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# Use of an online discussion board to improve diagnostic skills

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**Use of an online discussion board to improve diagnostic skills**, Terry A Rustin, MD. UTHSC-H School of Nursing, Houston, TX, 77030.

We have used the "Discussion Board" feature of an online classroom application (Blackboard) to present diagnostic questions for our advanced practice nursing students in their course on differential diagnosis. This module of the course (which also includes didactic lectures on each organ system, training in the techniques of the physical examination, critical reading of journal articles, case studies with standardized patients, and history-taking with actual patients), introduces the students the skill of searching the literature for information, correlating that information with clinical information obtained from the patient, and finalizing a diagnosis. We present here a selection of these questions with representative student responses.