Finding & Evaluating Information Online (Self-guided)

This document will lead you through the material covered in this workshop.

Instructions:

Complete each section of instructions, then mark the checkbox next to the bold title, and move to the next one.

Many videos have sound, so if you need help finding a way to listen or turn on captions, just ask!

☐ **Complete Search Engines Tutorial**

- Go to the webpage below, read the text, watch the videos, and complete the activities until you reach the **"Continue"** button.
- **When you reach the "Continue" button STOP. You have completed this tutorial.**
- https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/search-better-2018/introduction-to-searching-online/1

☐ **Read Search Engine Review (below)**

- <u>Search engines</u> are websites that use keywords to find relevant information on other websites.
  - Examples of search engines: Google, Bing, Duck Duck Go, Yahoo, etc.
- <u>Keywords</u> are the words you type into a search engine. They define the information you will find in search results.
- **Choose keywords carefully**
  - Use simple words.
  - Include only important words, ignore grammar rules, and don't necessarily use complete sentences.
  - Adding and removing keywords changes search results. It might be a good idea to try a few different searches to make sure you have the best results.
- **Search results** are displayed on the **results page**, and may include websites, videos, pictures, news results, sponsored results, and more. If you don't find what you're looking for, change your keywords.

☐ **Complete Search Engine Activity**

- Imagine you are going to search for information about cats. What keyword or keywords would you use? (answer here)

  _____

  _____

- Go to google.com and search using the keyword(s) you wrote above. Spend two minutes exploring the results and then return to these instructions.

- Imagine you are looking for information about adopting a cat. Would the information you found in your search results be helpful? What keywords would you use to find information specifically about adopting cats?

  _____

  _____

  - (Hint: You might want to add a keyword or two about your location so you can find results nearby.)

- Change your Google search to use your new keywords. Spend two minutes exploring the results and then return to these instructions.

- Small changes in the keywords you use to search can give you very different results. A good strategy is to try adding and removing keywords on the results page until you find the kind of information you are looking for.

☐ **Complete Information Evaluation Tutorial**

- Go to the webpage below, read the text, watch the videos, and complete the activities until you reach the "**Continue**" button.

- **When you reach the "Continue" button STOP. You have completed this tutorial.**

- https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/judging-online-information/1

☐ **Read Information Evaluation Review**

- Where is the information from?
  - Check the top level web domain (the letters at the end of the website)
    » **.gov**: government agencies
    » **.edu**: educational institution
    » **.org:** usually non-profits but not always unbiased
    » **.com .net .info .biz .fun:** could be owned by anyone

- How old is the information?
- What are their sources?
- What is the purpose of this site?
- Look out for bias.
  - Emotional language and generalizations are a red flag.
  - Focus on the facts.
  - Check multiple sources and consider multiple viewpoints.
- Use fact checkers:
  - http://www.snopes.com
  - https://www.politifact.com

☐ **Complete Finding Health and Medical Information Online activity**

- Discuss these questions with your partner:
  - What do you think about looking for health information online?
  - What are some possible drawbacks of searching for medical information online?
  - What are some positive aspects of searching for health information online?
- The internet can be used to find information about health, but just like anything other topic, it's important to make sure you can trust the information you find.
- With medical information, it's also important to remember that finding information online is not a replacement for seeing a doctor. However, sometimes you can save time and money by talking to your doctor online. Check with your insurance, doctor, or hospital to find out if there are "telehealth" options.
- Two websites with good health information are:
  - medlineplus.gov
  - nchealthinfo.org
- Spend 5 minutes on each website and then discuss with your partner examples of occasions in which you might use these websites.

☐ **Library Resources**

- Your public library has LOTS of online resources that you can use for homework to learn job skills, or just for fun!
- Ask a library staff person to tell you what kinds of resources are available online. Circle the services your library offers in the list below. Can you…

- Read an ebook?

- Listen to an audiobook?

- Read a comic book or magazine?

- Learn a new language?

- Find homework help?

- Watch a movie?

- Renew library books?

- Learn a new job skill?

- Your library offers so many services and resources online for free, and library staff can help you know which resources are trustworthy for the kind of information you're looking for.

Well done! You've completed this self-guided set of activities about finding and evaluating information online! The next page includes a review of these topics, as well as links to additional resources to learn more and practice the skills involved. Keep it as a reminder of what you've learned. If you need credit for completing this self-guided workshop, complete the Workshop Forms page and see a member of the library staff.

Finding and Evaluating Info
Review & Resources to Continue Learning

Search Engines

- Search engines are websites that use keywords to find relevant information elsewhere online.
    - Examples: Google, Bing, Duck Duck Go, Yahoo, etc

Improving Search Results

- <u>Keywords</u> are that represent the information you will find in search results.
- Choose keywords carefully.
    - Include only important words.
    - Ignore grammar rules and don't necessarily use complete sentences.
    - Adding and removing keywords changes search results. It might be a good idea to try a few different searches to make sure you have the best results.
- For more tips and tricks to make Google searches better and faster: edu.gcfglobal.org/en/search-better-2018/hidden-features-of-google-search/1
- To practice finding information with a search engine: agoogleaday.com

Evaluating Information Sources

- Where is the information from? How old is the information? What are their sources? What is the purpose of this site?
- Look out for bias.
    - Emotional language and generalizations are a red flag.
    - Focus on the facts.
    - Check multiple sources and consider multiple viewpoints.
- Use fact checkers:
    - snopes.com
    - politifact.com
- To learn more about how to evaluate information both online and offline, return to the Digital Media Literacy course and continue through the end.
    - edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy

Top Level Web Domains

- **.gov** government agencies
- **.edu** educational institutions
- **.org** usually non-profits but not always unbiased
- **.com .net .info .biz .fun** could be owned by anyone

Health Resources

- medlineplus.gov
- nchealthinfo.gov
- Telehealth: Check with your doctor, hospital, and/or insurance to see what money- and/or time-saving options are available online via telehealth.

Workshop Forms

COMPLETED WORKSHOP FORM – PARTICIPANT COPY

I _____ and I _____ have completed all the

(adult)   (student)

self-guided tutorials and activities for Finding and Evaluation Information Online. This will be added to my attendance record.

Adult Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Staff Signature _____ Date _____

- -

COMPLETED WORKSHOP FORM – LIBRARY COPY

I _____ and I _____ have completed all the

self-guided tutorials and activities for Finding and Evaluation Information Online. This will be added to my attendance record.

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Student Signature _____ Date _____

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