WebSource

For the Classroom

College and Career Readiness
Research Strategies: Using Google

Discussion Questions

- What are the steps you take when researching a topic?
- How do you choose what information to use while researching a topic?

Activity: How to Narrow Searches

Students will be able to narrow their searches while doing research, filtering out useless websites.

MATERIALS
- Computer(s)

PROCEDURE
1. Explain to students that they are going to learn how to narrow Google searches. Today's topic, as a practice exercise, will be to research careers they are interested in. They will have a much easier time finding the information they are looking for once they learn how to properly conduct a Google search, learning to eliminate all of the websites that don't offer the type of information they are looking for.
2. Have students take out a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Explain to students that they are going to take notes on tips for narrowing searches.
3. Create a list of the white board of the following tips about Google searches:
   - Google considers uppercase and lowercase letters to be equal so case sensitivity is not an issue.
   - Avoid misspellings. You will not get the results you are looking for – however, Google will correct any misspelled words and offer to do a search for the corrected words.
   - Be specific. The more targeted your words, the better your results will be.
   - Singular and plural forms of words are different according to Google. So, if you aren't getting what you are looking for, try the other form of the word.
   - Google ignores most common, short words, such as the, and, or, after, in, how, I, it was, will be, and so on.
   - Google will only recognize "AND" and "OR" if and when they are all capitalized.

- Google finds results anywhere in a document. It could be the HTML of a page.
- Word order matters on Google. The first word is always considered the most important.
- If you put quotation marks outside of the main words you are trying to search, you will get results of ALL words within the quotation marks.
- The * can be used as a wild card if you aren't sure of a word. This can be used to fill in a blank spot of a phrase. Google search will do it's best to find the missing word you are looking for.

4. Dismiss students to computers and have them begin their research.
5. Students should take notes on their findings and should be sure to include how they came up with them. You can copy and provide the attached chart. Students should write down which words they used to search their topic.
6. When time is up, have students share their findings. What did they find to be useful while searching? What did they see a lot of while searching the web?

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Topic	Word Search	Results/Notes