

Ready Reference For Youth Services Providers: Handout

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Resources highlighted in this presentation:

Google/Bing

www.google.com/www.bing.com

What can we say about Google and Bing? Don't be afraid to use these uber search engines as a starting point or when all else fails but do be careful of sources they lead to. Google and Bing both have amazing image searches, be sure to use the advanced options especially the usage rights. Google Books is an immensely useful tool to search for information from books when your collection is coming up dry. Google Scholar is a great resource for Young Adults who need more academically oriented or sophisticated research than your library may have access to.

Wikipedia

www.wikipedia.org

Wikipedia is a free, on-line, collaborative encyclopedia. Anyone can write and post or edit an article. Wikipedia is enormous; currently it has over 15 million articles in 250 languages. It is the 5th most visited website in the world. Wikipedia is free content which means they can be reproduced by anyone without permission. The best use for Wikipedia is for a general overview of a subject or for information of a very specialized subject.

ehow

www.ehow.com

E-how is an online community with 1.5 million articles and 150,000 short videos showing how to do just about anything. Articles are checked by experts and there is no mature content on the site. Great for questions like "How do I make a French braid?" or "How do I build a treehouse?"

Ask.com

www.ask.com

Ask.com is a mediated, community answer site that does monitor for inappropriate language or content including sales pitches but does not check information. It is similar to Wikipedia but provides answers to specific questions.

Answers.com

www.answers.com

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Answers.com is a combination of community-driven answers and established reference sources. You can choose to search one or the other or both. It is great at answering highly specialized questions like “Who invented false eyelashes?” quickly.

Amazon.com

www.amazon.com

While there is no question that Amazon is primarily a retail site, it has a huge amount of information on it. Use Amazon to find out about upcoming books, use the look inside books to access specific pages of books and, most of all, don't forget that they have a huge number of free books available in their Kindle store that you can get for patrons. I have found this especially useful for patrons who want old series like The Bobbsey Twins or The Campfire Girls that may be out of print.

KidsClick

www.kidsclick.org

KidsClick is a website aggregator and specialized search engine built and maintained by the School of Library Science at Kent State University. It is definitely worth taking some time and exploring what will be most useful to you. It finds kid friendly specialized websites on over 600 different subjects. Don't expect a quick answer to a question but you will find loads of useful information.

Fact Monster

www.factmonster.com/

Fact Monster is provided by Information Please, which is part of Pearson, “the world's largest integrated educational company” (whatever that means!). The site has a wealth of information on common school subjects, as well as tools like a conversion calculator, math flashcards, a library of printable maps, a this day in history finder, study skills and a dictionary, thesaurus, and almanac.

Yahoo Kids

<http://kids.yahoo.com/>

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This looks like an entertainment site for elementary kids with lots of games and videos. If you scroll down to the bottom you'll find their super Homework Help and Yahoo! Kids Directory. There are really good and targeted list of sites for common homework topics.

IPL2

www.ipl.org/

IPL2 is the result of a merger of the Internet Public Library (IPL) and the Librarians' Internet Index (LII) and is maintained by a consortium of university library studies programs. There are separate sections for kids and teens that include links to sites that have been reviewed by librarians.

WolframAlpha Computational Knowledge Engine

www.wolframalpha.com

This is a wonderful newish site that answers anything that can be answered with numbers or objective data. Good query examples are: how many miles to the moon, what date is Thanksgiving, birth and death dates for Harriet Tubman, information about Hurricane Katrina, etc., etc. I recommend that you do their tutorial before starting to use this site.

Dulcinea Media

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

Dulcinea media brands itself as the "curator of the internet". They have developed a variety of free products to help students with research. Please see the website for a complete list of these products but I like <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/> the best. This site has web guides to a large variety of subjects that not only list credible, appropriate sites to do research on but lead you through the research process.

Sweetsearch

www.sweetsearch.com

Sweetsearch is a Dulcinea Media product where every website is checked by research experts. This is an excellent site to use if you are not sure of an answer or have found multiple answers.

Livescience

www.livescience.com

LiveScience, launched in 2004, is a good source for highly accessible science, health and technology news. This is a great site for current events in science and technology and you will often see their stories on MSNBC.com and Yahoo.

Midcontinent Public Library - Juvenile and Young Adult Series and Sequels

www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/readers/series/juv/

This is my number one most used online reference source. It is a comprehensive and timely listing of all juvenile and young adult series in order and searchable by author name, series name, series subject and book title. Every reference librarian should have this site bookmarked.

Catholic.org

www.catholic.org/saints

Catholic.org gives comprehensive reference information about the Catholic Church. It is a religious website so if you are looking for sensitive information or different points of view this is not the place. However for the many projects on saints that children are assigned this is a great resource.

American Folklore

www.americanfolklore.net

American Folklore is a terrific site put together by a master storyteller. It has folklore by state, Native American myths, tons of spooky stories and much more.

Fashion-Era

www.fashion-era.com/

This site is useful for women's costume and fashion history in a variety of eras including information about the present. This site can be found by searching www.ipl.org.

Food Timeline

www.foodtimeline.org

This is a research project designed and maintained by one student. It has list of food and recipes in timeline form by date of introduction. You can then click on that food or recipe and be taken to an authoritative web source for more information.

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Novelist K-8 Plus

Created by librarians and school media specialists, Novelist is one of the best reader's advisory tool available. It has a host of tools to provide fast suggestions for read-alikes, read alouds, subject searches and much more. Two of the most helpful are the Grab and Go booklists (located under More in the top menu) and the Advanced Search. The Grab and Go Booklists give you a quick list on a huge variety of fiction and non-fiction including Read Aloud lists for every grade. The Advanced Search allows you to search by keywords, Lexile Levels, Author's Nationality, Publication Date, Dewey Range, Grade Level and much more. The Lexile Levels are particularly helpful when you need a book on a certain subject in a grade range such as aboriginal people for a 1st grader.

Scholastic.com

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/scholasticnews/index.html>

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=455s>

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3748328>

Obviously Scholastic is primarily in the business of selling stuff to kids, parents and teachers. However they do feature Scholastic News Online which is a free online version of their Scholastic News product. This site features super simple language and explanations for many current topics.

Ebsco Primary Search

[Accessible through the State Library](#)

Primary Search provides full text for nearly 70 popular, magazines for elementary school research. All full text articles included in the database are assigned a reading level indicator (Lexile), and full text information dates as far back as 1990.

Ebsco History Reference Center

[Accessible through the State Library](#)

History Reference Center offers full text from more than 2,500 reference books, encyclopedias and non-fiction books, cover to cover full text for nearly 170 leading history periodicals, more than 112,000 historical documents, 113,000 biographies of historical figures, more than 112,000 historical photos and maps, and more than 80 hours of historical video.

Some Additional Resources:

Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet

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

This site is a very well maintained list of web links that may be organized in different ways.

eNotes

www.enotes.com

Enotes features over study guides for over 3,000 books. The study guides include detailed summaries, often by chapter, as well as topics for discussion, literary criticism, character analysis and more. The site also has a large lesson plan for literature section and a special section for Shakespeare. This site is particularly helpful if you need a more in-depth and detailed book summary and for book discussion groups.

Kid Info

www.kidinfo.com

This site is described as having links to "the best Preschool and K-12 quality educational websites, videos and Powerpoints." The website is organized by user, for example, young children, students, teachers, parent resources, etc. and then by subject. There is also a search box which is inconveniently located at the bottom of the page, but at least it's there! The strength of this site is the way it is organized, which has a fair amount of detail.

Time for Kids

www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids

Time Magazine's website for kids includes articles on current events. Although there are much better and more varied resources for newspaper and magazine articles on a grade school to high school level to be found in the databases, this is a good free web resource.