

INTERNET RESOURCES: ENGLISH 201

Your assignment requires that you use the Internet to find information on a topic of your choosing. While you might think that finding information on the Internet is easy, it is a challenge to find quality information that you can trust.

#1: Understand what you are looking at: Basic Structure of a Web Address

`http://www.bcc.ctc.edu/lmc/links/health.html`



Transfer type/Server/Domain/Directories (Folders) /File's name. File type.

Helpful Hints when looking at Web Addresses

- ⇒ **Domain:** A domain (.com, .gov, etc.) used to tell you a lot about a site, but since no one is controlling the internet that's no longer true. However, sites with .edu or .gov domains are usually well monitored.
- ⇒ **Tilde:** A tilde (~) usually notes that this is a personal site. Be careful when you see this in a web address.

#2: Understand your search engine:

There are many search engines out on the Web. Google, Yahoo and MSN are probably all familiar to you. Most search engines work the same way, so it doesn't matter which search engine you use.

All search engines have an "advanced search" or "power search." This allows you to be more detailed when searching for information. When using advanced search, you can:

- Limit by date
- Come up with complex search phrases
- Limit by a specific domain

#3: Look for Evaluated Resources

While you will always find lots of information with a general search engine, the results you find may or may not be very helpful.

Here are places to look to find evaluated sites:

- <http://lii.org/> **The Librarian's Index to the Internet.**
While LII looks like a typical search engine, you get many fewer results than you do with Google or Yahoo. All of the websites included in LII's databases have been evaluated by a librarian or other professional for quality.
- **Library and College/University Websites**
The BCC Library website has a link called "Web Links by Subject." This is our listing of recommended websites organized by topic. Other libraries and discipline programs (like computer science or health) at colleges and universities are also a great source for recommended websites.

Evaluation Criteria: You must evaluate every site that you even consider using as part of your research!

Criteria	Questions to Ask
<u>Author/Authority</u>	Why should I trust what you are telling me?
<u>Currency</u>	When was this information written and updated?
<u>Accuracy</u>	Did they get the details right?
<u>Point of View/Bias</u>	Do they give you the full story or part of it? Are they trying to convince you of something?
<u>Audience</u>	Who does this website speak to?
<u>Argument</u>	Do they use good argument or just jump to conclusions?
<u>Conclusions</u>	Look at the big picture and decide if you trust this website.

Which of these criteria is most important? That depends...

- Authority is critical. It is important that you identify who is telling you the information that you find on the Internet.
- Currency really depends on your topic. Researching Russian history in the 1900s? Then currency isn't so important. Treatment for medical conditions does change drastically over time, so currency is more important.
- Accuracy: Since there are so many sources of information available on the web, make sure you choose a site that is accurate!
- Point of View, Bias and Audience are things that you need to be aware of. The American Cancer Society is biased (towards preventing and curing cancer), but that isn't a bad thing. Just **BE AWARE** of these things!
- Argument is another issue to be aware of, and links closely with point of view and bias. If a website is trying to convince you of something, how do they go about doing it?

A Note about Plagiarism:

Plagiarism can take many forms from **overt**, when you buy a paper off of the Internet, to **accidental**, when you paraphrase and cite information incorrectly. The Writing Lab can help you avoid mistakes, so make sure you use this great campus resource! The Writing Lab is located in A262.