

# **READY REFERENCE FOR YOUTH SERVICES PROVIDERS**

**Presented by: Tamara Richman, Youth Services Librarian  
Mary Jacobs Library, Somerset County Library System**

# The Reference World: Past and Present



1990



Today

# Nature of Children's Reference

- Children's Reference Questions
  - ▣ Undelineated and unfocused
    - "I want to know about animals."
  - ▣ Extremely specific
    - "I need to know a recipe for food that was served at the first Thanksgiving."
  - ▣ Limited as to which type of materials can be used
    - No INTERNET
    - Must have a book today



# Types of Reference Sources

- World Wide Web
  - ▣ Google and so much more!
- Community Reference Sites
  - ▣ Wikipedia
- For Profit Reference Sites
  - ▣ eHow
  - ▣ Answers

# Types of Reference Sources continued

- Mediated Web Directories
  - Internet Public Library for Kids
  - Kidsclick
  - Factmonster
  - Askkids
- Paid Databases
  - Ebsco available through NJ State Library

# Types of Websites\*

- Personal Home Pages
- Special interest sites
- Professional sites
- News and Journalistic sites (E-zines)
- Commercial sites

# What Makes a Good Website?

- Who made it?
  - Credibility
- When was it last updated?
- Does the website cite its sources?
- Are there a lot of ads?
- Are there obvious biases?
- Is it easy to find the information you need?

# Our Mission – Wow!

- *What comes after Icefire?*
- *How do I tie a bow tie?*
- *I have to find information on St. Emma for my confirmation and I can't find anything.*
- *I need a New Jersey folktale that is not too scary.*
- *I need a Native American recipe.*
- *What is the heart rate of a hibernating woodchuck?*



# Even More!

- *How many miles is it to the moon?*
- *I need information on gems (and there are no books left on the shelf).*
- *What was the largest volcano eruption in the 20th Century?*
- *I need to do a science project and I have no idea what to do!*
- *In what website(s) would I look to find the genealogy of my family?*
- *I need a biography on Orel Hershiser. I know he played for the Cleveland Indians.*

# To Wiki or not to Wiki (pedia that is)

- ❑ Wikipedia is enormous; Currently it has over 15 million articles in 250 languages.
- ❑ It is the 6<sup>th</sup> most visited website in the world.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ Wikipedia is free content which means they can be reproduced by anyone without permission.
- ❑ Anyone can write and post or edit most articles.
- ❑ Large number of studies most notably, one in the journal Nature, showing that accuracy of information on Wikipedia is as good as or better than such sources as the Encyclopedia Britannica.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup><http://www.google.com/adplanner/static/top1000/index.html> accessed on 11/9/11.

<sup>2</sup> Jim Giles (December 2005). "Internet encyclopedias go head to head". *Nature* **438** (7070): 900–901. Bibcode 2005Natur.438..900G. doi:10.1038/438900a. PMID 16355180. <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v438/n7070/full/438900a.html>. The study (which was not in itself peer reviewed) was cited in many news articles such as this: "Wikipedia survives research test". BBC News (BBC). December 15, 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4530930.stm> accessed on 11/9/11.

# The Ready Reference World



# Thank you!

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□ Any questions?

**Tamara Richman**  
**[trichman@sclibnj.org](mailto:trichman@sclibnj.org)**