

3rd - 5th Grade Search Lesson

In this lesson we will be focusing on learning if you can trust a website based on its looks.

We will use the great fake site thedogisland.com. Students in this age love this site and easily get sucked in to all the great pictures and writing about how great this island is for dogs. A fun place to start the conversation on authenticating your resources.

Extension: If you really want to mess with your kids you can have them search Google for Dog Island. Now the website talks about a fictional island for dogs but in reality there is an island named [Dog Island off the coast of Florida in the United States](#). But it's just a small island and no....you can't drop off your dog there to vacation. So if you want to take this lesson a step further you have this in your back pocket. :)

Set Up: Students can all be on their own device or in groups of 2 or 3. Groups might actually be better as you can give students time to talk to each other. I will use the phrase “**turn and talk**” to indicate time when students should be in discussion with each other.

Prime The Pump: Put on your acting hat as we're going to sell students on the fact that you found this great website called “Dog Island” the other day while looking for information on the web. It's an amazing web site about an island just for dogs where they can go on vacation and live happily (if you have a dog you can sell it even more that way!). Tell the students that this island sounds fantastic but you're really not sure about it and you want them to help you find out more information about the island. You can give them the URL and give them some time to explore the site on their own and **turn and talk** to each other about the website.

How do we know if we can trust a site?

- There are a couple of key pieces of information that will help us decide if we can trust a site or not. Each of us needs to make up our minds if we can trust the site, in the end it's a judgement call on the user's part. But these key pieces of information can help us.
 - Authority
 - Currency
 - Content/Purpose
 - Audience
 - Structure/Workability

[Chris Betcher has a great presentation that outlines these 5 points](#) with questions you can ask students or they can ask themselves when evaluating a website. Apply these five points to the website and allow students to **Turn and Talk** about what they find.
- **Using the Google linkto: Syntax**
 - Google can also help us find out if a website is worth trusting by telling us what other websites on the Internet are linking to the website we are looking at.
 - Have students open up a new tab to Google.com
 - In the search box type: linkto:<http://www.thedogisland.com>
 - These results show which websites are linking to thedogisland.com



- Allow students to “Turn and Talk” about the results
 - What do you notice?
 - Who is linking to this web site:
 - Note: All links to this site are either internal, meaning that the website just constantly links to itself, or there are websites made to tell people that these fake sites exist. Either way it doesn’t take long at this point to realize this site is fake with no outside authentication.
- How did the author sell this site as real?
 - Have students **turn and talk** about what aspects of the site make it seem real at first glance. i.e. it looks nice, has great pictures, seems to be “normal”.
 - Have a conversation along the lines of “you can’t judge a book by it’s cover”. These websites are made for you to think they are real. They want you to explore them and what they are really hoping for is that you click on an ad so the author gets paid.

On Their Own: Have students work in teams assigning each team to one of the links below. Give them time to see if they can use what they’ve learned to discover if these websites are real or fake. Have them report back to the class with their findings.

[Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus](#) (fake)

[Pacific Tree Frog](#) (real)

[The Federal Vampire and Zombie Agency](#) (fake)

[Save the Guinea Worm](#) (fake)

[Guinea Farm](#) (real)



linkto:<http://www.thedogisland.com>



About 2,560,000 results (0.18 seconds)

Using linkto: to find what sites link to this website

Did you mean: [linkto:http://www.the.dog.island.com](http://www.the.dog.island.com)

[Dog Island Free Forever](#)

www.thedogisland.com/

Over 2,500 dogs are already enjoying a better life at Dog Island. Separated from the anxieties of urban life, dogs on Dog Island are healthy dogs who live a ...

Notice the links within the website

[Disclaimer - Dog Island](#)

www.thedogisland.com/disclaimer.html

DISCLAIMER: This site was made in jest, for fun for love of dogs and for love of life. You are to take NO actions, make NO decisions based on the content of this ...

Notice the disclaimer page on the web site itself. If students used the 5 factors they were taught earlier they should have found this site was fake.

[Is this "dog island" real? http://www.thedogisland ... - Answerbag.com](#)

www.answerbag.com > ... > [Pets And Pet Care](#) > [Dogs](#) > [Dog Information](#)

4 answers - 16 May 2007

This site is a hoax. (there is a real dog island, but it's not as described) You can check this by some hoax review sites: ... No its not real. that is ...

[Internet Evaluation](#)

www.ferris.edu/library/instruction/classes/internet.html

21 Jun 2010 – [Link to Ferris Homepage](#). Ferris Library for ...

<http://www.snopes.com/medical/toxins/aspartame.asp> ...

(<http://www.thedogisland.com/>) ...

The next 3 links about this website all talk about how it is a fake site

[MonkeyFilter | Seeking Fake Websites](#)

monkeyfilter.com/link.php/6058

62 posts - 34 authors - 22 Nov 2004

<http://web.csuchico.edu/~ka58/dwsm/classes.html>. posted by Great stuff, and links to more, thanks so much! <http://www.thedogisland.com/> ...

A look at the search result for the linkto:<http://www.thedogisland.com>. have a discussion about this page and how using linkto: can help tell us who is linking to a web page.

