The Internet is no substitute for a library. The Library offers organized access to the knowledge of our civilization. In comparison, the Internet is the Wild, Wild, West!

**Differences Between Libraries and the Internet**

**Quality:**
Editors, Publishers, Peer-Reviewers, & Librarians do quality control checks. These people are unlikely to invest time and money into low-quality information. No one does quality control on the Internet, so anyone can publish there. Quality research is mixed with biased and outright wrong information.

**Organization:**
A lot of time, energy, and expertise is put into organizing a library so that information can be found again. Librarians are experts in information retrieval and will be happy to help you navigate the organization system. There is no organization on the Internet. In addition, the search tools are much harder to control. Content on the web is always changing, growing, or disappearing. This means something you cite may not be the same (or even exist) if your reader wants to see it later. This can make you lose credibility.

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Let's talk about Internet searching a little more...
Whether you know it or not, you’re using Boolean operators when you search Google...

Google automatically inserts the word “and” between all keywords. It also searches the full web page, not just the title, abstract, and subject terms.

This means your words are less likely to relate to one another, let alone the main point of the document.

Tip: Enclose search phrases in quotation marks.

“snowden library”

Search

Not everything is on the web... some estimates say as little as 20% of information on any given topic.

Remember: results are not listed in relevance or chronological order.

In addition, search engines can only reach about 10% of what is on the web.

What’s left is often called “the invisible web”.

The databases offer advanced features to construct more efficient searches and offer access to quality materials paid for by your library.

We both have our uses, so use us wisely!

Click for Review Questions