

Empowering Independent Learners: Internet Search Skills in the Fifth Grade

Research Question: How can I enhance student's Web literacy, and what impact will enhanced Web literacy have on information-seeking efficacy and choice in a rural fifth grade classroom?

Definition of Web Literacy for this study: Possessing both the ability and efficacy to independently search the Web to find information needed to answer questions that arise in an academic setting and to assess the validity of the source.



Significance of Research:

Students enter middle school without the Internet searching skills they require (Heil, 2005), yet they are already capable of learning Web searching in kindergarten (Spink et al., 2010). While students view themselves as tech savvy, their Internet-searching skills are not sufficient for academic searching tasks (Kolikant, 2010).

"It was fun I hope we do it again. I got a lot of answers."

"I learned about researching it was fun."

Have Fun Searching!

Conclusion:

The academic literature makes strong and compelling calls for the teaching of Web-searching skills. Such skills are a necessary component of Web literacy, which is growing increasingly important given the need to access Web-based information. The need for Web searching skills was evident in my class as well and students demonstrated they are able and eager to attain these skills.