

Searching the Web

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Students Using the Internet for Student Web Searches

Students will need to understand how to navigate the Web through guided practice adjusted to the age and temperament of the student. When introducing the browser window to your students, focus on a minimum of buttons. The home and back buttons are good for starting. The following sites are to be used directly by students to develop navigation skills.

- **<http://www.EnchantedLearning.com/Webtipsforchildren.html>**
Easy Web Tips to Teach Children.
Introduces the mouse, links, patience, resizing the window, scrolling, and going back a page. This is an interactive training segment located at the Enchanted Learning site.
- **<http://www.burlco.lib.nj.us/Classes/Intforkids/>**
Internet for Kids.
Introduces the mouse, links, and navigation techniques. Interactive. Created by the Burlington County Library in New Jersey.
- **<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/welcome/>**
Welcome To The Web: The Internet.
The first interactive unit, The Internet, introduces how to move around with links and the back button. The second unit explains what to do at sites with a guestbook and gives other safety points. The third unit is a guided practice for using a browser and bookmarks.

Teaching Internet use can be a separate unit or series of lessons, or taught on an as-needs basis. The following sites can be used by the teacher in planning the teaching of internet literacy to students.

- **<http://becybersmart.org>**
CyberSmart!
Free non-sequential curriculum with 65 stand alone lessons. Five strands: safety, manners, advertising, research (search tools, techniques and evaluating sites), and technical aspects. Lessons are designated for k-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8. Maintained. Pages have a 2006 copyright.
- **<http://pbskids.org/license/>**
Get Your Web License.
Students can earn a printable PBS Kids Web License by answering multiple choice questions about safe internet use. Students in grades 3-6 can use independently, but structure the activity so that they read the signs.
- **<http://www.computerlab.kids.new.net/internet.htm>**
Internet Island.
Colorful site with brief descriptions of browser and navigation terms. Students in grades 3-5 can use independently, grade 2 with assistance. The site is one continuous page with in-page links which can be confusing.
- **<http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/rules/kidinternet.htm>**
Rules in Cyberspace.
Authorship by the US Department of Justice adds authority to this tool for teaching cyber-ethics. For elementary & middle school, but the tone of some parts will seem kiddish to older students while the level of other parts is above the younger (consider for grades 4 through 8). These pages from 2002, although the site was updated January 2006.
- **http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/wa_teachers/safe_passage_teachers/index.cfm**
Safe Passage.
Information to help the teacher understand the benefits and risks of online experiences: Web

site browsing, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, and file-sharing. Includes practical suggestions for using online experiences in the classroom. This site is for teachers, but has some links to materials students use directly. These pages have a 2005 copyright.

- **<http://disney.go.com/surfswell/index.html>**
Surf Swell Island.
An adventure game format with three mini-games covering privacy, viruses, and netiquette. Teacher Guide has suggestions for "customizing" to use with students from kindergarten through grade 6.
Note: Another Disney site < <http://disney.go.com/cybersafety/> > presents three stories (interactive cartoon), each with an online safety moral about email and chat room. Designed for younger students to read with an adult.
- **http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/tech078.shtml**
Surfing for the Best Search Engine Teaching Techniques.
An Education World article discussing when to teach students about searching the internet. Links to resources and tutorials. Updated February 2005.
- **<http://www.ncsu.edu/midlink/tutorial/web.search.strat.html>**
Useful Skills for Your Web Treks.
How-to for middle school students on saving and using graphics or text from a Web page, including copyright information.
- **<http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/tg/>**
Yahooligans! Teachers' Guide.
Suggestions for how to teach internet literacy and sample lesson plans for teachers of grades 1-8.

When students are familiar enough with navigating the internet, they may want to try doing internet searching. This can be very problematic for elementary students. Students can use general search engines, but you need to be cautious about trusting to filters. Also, students can become lost in trying to narrow a search when getting a vast response list. You may decide that in most cases it is better to use a specialized search tool that indexes sites selected or screened for student use.

- **<http://www.ajkids.com/>**
Ask Jeeves for Kids.
Designed for middle school and younger; students can use independently from when they can type in a query up through grade 8. You can ask a question in plain English which Jeeves interprets. If an interpretation accurately states your query, then you click on a site with an answer rather than selecting from a long list of links. The found site appears as a frame within Jeeves for safe surfing. To see the actual URL for evaluation or citation, click on the No Frames button in the blue banner. Additional reference "books" menu for dictionary, thesaurus, almanac, atlas, biography. News sources list.
- **<http://www.dibdabdoo.com/>**
Dib Dab Doo.
Search engine that searches only sites and databases that have been reviewed by human's and classified as kid/teen safe. Use key-word or directory. Results may be less satisfactory (range of level and broad connection to search term), but it is easy to use. Dib Dab Doo is an option for intermediate and middle school students.
- **<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/facts/kids.html>**
Kids Search Engines.
Designed for the adult to better guide students grades 1-8. Describes and links to children's search engines. Also explains how to activate filtering on several of the general search engines.

- <http://www.kidsclick.org/>
KidsClick! Web Search.
Designed for elementary; most entries are grades 3-6, a few k-2, and some grade 7+. Third grade and up could use independently. KidsClick! Is a web guide and student search engine prepared by librarians. Search by clicking on a topic, for a subject by initial letter, or enter a keyword in a simple or advanced search. Results of matching sites are listed alphabetically by site name and the description includes reading level. KidsClick is a guide to about 5000 quality sites, not a filter. Maintained lists for over 600 subjects. Simpler to use than the Yahoo!igans Search Engine. Search by Dewey number at <http://www.kidsclick.org/dewey.html>
- <http://www.yahooligans.com/>
Yahooligans.
Designed for students in grades 2-7 to use independently. Yahooligans is a Web directory covering games, science, world, entertainment, recreation and school subjects. Do a keyword search or select a category. Referred sites are screened for content and appropriateness. Clicking "Reference" in the menu screen left gives access to ready reference tools: almanacs, thesauri, dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps.
- <http://www.ithaki.net/kids/>
Ithaki 4 KiDs.
Metasearch engine designed for elementary students. Ranked list showing title, brief description, and source search tool for each item. Clicking on an item opens the site in a separate window.

Whether students are using a general search engine or a specialized search index of kid-safe sites, there are effective strategies for searching that they need to know and use.

- Students need to know to begin with careful thought about what they want to find. Can the question be answered with a ready reference tool such as an online dictionary or encyclopedia? How broad is the question and can they make it more specific, or do they really need a general overview? What are the keywords in the question?
- Students need to know strategies for focusing the search in the query. How should Boolean search terms AND(+), OR, NOT(-) be used in the query? Should a phrase be used in the query? How could keywords narrow the number of results for the query? Would the advanced search option give better results?
- Students need to know how to use special syntax or shortcuts in search tools that are used often.

The following site helps students learn strategies for searching.

- <http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/welcome/>
Welcome to the Web: Searching the Net.
Intermediate level students grades 3-6 can use this unit which is the fourth in the series on the site. Students should know the skills from the first unit, The Internet, before beginning to work through the interactive unit on searching. This unit introduces both search techniques and children's search engines. Unit 5, Researching on the Net, covers finding a word on a page, printing text, and copying text or pictures.

Getting a list of sites in response to a query is not the end of the search process. Students should be guided through the use of evaluative criteria in examining a found site. Students should have models for citing the source of information they use from the internet.

The following site evaluation tools can be used directly by elementary students.

- <http://www.classroom.com/community/connection/howto/citeresources.jhtml;jsessionid=F KIKYLDGYHLVVQFIAJICFEQ>
Citing Internet Resources.
Easy to follow examples for grades 5-8 illustrate how to cite email, web content, online image, online sound, online video clip, ftp, or newsgroup.

- **<http://www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/online/eval.htm>**

Evaluation Rubrics for Websites.

Two points-based rubrics that elementary students can use to evaluate web sites: primary (grades 1-3) and intermediate (grades 4-7). Also a third to evaluate content of a site for secondary level.

- **<http://www.quick.org.uk/>**

Quality Information Checklist.

Eight checkpoints to evaluate a web site. Students in grades 4-7 can study the process by working through the presentation independently. Teachers' Guide, printables, quiz.

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