

I Know It's Out There, But How Do I Find It? Search Engine Showdown

Information Literacy

The ability to know where there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for an issue or problem at hand.

as defined by the National Forum on Information Literacy

The Information Literate student accesses information efficiently and effectively.

American Library Association
Information Literacy Standard One

Frequent uses of research-based instructional and administrative technologies will help Georgia lead the nation in improving student achievement in core academic areas; enhancing the technology literacy of students, parents, and educators; and developing a highly-qualified workforce for the 21st century.

Students will use technology to: Find, synthesize, analyze, represent, apply, and share information in new ways...;

from The State of Georgia K-12 Technology Plan
Vision Statement – June 2004

Student Friendly Search Engines

- AOL@School <http://www.aolatschool.com/>
- Ask Jeeves for Kids <http://www.ajkids.com/>
- Awesome Library <http://www.awesomelibrary.org>
- CyberSleuth Kids <http://cybersleuth-kids.com/>
- DMOZ Kids http://dmoz.org/Kids_and_Teens
- Ithaki for Kids <http://kids.ithaki.net>
- Ivy's Search Engine Resources for Kids <http://www.ivyjoy.com/rayne/kidssearch.html>
- KidsClick <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick!/>
- TekMom <http://www.tekmom.com/search/>
- Yahoooligans! <http://www.yahoooligans.com>

Directories

- All The Web <http://www.alltheweb.com>
- DMOZ <http://dmoz.org/>
- Librarians' Index to the Internet <http://lii.org/>
- Lycos <http://dir.lycos.com/>
- WWW Virtual Library <http://vlib.org/>
- Yahoo <http://www.yahoo.com/>

Search Engines

- Altavista <http://www.altavista.com>
- Ask Jeeves <http://www.ask.com/>
- Google <http://www.google.com>
- Hotbot <http://www.hotbot.com/>

Metasearch Engines

- Dogpile <http://www.dogpile.com/>
- Metacrawler <http://www.metacrawler.com/>
- Mama <http://www.mamma.com/>
- Zapmeta <http://www.zapmeta.com/>

Deep Web Search Engines

- Complete Planet <http://www.completeplanet.com/>
- Invisible Web <http://www.invisible-web.net/>
- Profusion <http://www.profusion.com/>

Visual, Clustering Search Sites

- Clusty <http://clusty.com/>
- Kartoo <http://www.kartoo.com/>
- Mooter <http://www.mooter.com/>
- Teoma <http://www.teoma.com/>

Boolean, Proximity, Truncation, Wildcard, & Field Operators

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AND or + | <input type="checkbox"/> W (within) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOT or - | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT W |
| <input type="checkbox"/> " " (quotes) | <input type="checkbox"/> NEAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OR | <input type="checkbox"/> ADJ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> () (parenthesis) | <input type="checkbox"/> TITLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ~ (tilde) | <input type="checkbox"/> URL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * ? \$ # (truncation/wildcards) | <input type="checkbox"/> LINK |

Search Strategies

- What do you want to find?
 - write out in one or two sentences
 - know what you are looking for and what you are not looking for
- Identify keywords
 - avoid being too general or too specific
 - consider synonyms and variant forms
- Whenever possible, use nouns and objects as keywords
- Put most important terms first in your keyword list
- Use at least three keywords in your query
- Combine keywords, whenever possible, into phrases
- Avoid common words, unless they're part of a phrase
- Think about words you'd expect to find in the body of the page, use them as keywords
- Start big, then narrow
 - begin with a directory, but don't browse
 - scan the hits
- Learn the search site's features
 - use the Advanced/Power Search options
 - Boolean Operators are your friends
- Searching is a skill – it takes time and practice to develop
- Experiment with a variety of search sites, then narrow your choices to a favorite few – learn the “secrets” of these sites