Besides Google:
Guiding Gifted Elementary Students
Onto the Entrance Ramp of the
Information Superhighway

by Joan Schneider
To Google or Not to Google

» BEST SOURCE FOR RESEARCH: the internet
» REASONS: speed, accessibility, limitless sources
» DRAWBACKS FOR CHILDREN:
  » Lack of quality control
    » Unreliable information
    » Children lack life experiences and extensive subject knowledge to defer sites that would be an obvious unreliable source to adults
    » Deceptive advertising/distracting advertisements
    » Inappropriate content
  » Too much information
    » Google searches yield millions of results
    » Info overload for young children/it’s overwhelming
Kid-Safe Directories

» Advise using child-oriented search engines:
  » **Yahoo! Kids** ([http://www.kids.yahoo.com](http://www.kids.yahoo.com)) content is appropriate; poor indexing limited to categories; searches words in titles (not within text of article); exact spelling is required / no suggestions for alternate spelling
  » **Ask for Kids** ([http://www.askforkids.com](http://www.askforkids.com)): searches multiple databases simultaneously using natural language; websites carefully selected & reviewed for quality and safety—only G-rated sites created for children; auto spell check of search terms
  » **KidsClick!** ([http://www.kidsclick.org](http://www.kidsclick.org)): limited to 6400 high-quality sites; search by directories or keywords; focuses on grades 4-9
  » **KOL Homework Help, Jr.** ([http://www.kids.aol.com/homework-help/junior](http://www.kids.aol.com/homework-help/junior)): educator-reviewed and age appropriate for grades K-2 using a point and click browser
  » **Awesome Library** ([http://www.awesomelibrary.org](http://www.awesomelibrary.org)): 35,000 carefully reviewed high-quality websites with safe links; intended for K-12 teachers, students, parents, and librarians; browsing and searching available in several foreign languages as well
Kid-Safe Directories

» Other tools for searching:
  » Kid’s Search Tools (http://www.rcis.org/ksearch.html):
    » lists on a single page several highly rated search tools for children
  » TekMom’s Search Tools for Students (http://www.tekmom.com/search):
    » lists the best kid search engines including specialized directories for science, history, and images as well as other useful online reference tools
When a more sophisticated topic needs to be researched using a regular search engine:

» **Set Preferences in Google**
   » Reduce abundance of hits by setting Google’s SafeSearch filter

» **Begin search on SquirrelNet’s web page**
   ([http://www.squirrelnet.com/search/Google_SafeSearch.asp](http://www.squirrelnet.com/search/Google_SafeSearch.asp)):
   » Site has a strict filter preset and includes popular kid and teen browsing sites.

» **Show guidance for formulating search statements**
   » **Offer basic search skills to lead to productive searches**
     » Correct spelling, root words, singular instead of plural terms, placing quotation marks around a phrase, or Boolean searches (using “and, or, or not” fields)
   
» **Use phrase searching which is a feature among the advanced search tabs**
Benefits of Article:

» Teaching young gifted students how to access information effectively online will provide:
  » the knowledge to locate the best information available to meet their needs quickly and efficiently
  » students to become information literate — knowing how to evaluate search results, be critical of its content, and use the information accurately

» Listing of child-friendly search engines and tools