Grades 3-5 Accessing Information

Background Information:

Accessing valid information, products, and services is important in the prevention, detection, and treatment of health problems. This skill is often the foundation of many decisions students will make. When using this skill, students will be evaluating the validity and reliability of information they have accessed on the Internet, from other printed sources, the media, and other people. Mastery of this skill will empower students to either accept or reject the information they have found in order to achieve better health.

The accessing information model for grades 3-5 has three basic components. First, students identify characteristics of information, products, and/or services. Next, students determine whom in their home, school, or community they can go to for information. It is also important that students know how to contact those individuals, or trusted adults, and they are able to determine when their help is needed. Finally, students analyze the characteristics and resources for validity, deciding if the information or source is truthful.

The Model

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Indentify Validity	Locate Resources	Analyze for Validity

The Steps

Skill Steps	Teaching Progression
Step 1: Identify Characteristics of Validity	Students identify the characteristics of the information, products, or services they are considering. Later students analyze the validity of these specific characteristics. Students work together to identify the characteristics of a website for their research project. Specifically, students should be taught how to locate the author's name, publication date, and possible supporting organizations. Students should also become familiar with URL extensions and their meanings (.edu, .org, .gov, .net, and .com). Students should examine how to identify fact from opinion. Examine what it means to educate without appealing to emotions. Finally, students need to determine if there is enough information about the topic, and if the information is well written and free of errors. Provide students with specific examples of each of these criteria and practice identifying how they would determine if the resource meets the criteria.
Step 2: Locate Accessible Resources	Students brainstorm all of the possible resources that may be available in their home, school, and community. This includes printed material like books, magazines, newspapers, and billboards. It can also include media such as TV, radio, internet, and social networks. Finally, it includes human resources. For example; friends, family, health professionals, and others. Students need to know where to access these resources. If printed material or media is not readily available, they determine where to go to access the resource. If a health professional is needed, students must not only consider which resource meets their needs, but also where and how they can be located. Locate Accessible Resources - Students work together to explore some popular internet search sites designed for children. They identify and record the features offered by one of the sites, then compare and contrast these with other sites. Discuss the importance of locating multiple sites when looking for research.
Step 3: Analyze for Validity	When analyzing for validity, students check to see if the characteristics or if the resources are **truthful**. This means that they are truthful and based on facts. The following questions may help determine if a characteristic, website or resource is valid. • Is the author(s) and their credentials listed? • Is the site or resource from a respected organization (.gov, .edu, .net, or .org)? • Is the information based on fact rather than opinion? • Is the site or resource free of errors (grammar, spelling, typographical, etc.)? • Is the site or resources current? • Are the claims realistic? • Does the information educate you without appealing to your emotions? • Can you find the same information in another resource? Analyze for Validity - Explore the idea that anyone can publish on the internet, so not all sites are trustworthy or valid. People who create posts, blogs, or other websites, aren't necessarily "experts" in the subject they are writing about. Their "facts" may not be true, or they may represent their opinions as facts. Students need to carefully evaluate the sites they use for research and then decide which ones they will trust. Students discuss the established criteria for rating an informational website, then apply the criteria by examining and scoring an assigned site based on the site's characteristics. The students compare their results, and learn that all websites are not equally trustworthy, or valid sources of information.

Sample Student Handouts

Validity Checklist

Accessing Information

List the website or resource you are considering using and answer the questions to decide if it is valid.

Internet Website Address or resource:

_____

1. Is the author(s) and their credential(s) listed?	YES	NO
2. Is the site or resource from a respected organization (.gov, .edu, .net, or .org)?	YES	NO
3. Is the information based on fact rather than opinion?	YES	NO
4. Is the site or resource free of errors (grammar, spelling, typographical, etc.)?	YES	NO
5. Is the site or resources current?	YES	NO
6. Are the claims realistic?	YES	NO
7. Does the information educate you without appealing to your emotions?	YES	NO
8. Can you find the same information in another resource?	YES	NO

How many times did you circle YES _____ out of a total 10?

7-8: Success! - You can trust the information on your site.

4-6: Be Careful - Check the facts using another trusted resource.

0-3: No Good - It isn't safe to use this site as a valid source of information. Try again.

Teaching Tips:

- Vocabulary: products, services, valid/validity, credentials, criteria
- Realize as a teacher where the students are developmentally. Students need multiple exposures and opportunities to practice identifying valid, as well as non-valid, characteristics and resources.
- We don't want a student to believe that simply because they have found an answer to their question, it must be correct. They need to practice determining validity.
- Accessing information is a critical skill in all subject areas. Students need to be knowledgeable and critical consumers of information. The only way they master this skill is through thoughtful opportunities for practice across the curriculum.
- Reading - Create a list of books in the library that would help a fellow student learn more about a particular topic.
- Science – Identify and compare two scientific claims and determine if the claims are valid based on the information given.
- Social Studies - Analyze a want ad that appeared in an east coast paper in 1803, looking for young men to join Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Engineers on an expedition to the west.
- A partnership between schools and parents can provide the type of environment that will help them access information not only at school, but also at home and in their community. Parents can reinforce the skills and vocabulary used in the classroom regarding the accessing information model.

What Does Mastery of Accessing Information Look Like:

To show proficiency, students in grades 3-5 will access valid information, products, and services. Students will also locate resources from home, school, and the community that provide valid information. Achieving this standard improves health literacy and the confidence to access legitimate sources of information, products, and services, from a variety of resources that will enhance their health

Teaching/Student Resources

The Colorado Education Initiative
http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/resources/chpe/

RMC Health
http://www.rmc.org/

Colorado Department of Education
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cohealthpe/statestandards

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