

Creating a Web Treasure Hunt

A Web Treasure Hunt can look like lots of things. It could be a complicated web page or it could be a simple Word document. Basically, the goal is the same: expose students to some very simple and scaffolded web searching.

It can be a great introduction to the internet as an information source for younger students. It should be noted however that for higher-order thinking skills, students should progress from a Treasure Hunt (info gathering) to things like Webquests (info gathering, evaluating and synthesising) and Problem Based Learning (question setting, critical literacy).

Making a Treasure Hunt using Word

We are going to create a simple Word document that contains questions relating to a central theme. Each question includes a 'hyperlink' to a selected website that, with a little bit of scanning, will provide the student with the answer.

Step 1: Come up with a theme and search for online resources.

Let's say we are going to do the Soccer World Cup. We could come up with our questions first and then search for the answers using Google. I prefer the flexibility of having a few ideas in my head and going out and finding some great websites which in the process refine and reshape my original ideas.

Either way, unless you have some good links already you will need to use a search engine like Google. Use smart searching techniques – simply typing in 'Soccer World Cup' yields over 100 million 'hits'. Adding a keyword like 'History' or 'Fixtures' or 'Stadiums' greatly refines the results you will get.

The keyword 'Kids' often helps find sites directed at children. For instance, searching for 'parliament' will lead to sites aimed more at adults while searching for 'parliament kids' should give you sites much more relevant for young people.

Another useful search term is FAQ or 'Frequently Asked Questions'. Lots of sites contain FAQs – bite sized chunks of the most important information relating to a topic. Try a search for 'parliament faq' (note: a Google search is not case sensitive – you can type in upper or lower case).

Google's Advanced Search tool expands your searching power even further, allowing you to search using a range of keyword combinations and 'boolean terms'.

The screenshot shows the Google Advanced Search interface. At the top, the Google logo is followed by 'Advanced Search' and links for 'Advanced Search Tips' and 'About Google'. Below this, there are several search criteria sections:

- Find results**: A table with four rows: 'with all of the words' (world cup 2006), 'with the exact phrase' (guus hiddink), 'with at least one of the words' (soccerroos), and 'without the words' (empty). A 'Google Search' button is to the right.
- Language**: Return pages written in English.
- File Format**: Only return results of the file format any format.
- Date**: Return web pages updated in the anytime.
- Occurrences**: Return results where my terms occur anywhere in the page.
- Domain**: Only return results from the site or domain (with an example: e.g. google.com, .org).
- Usage Rights**: Return results that are not filtered by license.
- SafeSearch**: No filtering (selected) or Filter using SafeSearch.

Step 2: Open up Microsoft Word.

Don't worry about the formatting (the 'pretty stuff') yet – that can come later. Assuming you have found a few useful sites, now it is time to put together a page of questions with 'hyperlinks' to where students will find the answers.

Simply type in a question (see below).

1. What is the nationality of Australian Soccerroos Coach Guus Hiddink?

Minimise Word and open the website where you found the answer to this question.

Web
address or
'URL'

Minimise
Word

Copy the website's
address or URL by
highlighting it with your
mouse.

Right-click on the
highlighted link and
choose 'Copy'.

Now minimise the web
page and re-open
Word.



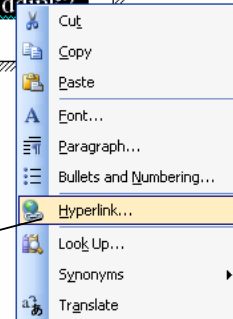
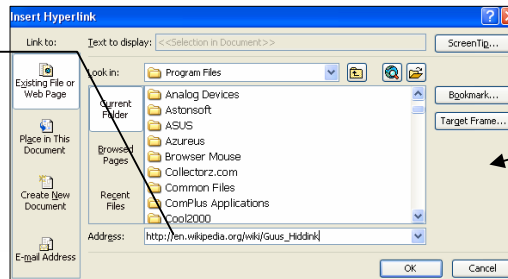
Step 3: Making the Link.

Highlight the question you typed earlier. Right-click on the question and choose 'Hyperlink'.

1. What is the nationality of Australian Soccerroos Coach Guus Hiddink?

In the 'Address' box
paste in the URL you
just copied. The best
way is pressing CTRL
V on your keyboard.

Click OK.



Your question text should now be linked and look something like this:

[1. What is the nationality of Australian Soccerroos Coach Guus Hiddink?](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guus_Hiddink)

You can test your link by holding down CTRL on your keyboard as you click it.

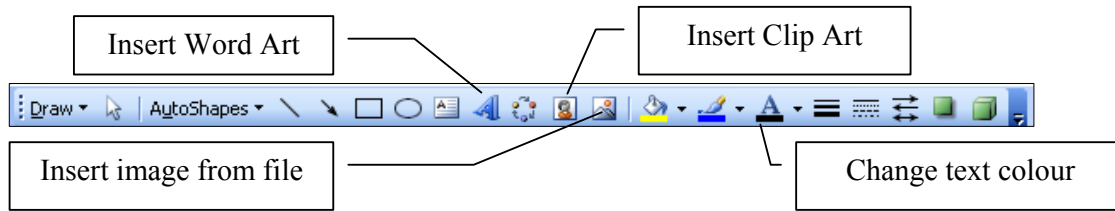
Repeat this process until you have about 10 questions, all linked to the websites where you want your students to visit.

Try to vary the sites they visit so they don't get all their information from one site only. Also remember that not all information, particularly on the internet, is text based. Ask a few questions relating to images or multimedia elements. For example, one task might be to use an online currency converter to work out how much our Dollar is worth in another country.

Step 4: Formatting and Saving the Page.

When you have finished your questions, you should have a fairly plain looking text-based Word document.

Use a combination of clip art, your own images and pictures copied and pasted from the web – with credits of course ☺ - to make your Treasure Hunt look a lot more interesting.



Format your text by highlighting it and changing it to a more interesting font.

Finally, make a more striking heading by using the 'Insert Word Art' feature.

Having said all of that, don't go overboard with funky borders and things you would normally put on a printable document because the next step involves turning it into a different kind of document altogether.

Step 5: Publishing the Treasure Hunt as a Web Document.

Now you should have a Word document but as we know, Word documents are for printing. What good is that going to do us when we want our students to be answering questions by clicking on links?

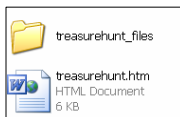
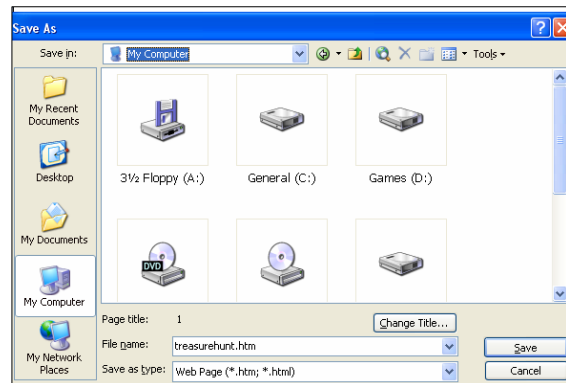
We need to convert our static Word document into a dynamic Web Page. Fortunately this is easier than it sounds.

Go to File > Save As.

Give your file a name like 'treasurehunt' or whatever you like.

In the 'Save as Type' section choose Web Page (htm, html). Click 'Save'.

This will create 2 files: The html page that you want your kids to be able to access and a folder containing any images and data you used in constructing your Treasure Hunt.



Believe it or not, you have just made a web site! Clicking on treasurehunt.htm will open the activity. These 2 files you just created must be together so they can read from each other, so it might be a good idea to put them inside their own folder.

The only thing to do now is work out how you are going to get your students to access the treasurehunt.htm document. The obvious way is to 'upload' the files so they can be accessed on the World Wide Web. However, unless you are experienced with this, you may find it a bit daunting.

Depending on how your school network is set up you might have a shared drive that all users can access. It is then simply a matter of copying your files and pasting them into a location on the share drive and alerting your students where to find them.