Chapter 9

Web-Based Resources
for Teaching

Learning Objectives. This chapter examines how resources found on the Internet may be molded into viable instructional materials matching specific lesson objectives with learning strategies. In support of those objectives, readers who complete Chapter Nine will be able to:

- Explain the history of the Internet from the perspectives of its content, organization, and technologies.
- Discuss the most popular applications of the web for teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate a mastery of web page fundamentals.
- Combine these skills with the use of technology resources harvested from the Internet to produce web-based materials (i.e., Basic web pages and the virtual tour) for teaching.

   Lesson Plan Template. Refer to **Appendix C, Distance Learner Lesson Plan Template** as the chapter discusses **Focus on Resources** as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Distance lesson plan template (focus on resources)
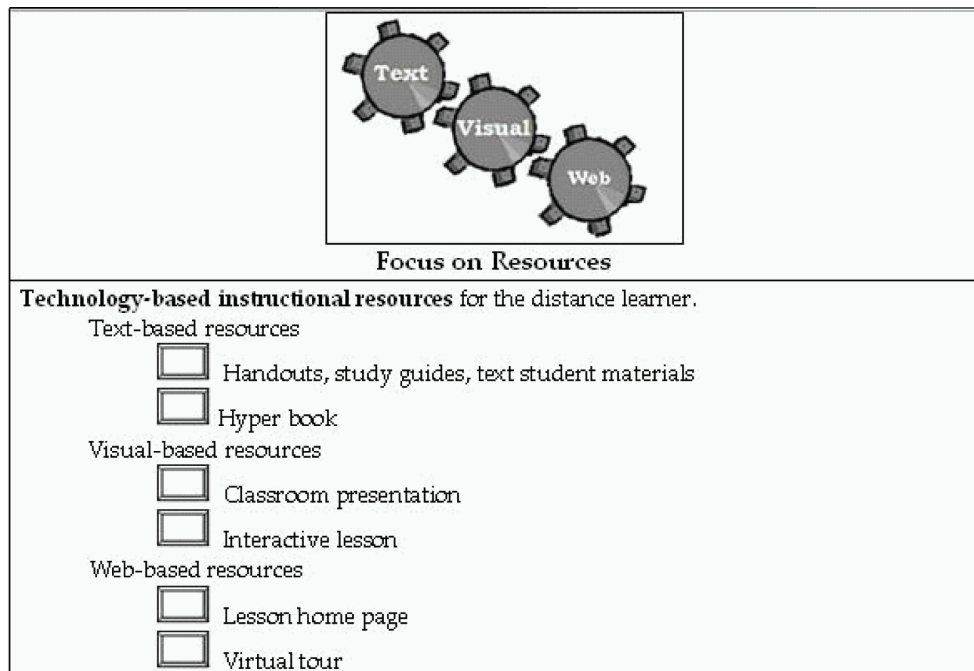
INTRODUCTION

Whether the instructor prefers handouts, study guides, and workbooks or overheads, 35mm slides, and projected images, the fact remains that the Internet is much too valuable a resource to dismiss as a passing fad. Yet, if the Internet is to reach its full potential as a teaching and learning strategy, educators must come to know and understand not only how to find these resources but how to create them as well.

Over the past 10 years since web browsers first became popular, a rivalry emerged among the leading competitors to become the single provider of web browsers in the industry. Mosaic, Netscape, Internet Explorer, Safari, Mozilla/ Firefox, and others remain in an on-going battle for supremacy of the web browsing public. Unfortunately, users of the Internet often become victims as companies compete – and such is the case with browsers and authoring tools.

In the beginning, browsers did not come bundled with authoring tools – there simply were no authoring tools. Developers were hostage to the html programming language and its string of tags, commands, and scripts. One of the first packages to offer WYSIWYG authoring was Netscape's Composer followed closely by Internet Explorer's Front Page. Composer was included free-of-charge by Netscape. Front Page began as a costly add-on, but was eventually packaged free along with its browser to chip away at Netscape's dominance in the marketplace. Simultaneously, other vendors (Adobe's Dreamweaver being the most prominent) were delivering their own proprietary products for designing web pages at a considerable cost to the user.

Sadly, the situation has deteriorated further. Netscape Composer is no longer bundled with its browser. Microsoft has disconnected Front Page from its Explorer package, and frankly, the rising cost of authoring web pages is no longer a consideration for any of the vendors.

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