

## ***To the teacher***

Students in the primary years are not excluded from the learning power of the Internet and World Wide Web. There is a wealth of programs, learning tools and skill enhancement sources for the younger student online. Learning how to move around in cyberspace, working with search engines to find more information, working interactively with programs and participating in virtual field trips are all online options for the student still in the primary years. Also, making contact with other students around the world and even more cyber activities await the student in years 3 to 6.

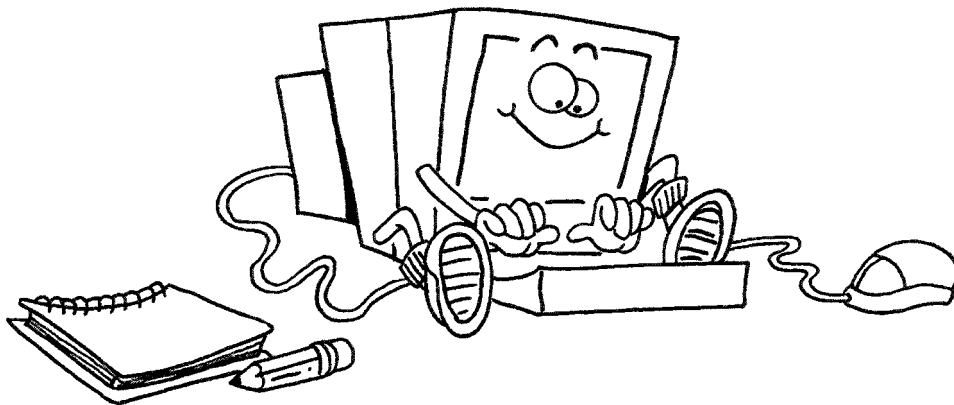
This book will help the teacher of students in years 3 to 6 become comfortable using the Internet and World Wide Web in the classroom. It will also help the teacher grasp and understand the depth of the emerging information technology available for primary-level students. This book is for the teacher who wants to understand and harness the power of cyberspace.

The first chapter explains the basics for safe and effective cyber use in the classroom. For the most part, online learning is safe, but it needs to be respected as a formidable source of information, some of which is not appropriate for the classroom. Chapter two presents basic vocabulary terms for computer and Internet literacy. Chapters three to five will help the teacher engage students to become active participants in online learning. They are not too young and they are not too immature to master some level of expertise with cyber learning. Empowering students at this young level is possible and will result in successful, sophisticated online learners.

*Internet Projects* provides specific activity and project sheets for student learning using the Internet, the World Wide Web and other information technology. It also provides the names and URLs for online programs, quests and other great cyber resources. This book will help you employ those tools to help your students achieve academic success. Many of the activity pages are broken into two different activities for you to choose the appropriate level for your class or even each specific child.

Teachers are strongly recommended to preview all sites before sending students to view them.

The websites highlighted in this book were chosen for their value and appropriate use in the education of children. Because websites change over time, the publisher does not attest to the absolute accuracy of any of the websites.



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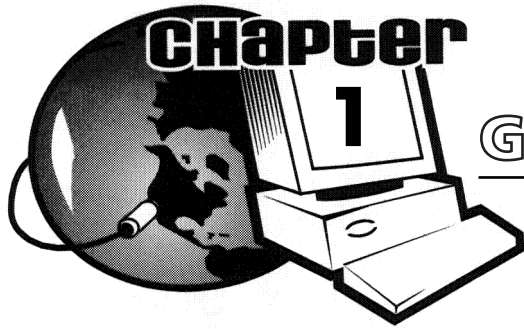
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# Getting started

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## Teacher information

The Internet offers many significant learning opportunities. Those learning opportunities are enhanced when preceded by thoughtful preparation. Such preparation includes decisions concerning filters, acceptable use policies and planning how to teach students to locate sites and use search engines.

### Filters

There are several good and reliable cyber filters that can be used in the classroom to protect students from running into sites of pornography, violence, abuse or perversion.

The filter *Bess* at <[www.n2h2.com](http://www.n2h2.com)>, developed by N2H2, is designed specifically for schools. The company also offers filters for the home and the workplace.

*Cyber Patrol* is owned by Surfcontrol located at <[www.surfcontrol.com](http://www.surfcontrol.com)>. The company provides two versions: *Cyber Patrol for Home* and *Cyber Patrol for Education*.

*CYBERSitter*, found at <[www.cybersitter.com](http://www.cybersitter.com)>, is a leading cyber filtering company primarily designed for home and educational use. It allows monitoring and blocking of website and chatroom use, keeps records of Internet activity and automatic filter updates.

The highly popular *Net Nanny* an effective website and email filter with the additional feature of online game blocking. It is located at <[www.netnanny.com](http://www.netnanny.com)>.

You can install a program that will block by specific words, phrases, graphics or language. Some of these programs are already set up to be installed with little or no adjustment. Other programs allow you the option of installing words to block. Choose the filtering system that will best fit the needs of your school or classroom. For further information or product review check out <[www.internetfilterreview.com](http://www.internetfilterreview.com)>.

### The acceptable use policy (AUP)

After the filters are installed, students should be encouraged to protect the integrity of their online usage and the welfare of their lab. A policy is needed that will help protect students from observing any inappropriate online sites or chatting with people whose intentions are less than honourable. It is not common, but there needs to be a back-up plan if it happens. Therefore, it is good to have an acceptable use policy or AUP, already in place.

Generally developed by administrators, staff, students and sometimes a few parent volunteers, the AUP lists the rules and behaviour code for students and staff working online. It not only clearly defines what is and is not appropriate viewing online, but it also deals with the rules and regulations for using material and equipment in the designated computer area. The AUP needs to address all the activities and functions in the computer area.

Developing an AUP that students, even year three students, sign is a productive way to encourage them to accept responsibility for their online use and managing the equipment in the room. Actually, even the year three student has opinions about how a computer area should be managed, what works and does not work in the area and what should be the right and wrong

things to view. Students in years 3–6 can easily become part of the acceptable use policy-making process and will probably honour their computer area more once they have participated in the development of the AUP.

First, the AUP should be developed by a group. Administrators, staff, parents and students all are valuable sources of input regarding what would be appropriate technology usage in the school. Technology usage means more than just online work; it also means working with software programs, different applications, video cameras, scanners and more. Information technology encompasses many things and your students need guidelines to handle them appropriately.

Discuss the acceptable use policy with students. Consider what you intend for students to see online and how it will work with your classroom learning. Next, explain in a simplified way how this work will help them to learn. This explanation will help them to understand why it is so important to behave appropriately while using such an exciting learning tool.

Finally, discuss the computer area and how it needs to be protected from vandalism and from abuse. You will want to explain that it is their area to use and to share with others and so they need to decide how students should behave once they are working with computers.

As each area is discussed, students learn how to behave online and how to maintain computers. They will form a pact agreeing to respect and protect computers. Even at their young age, they are 'lawmakers' for their school.

Once the AUP has been developed, students will sign it, have their parents sign it and submit it for filing at the school. They will know the rules, they will know the consequences and they will more than likely enjoy the 'adult responsibility' of maintaining a safe and secure computer area.

## **Locating URLs**

Before you go very far in your online lesson planning and teaching using the Internet and World Wide Web, it is very important to understand how to find things to match your teaching needs and the academic needs of your students. There are millions of sites in cyberspace and to hunt them down does become a huge task. How do you find a website you heard about as you walked through the staffroom? How do you find a cyber spot that you heard about at a conference and forgot to write down? This feeling of being unprepared to handle the Internet is common but not impossible to correct.

When you go online, the idea of finding something may become overwhelming when you consider all the possibilities. An extra word in your subject search and you could find yourself at someone's reunion website rather than at the site you thought was about book report writing. Without an understanding of how to work the Web, finding a website is like finding a needle in a haystack – it can be done but with unnecessary labour and time involved.

Simply, you can find anything you want on the Internet and World Wide Web if you approach cyberspace one of two ways. First, you could use things called URLs or cyber addresses that you place in the address box or address frame on a homepage. Just like an address on a street, this URL will take you directly to a site you are seeking. It is easy to recognise a URL (Universal Resource Locator), because it begins with `http://`, may be followed by `www.` and then the unique name and ends with an extension like `.com` or `.net` or `.gov.au` etc. This represents a URL or an address for locating a website in cyberspace.

URLs are everywhere. They are at the end of television or radio commercials about a product or company, they are published on advertisements and they are printed on panels on the sides of buses and company trucks and taxis. URLs are the new way to broadcast the site for a product, a company or some other interesting resource.

You can just about guess what a URL would be if the company or product is widely known. For example, Vegemite is a well-known Australian icon and its URL is its name, <<http://www.vegemite.com.au>> and a company such as Qantas has a URL of <<http://www.qantas.com.au>>. Since most computers 'assume' the http:// these days, if there is a www (which stands for World Wide Web), then you may see URLs that simply begin with www, such as <[www.vegemite.com.au](http://www.vegemite.com.au)> or <[www.qantas.com.au](http://www.qantas.com.au)>.

A good idea for practice to sharpen your ability to see cyber addresses is to log URLs as you find them over the next several days. Be precise in recording the address exactly as it appears and that includes perhaps adding a tilde ~ or adding a question mark ? that may be used in the address or even an underscore \_. Whatever is in the URL you are viewing must be copied correctly if you want to use it again to find the site.

To practice locating URLs, force yourself to find them in all sorts of places. Look carefully and you will see them. Develop the habit of logging accurately. Keep a file of worthwhile websites and record what the URL represents – its subject and interest areas.

Since the Internet and World Wide Web will be here to stay as an educational force, students in years 3 to 6 are not too young to develop the ability to locate URLs and learn how to record them for future use. URLs can be seen on the big items like billboards and panels on vehicles, but there are URLs all around us on smaller things like the products we use. These websites are also on products that children use. The websites usually have educational links on the sites, so it is worth it for children to be alert to the idea of finding the addresses and exploring these sites that are also 'child safe'.

Even a student in year 3 can neatly print an address of a site that will be fun to visit. Primary school students see advertisements for toys and other items that interest them and those advertisements have website addresses that are appropriate for the student to explore. Plus, usually those companies have added sections designed specifically for children to their company website. When primary school-aged children go to one of those sites, they gain practise in using and learning more control of their mouse, they learn about and recognise hyperlinks and they also learn about whatever the company hosting the site has added for their education.

For example, Cadbury is a chocolate brand that is very popular. If a child goes to the Cadbury homepage at <[www.cadbury.com.au](http://www.cadbury.com.au)>, there is a section called Kids Cubby where students can learn about chocolate, play educational games, design a new product or take a virtual tour of the Cadbury factory. There is even a school projects section for teachers to download lesson plans and activities covering many subject areas. The Cadbury site offers good practice for younger children in moving around a website and it is attractive and colourful enough to hold their interest.

Another example of a company that has developed a website that is student-friendly is the site <[www.m-ms.com.au](http://www.m-ms.com.au)> called the M&M's Network by Mars Incorporated. This site has many options for children to explore and enjoy. It has a network tour with things like a virtual time machine, a time capsule, a baking channel, a virtual tour of the factory and more. Loaded with fun and interesting information, this site is worth the time to visit.

Arnott's, located at <[www.arnotts.com.au](http://www.arnotts.com.au)>, is the site for the Arnott's biscuit company. Its homepage is attractive and certainly informative, but this is another example of how snack food companies enhance their website to be safe for kids to peruse. This safe site is a good source of diversion if the class is working online and a few students are finished ahead of the others. It allows those 'early bird' students a source of entertainment so they will focus on something rather than disrupting the rest of the class.

## Search engines

The second way to find your way around cyberspace if you do not know the correct URL is to use search engines. Cyberspace is not helpful like the postal worker who remembers that a particular family lives at a different address from what is written on an envelope and can deliver the mail with the error on the envelope. Cyberspace is 'unforgiving' and requires that the URL be accurate and exact. Without that accuracy, you will not find your site. Be accurate or you will only waste time looking for that 'needle in the cyberstack'.

But, when you really cannot remember the <http://> or URL address of a particular site, then you will need to approach finding a website through the use of a search engine. Search engines or navigational guides (such as Yahoo!) are what 'drive the Web'. That means that the search engine is what will make you the master of finding information. A search engine is simply a system that will find whatever it is you are seeking online.

Search engines help you find information about online learning, interactive sites, video conferencing, global contacts for global classroom experiences, software for your classroom or whatever it is that makes your lesson a virtual learning experience. The difference between finding a site online when working with a search engine and working with a URL is that the search engine uses the subject you are seeking rather than the address of the actual site. For example, if you wanted to find the ABC's children's website and could not remember the actual address of [www.abc.net.au/children](http://www.abc.net.au/children) (which does not follow the typical address format used for big companies), you could choose a search engine that would help you find the site. Using the subject of 'ABC children', you would find the link to the ABC's children's homepage.

With hundreds of search engines to choose from, the best way to begin working with them is to start with one that is easy to navigate and will 'get the job done'. Practising on Yahoo!, found at [www.yahoo.com.au](http://www.yahoo.com.au), is time well spent. Labelled a navigational guide, which is the company's preference of label, Yahoo! offers a subject search frame where you type whatever you are seeking. Next, you activate your search by clicking on the search tab. So, if you are seeking information on something like sites for a lesson on dinosaurs and you run a search using Yahoo!, you could find hundreds or even thousands of links to view for your students' assignment.

Also, on the website homepage of Yahoo! (as on most search engines) are links for just surfing or category seeking. If you are not certain what to look for, you may enjoy viewing the sites that the staff at Yahoo! has selected and added to the website. Most search engines (or navigational guides) do the same thing; they select many different sites and put them together under category headers. Those headers open to links which open to links and those open to links and suddenly there is a wealth of information related to your search.

