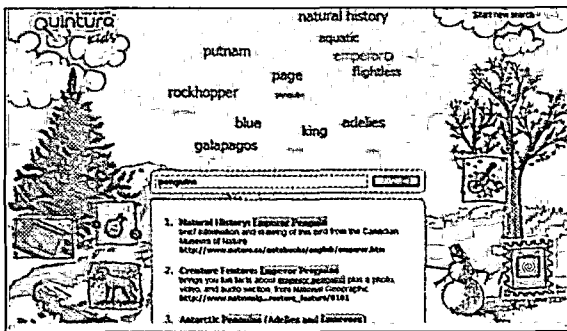


searching the Web with search engines for children

This sampling of children's search sites illustrates the range of search engines for kids on the Web. It includes a new visual search engine, a database of preapproved web sites selected for children, two search engines that search the Web and filter out sites whose content may be inappropriate for children, a British search site, and a meta-search engine.

Quintura for Kids (<http://kids.quintura.com/>), a visual search engine for grades K-6 that appeared in late 2006, is one of the newest children's search tools (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

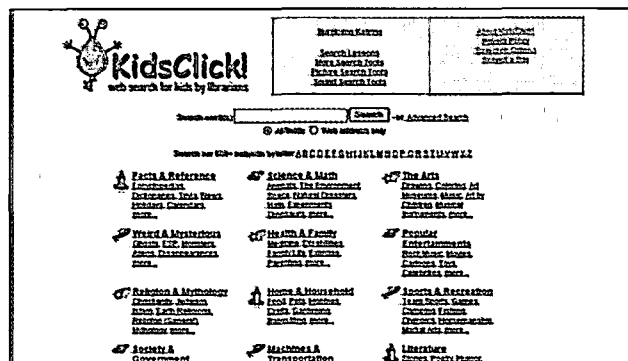


Quintura for Kids

and a cluster of related or more-specific search terms. *Strengths:* The visual search and concept maps of related terms are helpful for many users. It has an appealing interface; it is fun to use; and it provides useful results.

KidsClick! (www.kidsclick.org/), with its database of preapproved web sites selected for children in grades K-6, has been on the Web for over 10 years (see Figure 2). It was created by a group of librarians at the Ramapo Catskill Library System, Middletown, NY, and is now maintained by the School of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University, San Jose, CA. KidsClick!

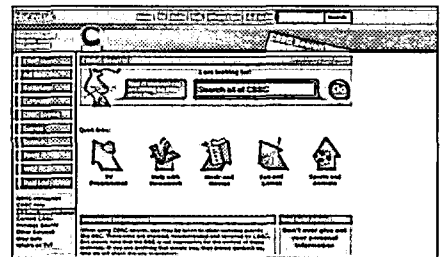
FIGURE 2



KidsClick!

is found on web sites located with KidsClick! For example, a search for *penguins* returned only five hits, one of which was about the Pittsburgh Penguins. *Strengths:* Assigned reading levels to web sites; no advertising; preapproved web sites, suitable for children at appropriate reading levels. It can be browsed or searched. *Weaknesses:* Limited search results.

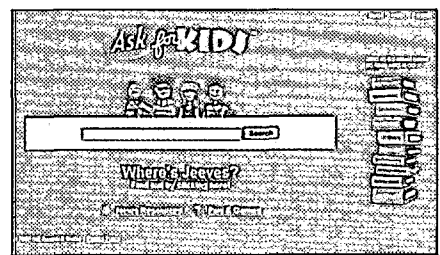
FIGURE 3



CBBC Search

CBBC Search (BBC for Children; www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/search/) is a United Kingdom-focused search tool for children grades 1-6 (see Figure 3). It searches for content from CBBC as well as from preapproved BBC and external web sites. Sites are checked by editorial staff to ensure that they are suitable and relevant for children of this age group. A search for *penguins* on CBBC returned 23 pages of search results that came from CBBC web sites: CBBC nature fact files, CBBC news, and CBBC feature presentations. *Strengths:* CBBC provides a good selection of preapproved web sites that are useful and relevant to search terms. *Weaknesses:* Although generally limited to CBBC content, this content is of overall high quality.

FIGURE 4



Ask for Kids

Ask for Kids (www.askforkids.com/; formerly AskJeeves for Kids from Ask.com) for grades K-6 has an appealing interface but offers limited results (see Figure 4). Often, only one main web site is returned for each search term, and it is followed by related sites from FactMonster (www.factmonster.com/). Ask for Kids, with its stack of study help books on the right side of the interface, is designed to appeal to school children working on school projects. A search for *penguins*

provided the kingdom, phylum, class, order, and family for penguins. Click on "More," and you are taken to a single web site from PBS. A drop-down list of 16 related search terms is provided, all of which are other types of penguins. Ten other results, which are interesting, relevant, and readable by children, are provided from FactMonster. However, these FactMonster results contain sponsored ads, banner advertising, and links to irrelevant articles. *Strengths:* Ask for Kids is visually appealing and styled to assist with students' research projects. *Weaknesses:* It provides limited results with advertising on many sites.

FIGURE 5

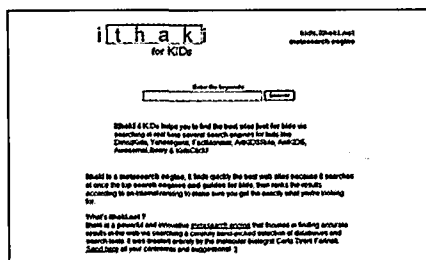


Yahoo! Kids

Yahoo! Kids (<http://kids.yahoo.com/>) for grades 2-7 is a major makeover of Yahoo!igans (see Figure 5). Still in beta, the new Yahoo! Kids' interface is loaded with advertising and distractions, not necessarily ideal for anyone trying to use it for school research. Search results always start with movie results first. Even when you scroll down to find the results from "Kids Sites," advertisements for games fill the righthand side of the page, and links to jokes, movies, and music are at the bottom of the page. When you eventually locate them, search results suitable for school projects tend to be excellent and very readable. However, the interface and search results are filled with too many diversions before actually reaching useful material. *Strengths:* Yahoo! Kids gives a good selection of useful, readable results. *Weaknesses:* The interface is too busy and filled with too many diversions. Useful material is buried amidst entertainment.

Ithaki (<http://kids.ithaki.net/>) is a meta-search engine for children in grades 4-6 (see Figure 6). It obtains its results from DmozKids, Yahoo! Kids, FactMonster, ArtKIDSRule, AoIKIDS, AwesomeLibrary, and KidsClick! A search for *penguins*

FIGURE 6



Ithaki

returned 35 hits, including one article about the Pittsburgh Penguins. Results

appear in a new window that allows the searcher to return to the original list of results without getting lost on results pages. This is a particularly useful feature for children. Several sites contain a lot of pop-up messages and advertising, but for the most part, the results were useful and relevant to the search terms. *Strengths:* The site is easy to navigate, and it retrieves results from many search tools. *Weaknesses:* Many search results contain pop-ups and advertising.

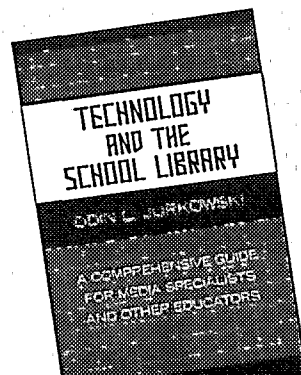
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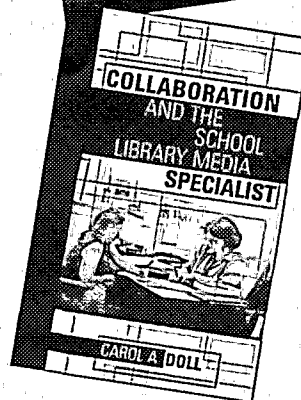
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