

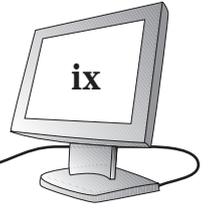


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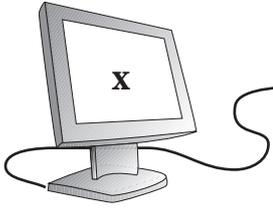
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Preface

This book was written for classroom teachers, by a classroom teacher, and is designed with direct classroom applications in mind. The material on these pages is geared mostly for the advanced online user, the teacher who regularly incorporates Internet-supplied material into the classroom curricula. Use of the Internet as a supplier of curricular material—the ultimate teacher resource centre—has become increasingly prevalent in the past couple of years. The virtual field trips described in these pages are designed to take the teacher to the next step, using the Internet as a teaching tool unto itself and as an integrated piece of the teaching process.

Virtual field trips can be as extensive or as brief as the teacher desires. The amount of preparation that is required is directly related both to the comfort level that the teacher has with the Internet and to the individual's goals and time availability. Please note, however, that the discussion within this book is explained step by step so that the experiences can be followed by all teachers, regardless of their previous experiences. Whereas some of the procedures appear lengthy, the creation of virtual field trips is quite simple once the teacher becomes familiar with the process. Do not let the amount of perceived work deter you. Look at the situation as being similar to the writing of lesson plans. For instance, in teacher preparatory classes, lesson plans are required to be long, extensive and covering every conceivable aspect of the teaching experience. As the student becomes a full-time teacher, the lesson plans become more compact and ultimately contain only the information necessary for that particular teacher. The same philosophy should be applied and kept in mind with the material within these chapters. The more familiar and experienced the teacher becomes with creating virtual field trips, the easier and quicker they are to create.



Finally, the overall philosophy of this book is to *educate*, not *train*, teachers in how to create and integrate virtual field trips into their personal classroom curricula. The key is for teachers to learn how to adapt the material to their own personal teaching styles and educational environments and to make the material a natural part of their overall teaching repertoires.

Scott Mandel, Ph.D.
Van Nuys, CA 1999



Advantages of Virtual Field Trips

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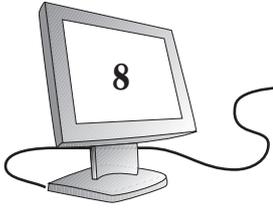
The Human Experience: Adapting to Different Climates, Topographies and Modern Speeds

The students enter the computer lab and immediately move into their cooperative learning groups. Their topic of study involves an investigation of how people adapt to various climates and topography in their quest to create adequate living conditions. Within this particular cooperative learning lesson, the students' immediate task is to determine the types of clothing and equipment necessary to bring with them for a hypothetical trip to various spots around the globe. They must make their decisions based only on the climate and topography of that particular location. The source of their material is a virtual field trip experience using the Internet. The students are to synthesise the information and material they acquire into their overall study of human adaptability.

Prior to the session, their teacher, Mr. Lopez*, created a virtual field trip Web site and uploaded it onto the school computer network. The site includes links to previously selected Internet ad-

* All names of teachers are fictional





dresses for locations that visually exemplify the material he wants his students to experience.

Each two-student team logs onto the Web site that appears as a weather map of the world. Various sites are designated as places for students to click on and visit. Each predetermined location on the map is linked to an Internet address containing a virtual Web site approximating the conditions the students would find at that particular location. The groups determine the various areas to visit, based on their personal choices. They each have a topic sheet that contains subject areas and concepts to search and answer, which forms the basis of a later classroom discussion. Some the various groups' experiences include the following:

Group 1

One group clicks onto the Bahamas and discovers a hurricane, thanks to the Web site USA TODAY WEATHER—A TYPICAL NORTHERN HEMISPHERE HURRICANE. At this site, students learn the meteorological steps involved in the development of hurricanes, see pictures of hurricanes in action, explore the long-recorded history of hurricanes, and investigate other variations of serious weather conditions such as tornadoes and thunderstorms.

Group 2

Another group visits one of the islands in the Pacific rim and explores an active volcano, courtesy of the site HAWAIIAN VOLCANO OBSERVATORY. This site presents students with pictures of various currently active volcanoes and the destruction they incur, especially from lava and earthquakes. The site also includes a section describing how volcanoes work and the general hazards posed by volcanoes to cultures that live in their vicinity.

Group 3

A third group faces the harshness of one of the world's numerous deserts through the Web site DESERT LIFE IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST. The site describes in both text and pictures the status of various arid regions around the world, the animal and plant life that the region supports, and the fate of that particular area due to human encroachment.