Handouts for
Survival Skills for the Information Jungle:
What all kids need to know about using the Internet.

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Survival Skills for the Information Jungle: What Kids Need to Know About Using the Internet
Jungles can be confusing and even dangerous to the inexperienced traveler. The sheer abundance of resources and multitude of paths in them demand the explorer have special skills if they are going to survive and thrive. This presentation describes six Information Jungle Survival Tips for students and explores how they can be taught.

Spoof sites: (links checked Oct 2007)

California's Velcro Crop Under Challenge
http://home.inreach.com/kumbach/velcro.html

Feline Reactions to Bearded Men
http://www.improb.com/airchives/classical/cat/cat.html

Mankato MN Homepage
http://city-mankato.us

Dihydrogen Monoxide
http://www.dhmo.org/

Clones-R-Us
http://www.d-b.net/dti/
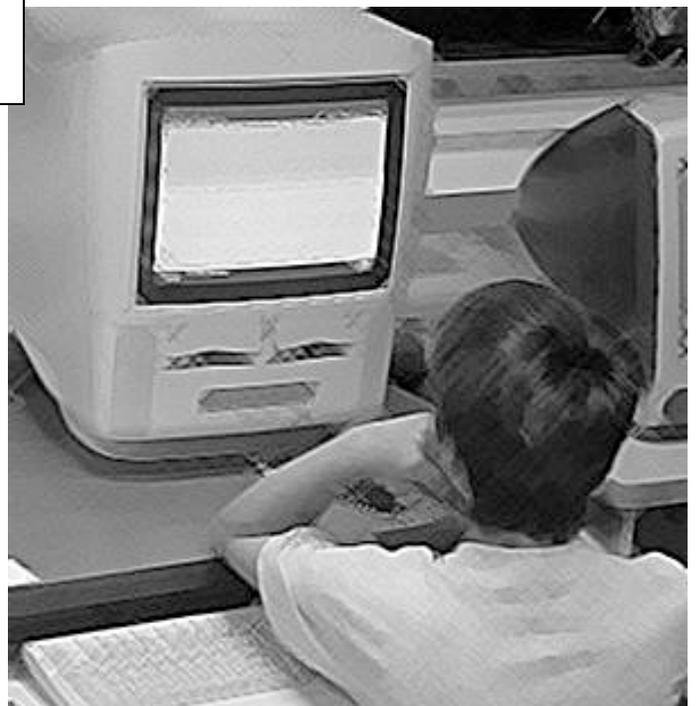
Survival Skills for the Information Jungle: Information Problem-Solving Activities Are More Important Than Ever

> **How has "research" changed since you were in school? Jot down some skills students today need that we did not.**

The Information Jungle

Research for most of us who finished our formal education prior to 1995 operated in an Information Desert. Those five or ten sources required for a research paper were tough to find in our school and public libraries. The final product of our information quest was usually a written compilation of information, often verging on plagiarism to fulfill an assignment that neither requested nor encouraged the creation of new knowledge or innovative solutions to real problems.

Today's student who has access to online sources of information operates in an Information Jungle. A quick search using an Internet search engine can yield thousands of possible sources of information. Savvy teachers today are asking students not just find and organize information, but to do so to answer genuine questions, offer original solutions to problems, and communicate their findings using a variety of media.

While technology can be enriching, the Information Jungle and projects that call for the demonstration of higher level thinking skills contain perils as well. The role of the teacher and library media specialist has rapidly changed from one of a desert guide (helping learners locate scarce resources) to one of jungle guide (helping learners evaluate and select resources of value). This change has been so rapid that many educators have not had time to learn the skills necessary for their new roles. But for those who do, the rewards for doing information problem solving in the Information Jungle can be tremendous.

Everyday practice in problem-solving

We too often think of information problem-solving in the context of huge projects or term papers, when most of use information problem-solving skills everyday. How can we give our student's everyday practice in using the Internet? Some suggestions are below. Add your own!

1. Use the Internet to check the weather forecast and make a recommendation about dress for the next day.
2. Search and report an interesting fact about the author of the next story being read by the class.
3. Email students in another class to ask their opinions on a discussion topic.
4. Recommend a movie or television show to watch the coming weekend.
5. Find two science articles that relate to the current science unit. Evaluate the credibility of the sources of information.
6. Locate a place from a current news headline on an online map resource like <www.mapquest.com>.
7. Recommend a book to a classmate based on other books that classmate has read using the school's library catalog or an Internet source.
8. Update the class webpage with interesting facts from units studied and links to related information on the web.
9. Estimate the number of calories and fat grams in the meal served in the cafeteria that day.
10. Find a "quote of the day" on a specific topic and use a graphics program to illustrate and print it out.

Your ideas!