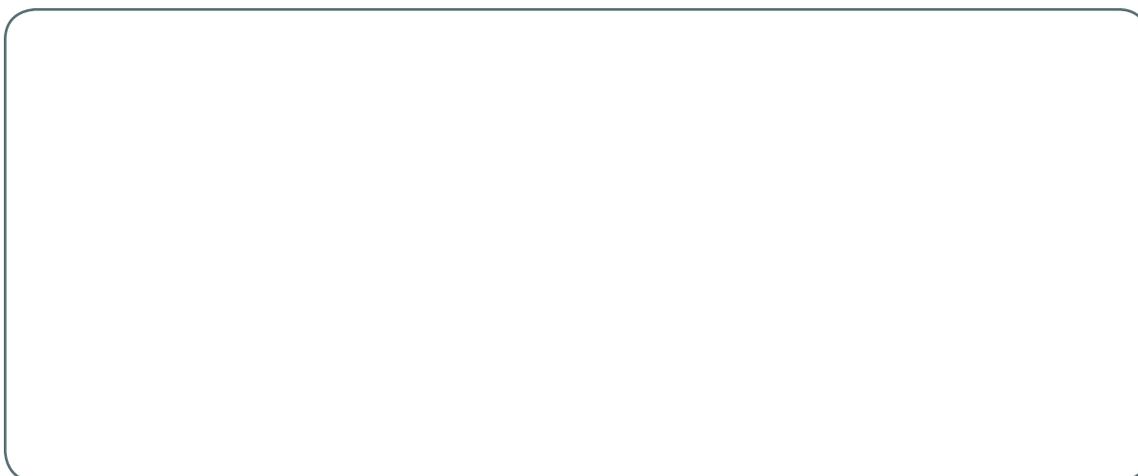
STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Note: This step will be completed after you have implemented the technique.
Did this technique help you accomplish your goals? What worked well? What could have been improved? What might you change if you decide to implement the activity again?

References and Resources

PRIMARY SOURCE

Content for this download was drawn primarily from "Student Engagement Technique 46: Resource Scavenger Hunt" in *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty* (Barkley, 2010), pp. 345–346. It includes material that was adapted or reproduced with permission. For further information about this technique, including examples in both on campus and online courses, see the primary source:

Barkley, E. F. (2010). *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

CITATIONS AND ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Watkins, R. (2005). *75 e-Learning activities: Making online learning interactive.* San Francisco: Pfeiffer, pp. 147–149

COPYRIGHT