

Teachers Guide to the Internet
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Abstract

This paper is designed for teachers of students in grades Pre-K through 12 and will introduce them to the numerous curriculum resources on the Internet. More often today supplements to course curriculum can be found on any text book company web site. Even more important is the amount of curriculum resources available for free on the Internet. Search engines can provide links to innumerable web sites that maintain information on any subject. E-mail, bulletin boards, blogs, chat groups and instant messaging helps educators keep in touch with colleagues around the globe. A brief introduction to Internet use is included and will inform the reader of evaluation techniques. Information about domain names and their use is also discussed. In addition to resources for the regular education class, this paper will provide many web sites to use for students with exceptionalities. This paper is organized by subject type and will provide the current Internet address.

Introduction

Countless Web sites exist on the Internet from countries all over the world. It is obvious to see that this is the Information Age when one performs a simple search on a search engine and the results return thousands of Web sites to choose from. This paper seeks to provide some background information for using the Internet, information on search engines, and a Weblibliography organized by subject.

Internet and the World Wide Web

The Internet is only a part of the World Wide Web (WWW). Parsons and Oja describe the Internet as “a collection of local, regional, national, and international computer networks linked together to exchange data and distribute processing tasks” (2004, p. 15). Parsons and Oja provide another definition that describes the relationship between the Internet and the World Wide Web by saying “the Internet is a communications system, and the Web is an interlinked collection of information that flows over that communications system” (2004, p. 284). Most teachers are familiar with accessing the Internet, so that topic will not be covered here. The Internet is a collection of data that can be accessed in many formats. Some examples are Web sites, search engines, downloads and uploads, E-mail, bulletin boards, blogs, chat groups and instant messaging, Internet telephony, E-commerce, broadcasting and remote access and control (Parsons & Oja, 2004, p. 17-18).

Web pages can be accessed by their Uniform Resource Locator, or URL, which is a unique address for any Web site (Parsons and Oja, 2004, p. 27). Part of the URL is a domain name extension which indicates its top-level domain. It is commonly seen as .com or .net. It is important to be familiar with these extensions when evaluating what Web sites to use. Some of the most commonly used domain names are:

Biz—unrestricted use; usually for commercial businesses

Com—unrestricted use; usually for commercial businesses

Edu—restricted to North American educational institutions

Gov—restricted to U.S. government agencies

Info—unrestricted use

Int—restricted to organizations established by international treaties

Mil—restricted to U.S. military agencies

Net—unrestricted use; traditionally for Internet administrative organizations

Org—unrestricted use; traditionally for professional and nonprofit organizations (Parsons & Oja, 2004, p. 251)

Teachers are expected to provide the authority on any subject; therefore it is essential for teachers to evaluate Web sites before using them in class. Using the above table can provide some information as to the source of a Web page. Next, one should determine the authority of the author and organization that creates the Web page. Then, find the year created to see if the information is timely. Based on a teachers' judgment and experience, she can then decide if the Web site is useful for her class.

Many search engines provide information and are available to search by name, organization or subject. Below are several popular search engines:

www.google.com

www.alltheweb.com

www.msn.com

www.yahoo.com

www.altavista.com

www.lycos.com

www.dogpile.com

www.hotbot.com

www.excite.com

<http://www.yahooligans.com/>

<http://www.ajkids.com/> (the Ask Jeeves Web site)

Many more exist and what you find on one search engine may not be found on another. When performing a query, use of some search operators include: and, or, not, quotation marks, near, wildcards and field searches. Again, it is up to the teacher to evaluate any Web site based on her knowledge and experience. This paper seeks to provide only free sites, however some may have minimal costs involved. These Web sites were current as to the writing of this paper.

Information Literacy

www.loc.gov

<http://yahelp.suffolk.lib.ny.us/yaonline.html>

<http://www.sasaustin.org/library/ResearchPaperOrganizer.htm>

<http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/librarylandclosed.html>

<http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/default.htm>

<http://nancykeane.com/rl/default.htm#Specialty>

<http://www.digital-librarian.com/librarians.html>

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/libraries.htm>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/index.asp>

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/libinst.htm>

<http://www.ipl.org/youth/dewey>

<http://lii.org/>

Teaching and Teachers, General Sites—with Multiple Subject Listings

<http://teachers.net/>

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/te0cont.htm>

<http://www.educationworld.com/index.shtml>

<http://www.marcopolo-education.org/>

<http://www.norman.k12.ok.us/092/techscope/lessons.htm>

<http://www.teachnet.com/powertools/take5/>

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/>

<http://www.lessonplanz.com/>

<http://www.sitesforteachers.com/>

<http://www.pacificnet.net/~mandel/>

<http://www.4teachers.org/>

<http://www.teachersfirst.com/>

Sciences

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/nimhhome/index.cfm>

<http://www.medlineplus.gov>

http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/home.shtml

www.nationalgeographic.com/kids

www.exploratorium.edu

Math

<http://www.math.com/teachers/athome.html>

Social Studies

<http://www.socialstudies.org/lessons/>

<http://www.historychannel.com/classroom/classroom.html>

<http://home.comcast.net/~dboals1/boals.html>

Disabilities and Exceptionalities

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/index.html>

<http://www.pluk.org/>

Test Preparation

<http://www.testprepreview.com/>

www.learningexpresslibrary.com This site is free to Portales Public Library card holders.

Check with them for sign-in procedures.

Online Databases

<http://infotrac.galegroup.com/menu> These eight databases are free to Public Libraries in New Mexico as well as school libraries and include InfoTrac Professional Collection for Education Professionals and three databases for K-12 students.

Summary and Conclusions

After searching some of these sites, bookmark your favorites. Word of mouth is a great way to share excellent resources, so ask your fellow teachers for ideas and share with them the sites that you have found useful. Don't forget to utilize the web site of the text books that are used in your classroom. Government sites often have free curriculum resources, but it requires you to search the Internet for whatever topic your class is studying. Check out national or regional organizations like the National Dairy Council or the Peanut Board. They are likely to have teacher resources also. Keep your sites updated as Web sites change addresses or close

down. Check with your School Library Media Specialist for more sites or your public library Web site for more listings. Use this as a guide for your students and get their input as well.

References

Parsons, J. J. and Oja, D. (2004) New perspectives on computer concepts. 7th Ed. Boston:
Thomson Course Technology.