

A+ Research Reports Researching on the Internet

Safety Tips

- After you click on a button or link, give the computer time to respond. Clicking the same thing over and over may give you results you don't want.
- Think about where you're going BEFORE you click. Try not to click on pop-up advertisements...close the window instead.
- Make online exploration a family activity. Put the computer in the living room or family room so parents can monitor children's activities.
- Always look first for the Kids Section of the website.



Searching

- Use search engines designed especially for kids, such as Yahoorigans or Action Bits.
- When you're deciding which sites to visit, remember that sites with addresses ending in .ORG, .GOV and .EDU are good places to start.
- Use *key words* to describe what you want to find.
- Make your key words as specific as you can: *spotted leopard* gives you better search results than *zoo animals*.
- Spelling counts: searching for *hair* is very different than searching for *hare*.

Using Online Information

- Always check the Web sites you visit for: a recent update date, current information, and real contact information.
- Thieme, Lynne C. "Safe Researching on the Internet." Action Bits. March 2004. <<http://www.actionbits.org>>

A+ Research Reports Evaluating Online Materials

The Internet is a terrific resource for research. Unlike books, which go through an editing and publishing process, information on the Internet can be published by anyone.

Ask yourself some questions before starting:

What kind of information am I looking for?

- Do I want facts? Opinions? News reports? Research studies? History? Stories?

Where would be a good place to look?

- For example, if you are looking for information on a current event, a reliable newspaper like the *NY Times* would be a good place to start.

Once you find a source, ask more questions:

Is there a date on the website?

- When was the source published? Is the date current enough to be useful?

Who produced or published the info?

- Is the website publisher reputable; for example a government agency or a university?

Is this information intended for me?

- Is this website useful for kids? Is this someone else's point of view or bias?

What is the purpose of this website?

- Is this site trying to advertise anything or persuade your thinking? Is there a lot of flash, color & gimmicks to attract attention?

*If you get lost on the Internet while researching, you can always go home. Just click the **HOME** icon and you're back where you started.*

