

10 Essential Search/Resource Tools for Online Learners

The growth of the Internet over the past 15 years has become a powerful force in changing the way students learn languages and carry out their academic studies. Yet, in the words of *Internet for English Teaching* (TESOL, 2000, p. 85), the exponential growth of the Web has made searching for quality content and research tools as difficult as taking a sip of water from a gushing fire hydrant. In the end, students really need to be guided through the online labyrinth to find resources that encourage effective and productive study.

Therefore, in keeping with the theme of the conference (“Uncharted Mountains, Forging New Pathways”), the presenter will introduce 10 Web tools for helping students maximize their organizational, personal study, and research skills:

- 1. Google Alerts:** Email updates of the latest relevant Google results on your topic
 - ❖ Skill Areas: data collection, analyzing information
- 2. askkids.com:** Simple search engine that don't overwhelm the learner
 - ❖ Skill Areas: reading, critical thinking, research writing (cell phones in schools)
- 3. factbites.com:** Specialized search engine that provides full-sentence results from quality and authoritative sources. Better than Google for encyclopedia-style content.
 - ❖ Skill Areas: reading, critical thinking, research writing (see http://www.factbites.com/factbites_vs_google.php).
- 4. kartoo.com, redzee.com, and searchme.com:** Virtual search engines that let you scan things visually.
 - ❖ Skill Areas: reading, critical thinking, brainstorming, writing
- 5. clusty.com:** Metasearch engine using comparative ranking that groups search engine results into topical clusters (cell phone schools)
 - ❖ Skill Areas: finding relevant information about research topics
- 6. www.onelook.com:** Online dictionary search engine.
 - ❖ Skill Areas: vocabulary and sentence building
- 7. scholar.google.com:** Authoritative research results on academic topics
 - ❖ Skill Areas: reading, analyzing information from different sources, writing
- 8. www.archive.org:** (Internet Archive)
 - ❖ Skill Areas: reading, analyzing information
- 9. nces.ed.gov/nceskids/createagraph:** (Create a Graph from the National Center for Education Statistics)
 - ❖ Skill Areas: presentations and public speaking, research writing, analyzing information
- 10. Bibme.com:** An automatic bibliography generator for simplifying research writing (also www.easybig.com and ottobib.com).
 - ❖ Skill Areas: research writing, annotations and paraphrasing