

another, but also students are challenged to process a wide range of information in ways that are aligned with 21st century skills. They have to determine, evaluate, judge, analyze, summarize, synthesize, and construct their notes, comments, and reflections for future inclusion in their final product.

Teachers can scaffold the listing of websites in other ways. One list could feature websites that highlight videos; another, research articles; and still another, news sites. Or a list might include websites that focus on original documents or current-day bloggers. With this wide variety of web pages, teachers are sampling sources that students should be using in their searches—one or more of which might provide the solution to the student's problem scenario.

How to Search the Web

Web search expert Wendy Boswell (2016) presents some basic skills that students need for successful web searches.

1. Use quotes to locate a specific phrase.

This is one of the number-one timesavers when it comes to searching on the internet. When you use quotation marks around a phrase, you're telling the search engine to only bring back pages that include these search terms *exactly* how you typed them in. This tip works in almost every search engine and brings back hyperfocused results. If you're looking for an exact phrase, put it in quotes. Otherwise, you'll come back with a huge jumble of results.

2. Use Google to search within a site.

If you've ever tried to use a website's native search tool to find something and haven't been successful, you're not alone. You can use Google to search within a site with a minimum of fuss. Simply use this command within Google's search bar to search within a site: the word "site," then a colon, then the URL of the website you'd like to search within.

3. Find words within a web address.

Using the “inurl” command through Google, you can search for words within the Uniform Resource Locator, or URL. For example, if you only want to find results from sites that have the word *marshmallow* in their URL, you would plug this query into Google’s search bar: inurl:marshmallow. Your search results will only contain websites with that word in their URLs.

4. Use basic math to narrow down your search results.

Basic math can really help you in your searches. This is called a Boolean search, and it’s one of the guiding principles behind the way most search engines frame their search results. For example, you’re searching for Tom Ford, but you get lots of results for Ford Motors. Just type in “tom ford” –motors. The minus sign before the word *motors* will remove those pesky car results.

5. Limit your searches to a specific high-level domain.

If you’d like to limit your searches to a specific domain—such as .edu, .org, .gov, or more—use the “site:” command to accomplish this. For example, let’s say you only wanted to search U.S. government-related sites for a topic. You could limit your search results by typing site:.gov and your query. This will bring back results only from sites that are in the .gov domain.

6. Use more than one search engine.

Don’t fall into the rut of using just one search engine for all your search needs. Every search engine returns different results. Plus, many search engines focus on specific niches, such as games, blogs, books, forums, and so on. The more comfortable you are with a variety of search engines, the more successful your searches will be. In addition to Google and Yahoo, try Bing, Baidu, AOL, and others.

7. Find a word on a web page.

Say you're looking for a specific concept or topic, perhaps someone's name, or a business, or a particular phrase. You plug your search into your favorite search engine, click on a few pages, and scroll laboriously through tons of content to find what you're looking for. Right? Not necessarily. You can use a simple shortcut to search for a word on a web page, and this will work in any browser you might be using. Here we go: CTRL +F, then type in the word you're looking for at the bottom of your browser in the search field that pops up. It's as simple as that.

8. Widen the net with a wildcard search.

You can use "wildcard" characters to throw a broader search net in most search engines and directories. These wildcard characters include *, #, and ?, with the asterisk the most common. For example, if you're looking for sites that discuss trucking, don't search for truck, search for truck*. This will return pages that contain the word *truck* as well as pages that contain *trucks*, *trucking*, *truck enthusiasts*, *trucking industry*, and so on.

9. Be specific.

The more you can narrow down your search, the better it will be. For example, if you were searching for "coffee," you'd get way more results than you could use. However, if you narrowed that down to "roasted Arabica coffee in Detroit Michigan," you'd be more successful.

Teachers can offer these tips in mini-lessons to help students hone the research skills they'll need throughout their college, career, and job-training experiences. Give them opportunities to practice the tips with the guidance of the teacher or a peer partner.