

WebQuest - Teacher's notes

New York

1 Brainstorming - New York, New York!

Start off by writing 'New York' on the board in your classroom. Give your students two minutes to write down everything this makes them think about. After two minutes collate the ideas of your class and then tell your students to check out the following website and see if their words and phrases are mentioned. They should scan the text quickly.

[http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761576416/New_York_\(city\).html](http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761576416/New_York_(city).html)
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/north-america/usa/new-york-city>

2 Introductory quiz

Put your students into pairs (or small groups) and ask them to look at the eight questions about New York. Do they know any of the answers already? Then direct them to the websites and tell them to answer the questions (tell them they will need to use both websites) and set a time limit (eight to ten minutes). Alternatively, tell them it is a race to see which pair or group can answer the questions first:

Key

1. Who was the first European to visit the area of New York?

Giovanni da Verrazano

2. Which two Native American groups inhabited the area?

Algonquian and Iroquois

3. What is the name of the river in New York? Who was it named after?

Hudson River (led by explorer Henry Hudson)

4. What was the original name of New York?

New Amsterdam

5. Who designed the Brooklyn Bridge?

John A. Roebling & Washington A. Roebling

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6. When was the Brooklyn Bridge opened?
1883
7. In what decade did immigrants from Puerto Rico start to arrive?
1950s
8. Who was Rudolph Giuliani?
Mayor (Republican) of NYC from 1993 to 2001

[http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761576416/New_York_\(city\).html](http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761576416/New_York_(city).html)

3 Web information hunt

a)

Divide your class into five groups – Q, B, S, X and M – and then direct each group to look at their section of the website:

If you are Q look at [Queens](#)

If you are B look at [Brooklyn](#)

If you are S look at [Staten Island](#)

If you are X look at [the Bronx](#)

If you are M look at [Manhattan](#)

Tell them they need to read through the texts and write down five interesting pieces of information. After ten minutes create new groups with one student from each of the groups above. Then tell them to exchange the information they have found out and see if they have discovered similar types of information (i.e. the population of the borough).

b)

Finally, ask each (new) group to try and answer the six questions below:

1. Which borough has the largest population? **Brooklyn**
2. In which borough is Wall Street? **Manhattan**
3. In which borough is the Yankee Stadium? **The Bronx**
4. In which borough are the two main airports? **Queens**
5. Which is the only borough (of the five) on the mainland? **The Bronx**
6. How would people travel from Staten Island to Manhattan? **By ferry**

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4 Group planning - a day in NYC!

Ask your students if any of them have ever visited New York. Ask those who have if they can remember the names of any places they visited. Write any useful suggestions on the board. (E.g. Statue of Liberty.) Divide your students into small groups (between two and four). Explain to your students that they will use the website below to plan a day in New York. Tell them their day will begin at 9.00 am and end at 8pm, so they need to think carefully about the timing of their activities. Explain they will have a budget of \$400 – (around £200) per person. Ask students to consider the following questions:

1. Who will you go to New York with?
2. Which places will you visit?
3. How long you will need to spend in each place?
4. How much will the day cost? (Include transport, cost of tickets and entry fees, food and anything else you will buy.)

<http://www.theinsider.com/nyc/index.html>

5 Listening - Tom's Diner

Suzanne Vega is a New York songwriter. Her most famous song to date is called *Tom's Diner*. Suzanne Vega's songs often reflect life in her hometown of New York. One song, *Tom's Diner*, was actually written in Tom's restaurant at 2880 Broadway, New York.

Ask your students to use the following website to listen to different versions of the song *Tom's Diner*. Your students will be able to access the song lyrics from this website. Click on 'music' then 'MP3s A-Z' then *Tom's Diner*.

Another activity you might want to try is 'Musical Bingo'. Write out cards with between six and nine words per card taken from the song. Hand out a card to each student and explain that when they hear a word on their card they should cross it off. If they cross off all their words they should shout 'Bingo'. Play the song.

<http://www.suzannevega.com>

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6 Grammar - present continuous and present simple

This is a simple activity for students at intermediate level. The song *Tom's Diner* is full of actions and uses the present continuous to talk about what is happening, Do your students know when to use the present continuous and when to use the present simple? Ask your students to choose the correct sentence from each pair:

Answers

1. b) I am sitting in the diner.
2. a) She is pulling up her stockings.
3. a) I like listening to music.
4. b) It is always nice to see you.
5. a) It is time to catch the train.

Once your students have completed this task they could write three or four pairs of sentences themselves using the present continuous and present simple. These could then be passed to another student to 'test'.

Alternatively, use the song (*Tom's Diner*) as the basis of a grammar writing activity.

7 Extra websites

Tours

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/hidden/index.html>

Click on 'enter' and find out about the real New York.

News

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Up-to-date news from the New York Times. If you want to read the news in-depth then you'll need to create an account (but it's free).

Essential NY

<http://www.essentialbigapple.com>

Bright and brash, this website reflects many peoples' image of New York. Lots of information, including an excellent section under 'Tourist attractions menu'.

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History

<http://www2.thingstodo.com/states/NY/history.htm>

Nice simple history page which also includes a timeline.

Suzanne Vega

<http://www.suzannevega.com>

Find out more about this inspirational song.

Music

<http://www.vigilcd.org/index.htm>

A selection of songs written and played by New York songwriters (led by Suzanne Vega) focusing on the events of 09/11/2001.