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Module 3 Summary

Module 3 is about searching the web. We learned how search engines work and how to use them proficiently, one way by using search operators. Things can even be searched by using images. Another topic in Module 3 was evaluating web resources to be sure a webpage has accurate and reliable information.

My preferred search engine is Google. After I run a search, I personally tend to skip the sponsored options. If the sponsored webpage is relative enough to my search it is usually listed twice: As a sponsored link, and then further down as a regular link. The reason I usually skip the sponsored links is because those webpages paid money to be listed at the top, but that doesn’t mean they truly are what I am searching for. In class, Mr. Weidner showed a chart that depicted a typical user’s link clicks. I was shocked to see an overwhelming majority click on the very first link. I guess I am not in that grouping.

After learning about how I could optimize my search results by using search operators and logic operators, I began tweaking with my searching at home. In our lectures we have used teapots a few times as an example. I decided to try the different ways I could see teapot results based on different operators. I used AND, and OR, with keywords like glass and metal, and I tried the site: and location: operators. I also tried the minus (-) symbol in Google to exclude certain keywords. I got drastically different results depending on which operator I tried. An example of my findings was when I typed teapots location: Luzerne county PA…One of the results was of the local Polish Pottery Store. I remembered that this store was one of the buildings destroyed by the Wilkes-Barre tornado years ago, but I didn’t realize they moved to the mall and are still open. I’ll have to get my grandmother some polish pottery for her birthday.

When we covered the topic of evaluating web resources, I kept thinking back to the hybrid speech class I took over the summer. We had an assignment, before even writing our speech, to make a works cited page with proper resources listed in MLA format. In our New Perspectives – The Internet textbook, it covers all of the same criteria to test if a resource is legitimate: By identifying the author and their credibility towards the topic, checking for recent data, spelling or grammar errors, accuracy, relevance, and if there is any bias in the content. This usually requires checking multiple sources to be compared.

One final thought I had about the chapter was about Wikipedia. Every teacher I have ever had have always prevented me from using Wikipedia as a resource to be used for research or projects. I was pleasantly surprised when both the textbook and Mr. Weidner expressed that some articles on the site are well written, properly cited, and reviewed by qualified editors. However, there are still articles that lack objectivity, are incomplete, or simply untrue.