

## **Reflection: Using Google Custom Search in an educational setting**

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Google Custom Search is a great idea and seems tailored to work perfectly in an educational setting (I may even be tempted to pay the \$100 fee at school to remove the ads!).

I like the options to gather your own customized group of sites... sites that have been screened for appropriate content and reliable information. This is the hardest part of research for today's student. They are so used to having information immediately available to them through a Google search that they rarely take the time to question the origin of that information. So few students are able to filter what they find and determine if it is from a reliable source.

I think that is still a good lesson for a student to learn. I wouldn't want to spoon-feed them customized searches for every research project. That would take the "real world" element out of the research and a teacher would be missing a valuable teaching opportunity. However, if the students were too young to learn how to tell a reliable source from a questionable one, the teacher could setup a customized search for them. If they are old enough to know better... then a great activity would be to have the students setup a customized search of their own to help them in their research.

One last feature I like is the ability to take the html code of a customized search and embed that search engine into a web page. I may be showing my age by using the term "webquests", but to me this seems like an ideal tool for such an activity. Teachers could create a webquest page and embed the custom search directly on the page for students to be able to answer the questions from the specific sites chosen. That would give the students the tools that they need to complete a focused, directed lesson on a particular topic.