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Creating an Offline Website

Materials

index cards
pen (optional—different colors)

Objective

Create an offline version of a website in all of its layers.

Step-by-Step

Veronica Brown

The Gingerbread Man

The Gingerbread Man is a very old fairy tale that was part of a book by Joseph Jacobs. It is a very silly story about a man made out of gingerbread who runs so fast that no one can catch him.

About Me

I am a fourth grader at Chaparral Elementary School.

Joseph Jacobs was a writer who collected many fairy tales.

Gingerbread is a dessert made from ginger and sugar. It is usually a cookie or a cake.

1. Take a stack of index cards and, on the top one, write a paragraph about a fairy tale of your choice. In your paragraph, you should include the TAG (title, author, genre), a short summary, and an opinion. Make sure to put your name on top.
2. Underline the important words or phrases in the paragraph about which a reader may want more information. Make sure you underline your name as well. After all, you are the webmaster of this website.
3. Create a second tier of cards, one card for each word or phrase you underlined. For example, if you underlined a word that describes the setting of the story—for example, “Neverland”—then you need a card that is going to be about Neverland.
4. The card based on your name should be the “About Me” card.
5. Underline words or phrases in the second tier of cards that might also connect to their own explanation cards.
6. Create a third tier of cards to go into further explanation about topics from that second tier. For instance, perhaps in the “Neverland” card from the second tier, you’ve underlined “Pirates.” Maybe your next tier of cards is about famous pirates from history.

Also, don’t worry if not every second tier card has a third tier card. It could be that some card paths end at the second tier.

Voilà! Now you have your very own offline version of a website.



Translating URLs

To know how to trust a site begins with being able to read. Yes, we know you can read, but can you translate a URL?

Just as there are prefixes, roots, and suffixes in words, so are there different parts to an online address. Some you may know already; some may be new to you.

1. Domain names are the root words of the URL. They come after the **http://www**. Domain names can give you hints about the purpose and trustworthiness of the site. They might give you a hint as to whether a site is commercial or personal, fact or fiction.
2. Extensions are abbreviated ways to show the organization that owns and publishes the website. Some common extensions follow.

Common Extensions

.edu = Educational organization (most US universities)

.k12 = many US school sites

.ac = academic institution (outside of US)

.sch = some schools outside US

.com = company (in UK it's usually .co)

.org = any organization

.gov = any government agency

.net= network

.mil = military institution

.biz, .name, .pro, .info = used for commercial purposes

Then there are also country codes like England's .uk or state codes like California's .ca.

Remember that .edu, .gov, and .k12 tend to be more reliable. You'll need more backups before you use the research provided by sites that end with .com, .org, and .net.



Five Steps to Citing Websites

Citing websites actually answers questions that readers may have about your resources. In fact, it answers the five questions that most reporters ask themselves when investigating a story—who, what, when, where, and why.

When you aren't sure what information you need to include in a bibliography, just remember the following five steps:

Who is the author of the website, and is he or she an expert in the topic?



What does the website say? Is it fact or opinion? Is it a narrative or informational?



When was the website created and, more importantly, when was it last updated? Is the information current?



Where is the expert getting his or her information? Are there resources that you can further research that are linked to the site?



Why are the facts important to your research? Are they useful to you and the purpose of your research?

Let these five investigative question stems help guide you as you check the accuracy of a site and decide what is important to cite for each website.