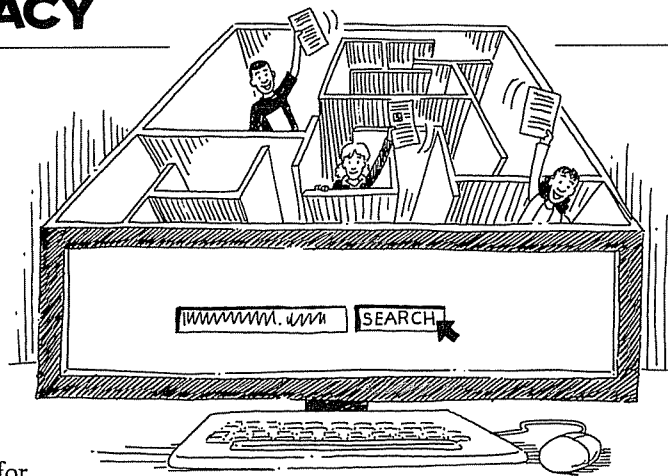




■ Explore other search features. For example, most engines have an “advanced search” or “options” link that will let your teen request sites from a particular country or source (news story, journal article, blog). She can also specify sites that do not include particular words. If she’s searching for “Madagascar coral reefs” and wants sites only about the country and not about a movie, she would type “Madagascar coral reefs –movie” (attach a minus sign to the word you want left out).

■ Many teens begin their research on Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)). It’s a collaborative Web site, or “wiki,” that is written and edited by users. Since anyone in the world can add to Wikipedia, remind your youngster to always check the facts she finds there. She can also use the references and links at the bottom of each Wikipedia entry to do more research.

■ If your teen isn’t sure what her topic will be, a Web directory might be a smart place to start. This is a collection of sites organized into categories. For example, the Internet Public Library ([www.ipl.org](http://www.ipl.org)) has headings such as “Arts & Humanities” and “Law & Government.” Other directories include <http://lii.org>, [www.awesomelibrary.org](http://www.awesomelibrary.org), and [www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org).



## CITING INTERNET SOURCES

Online information should be treated just like material in books. Remind your teen that it is plagiarism to copy word-for-word. Also, she must list sources for information that’s not common knowledge (example: Neil Armstrong was the first person to walk on the moon). She should ask her teacher how he wants Web pages to be cited.

## EVALUATING INFORMATION

The Internet contains so much information that it can be difficult to know which sites are reliable. These tips can help:

■ Look at the URL. Educational organizations (.edu) and government agencies (.gov) are usually reliable Web sources. Commercial Web sites (.com), nonprofit organizations (.org), and small business sites (.biz) can also have legitimate information, but your teen will need to evaluate them more carefully. He can search just for URLs ending in .gov or .edu by using an engine’s “advanced search” feature. Or he can add “site:.edu” (no space between the colon and the period) before the search terms. For instance, typing “site:.edu health” will pull up health sites published by schools.



■ Learn about the person or organization behind a Web site. A link at the bottom of the page may give credentials (books a person has published, organizations a group is affiliated with). Urge your teenager to avoid “sponsored links” on search engines. These paid advertisements usually appear in a shaded box at the top of the page or in their own column.

■ Check the date. Scan the page to find out when it was last updated. There may be a dateline at the top of an article or a copyright date at the bottom of the site.

*Tip:* Remind your teen to double-check all information. He should always verify facts by looking them up on more than one site.

## ORGANIZING ONLINE INFORMATION

**BOOKMARKING.** Your child can use his browser’s bookmark or “favorites” feature to save the address of each Web site he uses for an assignment. He’ll want to keep all his bookmarked sites in one computer folder with the name of his project. He can even create a shortcut so that this folder is accessible from his computer’s desktop. Another option is to save his URLs online at a social bookmarking site such as [www.diigo.com](http://www.diigo.com) or <http://delicious.com>.



These allow him to access his links from any computer by signing into his free account. He can also share great sites with friends.

**NOTE TAKING.** If your teen is already on the computer doing research, suggest that she save time by taking notes in a word processing document. She should be careful not to cut and paste information from a Web site into her project, unless she’s quoting something directly. Instead, she should read each section and then summarize important points in her own words.

## High School Years