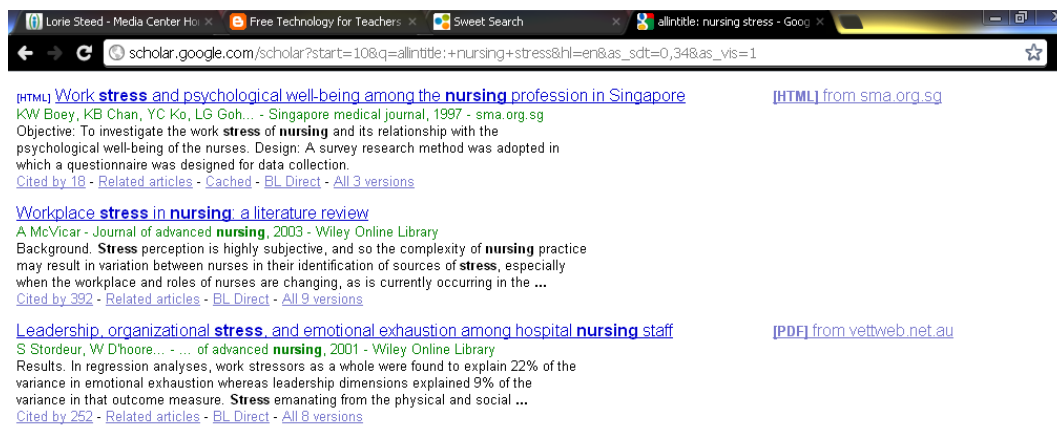


Search Engine Tips

1—Try different search engines besides Google:

Compiled with help from Richard Byrne's Free Technology for Teachers Blog

<http://www.dogpile.com> and <http://www.metacrawler.com>: Search Google, Yahoo, & Bing at once
<http://www.sweetsearch.com>: Search sites evaluated by a team professionals
<http://oolone.com>: Displays previews of web pages in search results
<http://www.refseek.com>: More academic results than commercial search engines
<http://books.google.com/>: With a Google account, search for free Google ebooks
<http://scholar.google.com> Search for academic articles; choose full-text HTML or PDF



2—Don't assume that the first results are the most relevant. Often, sites pay for the privilege to be first. Or some sites may be listed because they are the most popular—but that doesn't mean they are the best resources.

3—Look for .edu or .gov sites (run by educational or government institutions) which are generally more reliable than .com websites. Also, .org sites are often better than .com sites, but be careful—Wikipedia is .org and is not an acceptable source because anyone can post information there. Also, anyone can get a .com or even a .org address, so those will require closer evaluation on your part.

****Tip:** To eliminate all .com results, do an Advanced search and in the box "Search within this site or domain," type in .edu or .gov. In Dogpile, go to Advanced Search, click on "Exclude Domain" and type in .com.

4—If you get too many results, or results that don't seem useful, use the words "and," "or," and "not" to limit results to more specific topics (for instance, Hitler and marriage to Eva Braun).

5—When evaluating .com sites, consider the following:

A—Who is the author of the site? This may be an organization rather than an individual. For instance, the author of www.biography.com is A & E Television Networks.

****Tip:** To find the author, look at the bottom of the page beside the copyright notice. You may also find this information by clicking on the “About” or “Contact” tabs if they exist. Be very cautious about using a site with no known author!

B—Is the site up to date? Look for the copyright and/or “Date Last Updated” (usually at the bottom of the page). Also beware if there are several “dead links”—they indicate the site is out of date.

C—Does the site give credit to sources used? Look for this especially when using an individual site.

D—Just because a site claims to be “the official site of such-and-such” doesn’t mean it is.

E—Primary sources contain firsthand information and are often the best resources. For instance, if you are researching an individual, a site maintained by that person, his/her family, or an organization set up in that person’s name may be a good resource. If you are researching a company, that company’s website should be consulted as a source.

F—A site specifically about a topic is better than a general site that has a little bit of information about everything. Sites such as about.com, for instance, are basically Internet encyclopedias and should be used only as a last resort.

G—If you have questions about whether or not a site is an appropriate resource, ask your teacher or the librarian for input.

6—Cite your sources with www.easybib.com, which also has a phone App!