



INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET

What is the Internet?

An international network of computer networks which allows you to access millions of files through a global communications system. It was created about 25 years ago as a U.S. Department of Defense project to provide a method for computers around the world to transfer data efficiently.

What is the World Wide Web?

The WWW is like a window to view the body of information available on the Internet and to transmit text, graphics, sound, and video images.

What is a URL?

The Uniform Resource Locator is the address for a WWW site. It is formed by the name of the computer where the information resides and a domain type. Examples of domains and URLs:

	Domains	URL Examples
.edu	education sites	www.gwc.cccd.edu
.gov	government sites	www.whitehouse.gov
.com	commercial, business sites	www.cocacola.com
.org	organizations	www.redcross.org
.mil	military sites	www.chinalake.mil
.net	networked sites	www.att.net

What is a link?

Hyperlinks or links allow you to go from one web page to another by clicking on a word, picture, or icon. A link is usually blue in color. When you place the cursor over it, a "hand" icon appears. Click the mouse button and go to that site.

SEARCH DIRECTORIES

Selected and evaluated sites organized by subject. Use these to find general information or overviews on popular or scholarly subjects.

Yahoo	http://www.yahoo.com
Librarians' Index To The Internet	http://www.lii.org
Infomine	http://infomine.ucr.edu/
AcademicInfo	http://www.academicinfo.net
Internet Public Library	http://www.ipl.org/ref

SEARCH ENGINES

Search engines scan a database and return a file with links to websites containing the word or words you supply.

Google	http://www.google.com
Alta Vista	http://www.altavista.com
Northern Light	http://www.northernlight.com
Teoma	http://www.teoma.com

FOUR CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WEB SITES:

1. Authority

- Who is presenting the information?
- What are the author's credentials or level of expertise?
- Is contact information included (e-mail, address, or phone number)?
- Where is the document published? Check URL domain (.edu, .org, .com, .gov)

2. Objectivity

- Has the author or organization clearly stated the goals and/or aims of the site?
- Is the information presented in an objective manner?
- Is a particular point of view being presented?
- Is there a bias, either explicit or implied?
- Is the information presented free of advertising? If there is advertising, is it clearly differentiated from the informational content?

3. Reliability

- Does the site have an academic, governmental, or organizational affiliation?
- Has the site been updated recently? How current is the information?
- Is there a way to contact someone about the site?
- If facts and figures are given, are they accurate?
- How does this information compare with other sources of information on this topic?

4. Structure and Content

- Does the page meet your research needs or purpose?
- Is the subject adequately covered?
- Is the site well organized and easy to use?
- What is the purpose of the site: Educational? Promotional? Propagandistic?
- If other sources are quoted, is the information accurately cited?
- Is all the information on the site free, or is there a fee to link to some or all of the information?