

Information Literacy Lesson of the Month

Accessing Information Navigating the Internet

This week's IL lesson, which takes approximately forty minutes, focuses on how the Internet works, how to THINK like the Internet in order to maximize searches, and some "tricks" to narrow one's searches. In general, it's always a good idea for students to have a working knowledge of their narrowed topic and be able to identify KEYWORDS specific to that topic to facilitate relative connections during the lesson, but it is not absolutely necessary.

Some lesson highlights include:

- Types of websites and the Invisible Web
 - Two good academic directories (invisible web)
- Search engines and directories and how they work
 - Three directories/engines worth using
- Searching strategies
 - Boolean operators
 - Specific keyword searches
 - Nesting
- Cool "tricks" for searching more effectively



Handouts include key features of this information, particularly methods for searching Google, Yahoo and [Exalead](#) (a great site to try for academic topics) and Boolean operator explanations and examples.

I place quite a bit of emphasis using KEYWORDS, Boolean operators and strategy searches that avoids using whole language--something the Internet/databases are not equipped to handle and usually produce poor results.

I also recommend that students create a tentative "toolbox" of 3-10 websites they have found to be reliable. These sites can then be searched either directly or through a search engine to gather foundational information that can guide students for deeper searches later on.

Tyee Complex Library
Lisa Carlson,
Teacher-Librarian

Telephone 988.7230
carlsolm@hsd401.org

"The library is the place in the school that serves all students. You don't have to try out, as you do for sports. You don't have to buy an instrument, as you do for music. You just have to walk in the door."

Ellie Goldstein- Erickson, vice president in charge of legislation for the California School Library Association

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