

Portals, Gateways, and MetaSites (The Sites That Select Quality Web Sites)

Tips in general: Search by broad terms. Sometimes you may have to think "James Baldwin" instead of a novel title such as *The Fire Next Time* or you may have to think of broader terms such as "Afro American Literature" or even "American Literature."

Librarians' Index to the Internet

<http://lii.org>

Librarians' Index to the Internet (LII) is an excellent directory of over 10,000 web sites selected, evaluated and then annotated by librarians for both public librarians and public library users. One selection criteria of LII is that it does NOT include web sites that exist to primarily sell a product or charge a fee just to access or search the site. An alphabetical list is also available. When searching LII, keep in mind that the search terms you enter will be seeking words that are in the subject terms and descriptions and NOT in the actual web sites, themselves. The selected web sites also have Library of Congress Subject headings ascribed to them. In general, searching Librarians' Index to the Internet is like searching a Library Catalog of a Library that contains very selective resources. As the "Library's collection" is not so large, the user MUST search by broad search terms.

Help Screen: <http://www.lii.org/search/file/tips>

INFOMINE

<http://infomine.ucr.edu/>

Selected and maintained by librarians from several California universities, INFOMINE is a catalog of over 100,000 scholarly web resources. Begin by selecting any of the main categories. "Multiple Database Searching" will search all of INFOMINE's databases while each category leads to one particular database for that category. Once you select a category, you can enter search terms or begin browsing, selecting one of the links on the left. Once you are in a database, select your terms carefully and use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT). In the Multiple Database Search, you can either search all databases, or make selections below as to which databases you want to search. INFOMINE uses Library of Congress Subject Headings for indexing.

Help Screen: <http://infomine.ucr.edu/help/>

Virtual Learning Resources Center

<http://www.virtuallrc.com/>

Virtual Learning Resources Center is currently a one of a kind metasearch engine. It searches only online reference libraries, academic subject directories and other portals that are academically based. To make your search more focused, you enter your search terms, and then you enter one Dewey subject category below. Then, you click Search. Sometimes, you may have to perform a few searches, using a different Dewey category to get the most out of this meta-search engine.

Academic Info

<http://www.academicinfo.net>

Keyword Search: <http://www.academicinfo.net/search.html>

Complete Index: <http://www.academicinfo.net/table.html>

Founded by librarian, Michael Maldin, this subject directory is excellent in providing links to academic web sites. Select a broad subject category and then further categories. Or click on Keyword Search to search across all categories. Academic Info is currently seeking donations to continue its service, so if you see credit card symbols on top, simply scroll down to get to the strong indexed materials.

<http://www.academicinfo.net/help.html>

Scout Report Archives (Formerly Scout Report Signpost)

<http://scout.cs.wisc.edu/archives/>

The Scout Report Archives contains links to all the web sites reviewed by the Scout Report, a weekly annotated list of quality web sites selected by librarians and academics. This directory is categorized by the Library of Congress Subject Headings, just like books at most academic libraries, including Chabot's. Currently, there are over 14,000 quality web sites in the database (over 11,000 indexed with subject headings). Begin your search by either Quick Search or Advanced Search or browse by Library of Congress Subject Headings. Once you are at a link to a promising web site, click on it and you will first be led to a detailed description and review of that web site. Click on the link from the review and it will take you to the web site, itself. When searching Scout Report Archives keep in mind that the search terms you enter will capture words in the subject headings and annotations but NOT in the actual web sites, themselves. Also, since around 3,000 web sites are not indexed as of yet, you may want to search by keywords in addition to subject words. The Internet Scout Project is funded by the National Science Foundation to provide information on useful Internet resources to the education community.

Help Screen: <http://scout.cs.wisc.edu/archives/SRA--Help.html>

Geniusfind

<http://www.geniusfind.com>

Geniusfind is a directory of selected topic-specific search engines, databases, and web sites on the Web. Broken down into about 400 topics, the directory covers broad subject areas which lead you often to databases that you can then perform a more specific search. Each topic page contains no more than 20 selected sites, those determined to be the best of quality by the staff of Geniusfind.

Bubl-Link

<http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/index.html>

Search engine: <http://www.bubl.ac.uk/link/search.html>

A catalog of over 11,000 links, Bubl-Link is based in Great Britain and is organized by the Dewey Decimal Classification system, the way books are usually organized in public (not academic) libraries. Links can be searched by clicking on the letters on top to go to an alphabetical listing of subject terms, or select one of the major area links below to then find narrower terms to eventually reach the links to web sites, themselves. Each link is followed by a detailed annotation, telling you about the site and what it contains. By selecting "Search" on the top left, Bubl-Link will lead you to its search engine which does accept +, -, and exact phrase searching with quotation marks.

Help Screen: <http://link.bubl.ac.uk/search.htm>

About (Formerly Mining Co.)

<http://www.about.com/>

Sites A-Z: <http://a-zlist.about.com/index.htm>

The most commercial of these portals, About.com calls itself "The Human Internet." It builds its directory by having a paid staff of "Guides." Each guide is in charge of a particular subject and finds quality web sites on that subject. They then continue to update and maintain that subject page. Guides are very well trained by the About company and they usually have credentials related to their subject area. Begin by searching a term in its search engine, select a directory listed below, or search About's Sites A-Z list to overcome the layers of categories. If your use the search engine and your results lead to an Error message, try using a different search term. Do not search "the Web" through About or search the Sprinks entries listed in your entries, as they are all sponsored, paid for placement links.

Help Screen: http://search.about.com/library/search_tips.htm#tips

Invisible-Web.net

<http://invisible-web.net/>

Compiled by librarians Gary Price and Chris Sherman, this is an excellent directory to selected "Invisible Web" resources-- sources that search engines cannot pick up. The first stop for finding such resources, you first select a main category, THEN you select subcategories, each appearing as a new submenu listed below the main menu above. Eventually, a list of sites will appear below the series of menus. Remember to scroll down when using this source.