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The Thinkfinity Center for Innovative Teaching, Technology and Research

7-1-2008

Manual on Creating Web-enhanced Lessons Using Thinkfinity

Compilation of Guidelines

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Creating Web-Enhanced Lessons Using Thinkfinity

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Standards Alignment

Thinkfinity's Standards Alignment feature allows you to find lessons that align with the New York State standards.

To use the Standards Alignment feature:

- Open the **Educator Page**.
- Click on **Standards Alignment** in the top navigation bar. The center of the page includes the National standards addressed by each of the partners. Many partners also refer to additional standards in their lessons when appropriate.

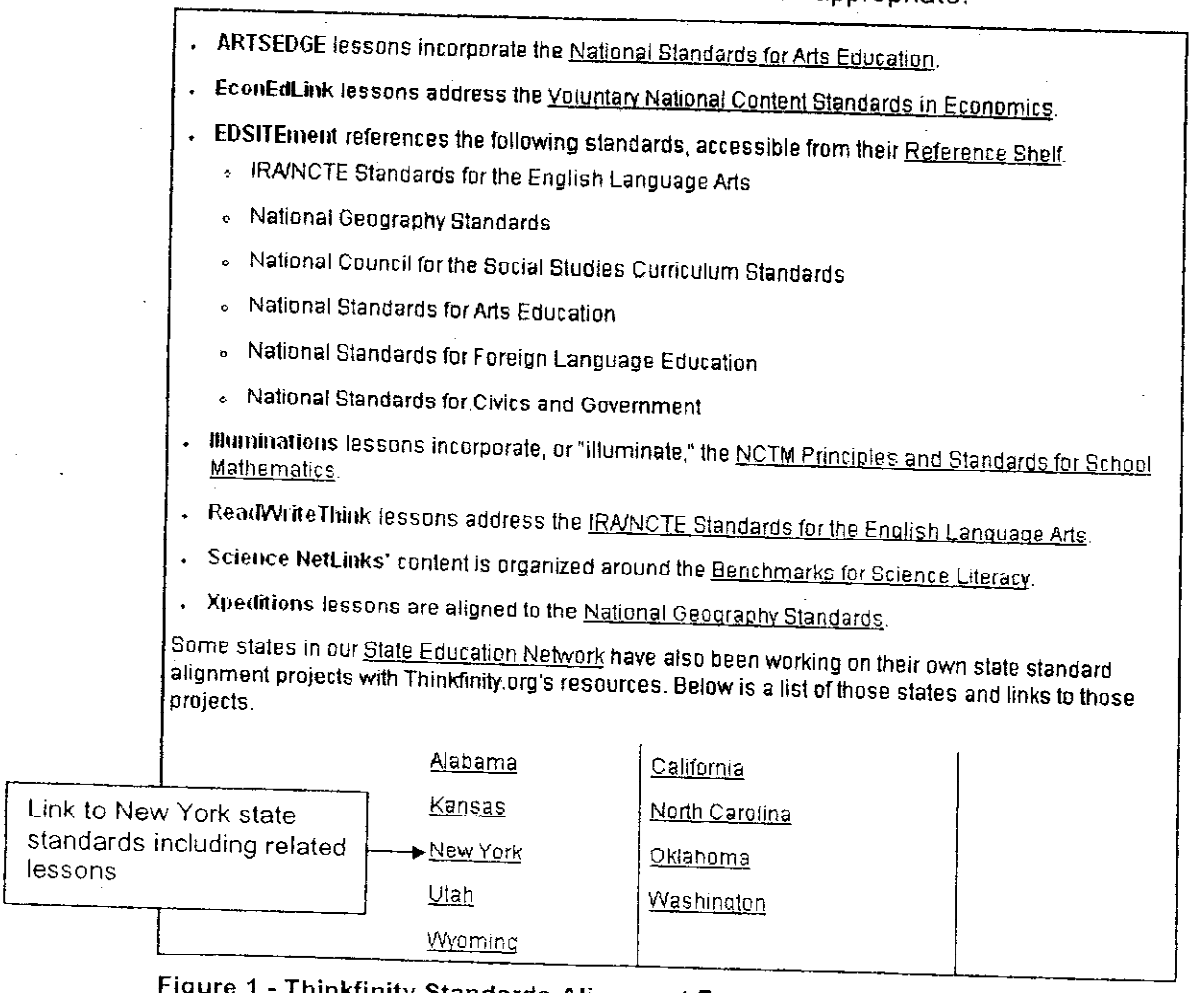


Figure 1 - Thinkfinity Standards Alignment Page

- To reach the NY State standards, click on the link to **New York**.

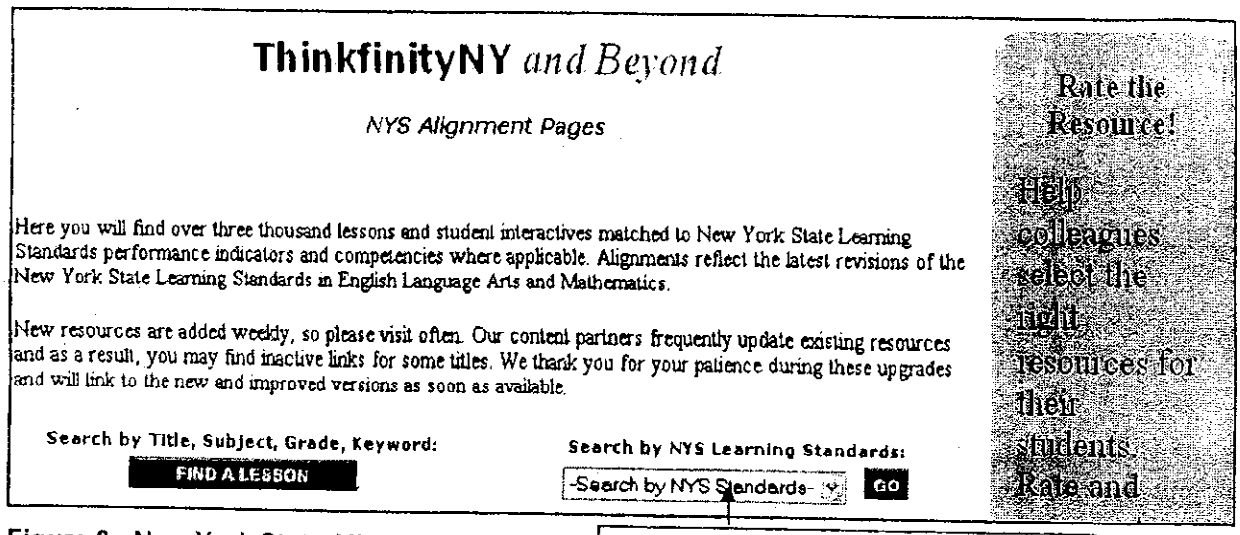


Figure 2 - New York State Alignment Page

Pick NYS Standard here and click GO.

- To search the New York State Alignment Page by standard, choose a standard from the – **Search by NYS Standards** box and click **GO**.

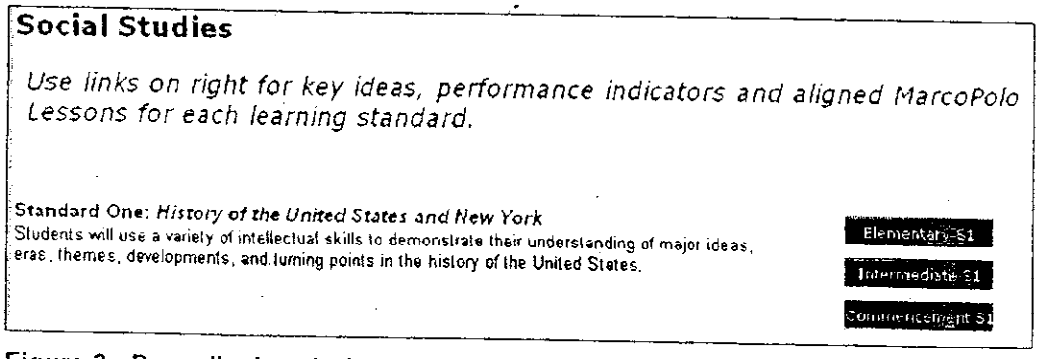


Figure 3 - Page displayed after you have picked a standards content area

- Pick the level (Elementary, Intermediate or Commencement) for the standard that you want.

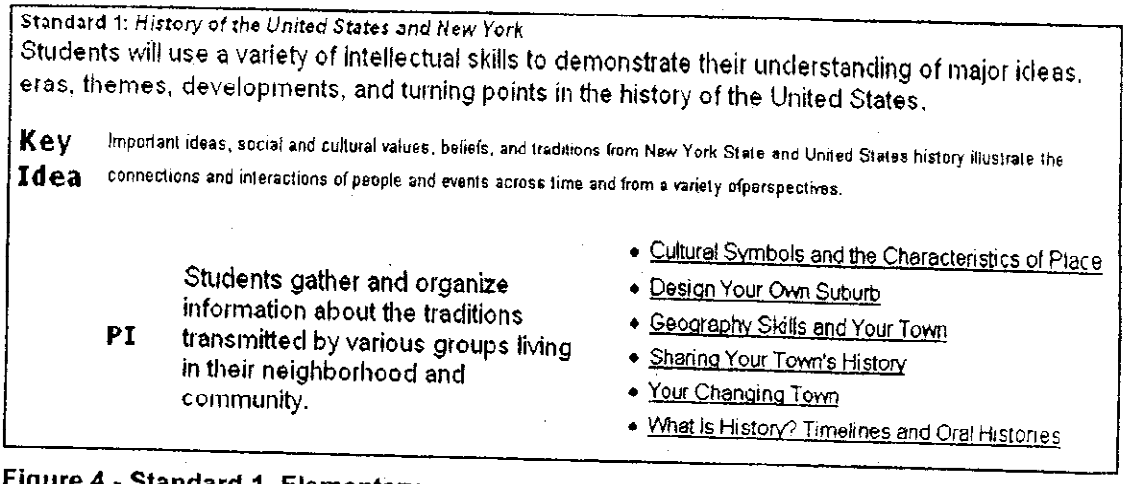


Figure 4 - Standard 1, Elementary

- Click on a lesson that meets your standard.
- The Lesson Details page will be displayed. It includes the lesson title, grade level, lesson URL, description, teacher ratings (if there are any), parent information, partner name, and NY State Standards Alignments. Click on the link to the lesson to go to the lesson.

- Alternately, from the Standards Alignment page, you can click on the link to Find Lesson. Here, you can search by Title, Subject, Grade, Content Type, Partner and/or Keyword.

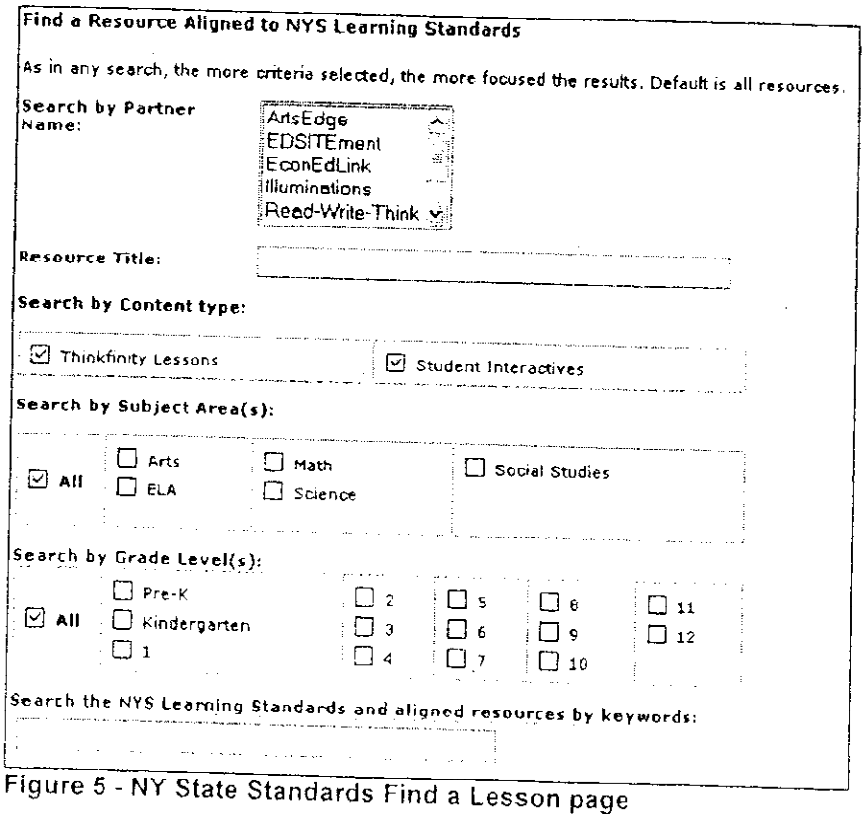


Figure 5 - NY State Standards Find a Lesson page

- The results of the search will be the Lesson Details page described above.

NOTE: Not all lessons that meet a specific state standard are listed. Lessons are continually being added.

Searching Thinkfinity

You can find a wealth of resources by searching the entire Thinkfinity network – including Partner Sites and reviewed Weblinks.

You can start a search from

- The Thinkfinity home page

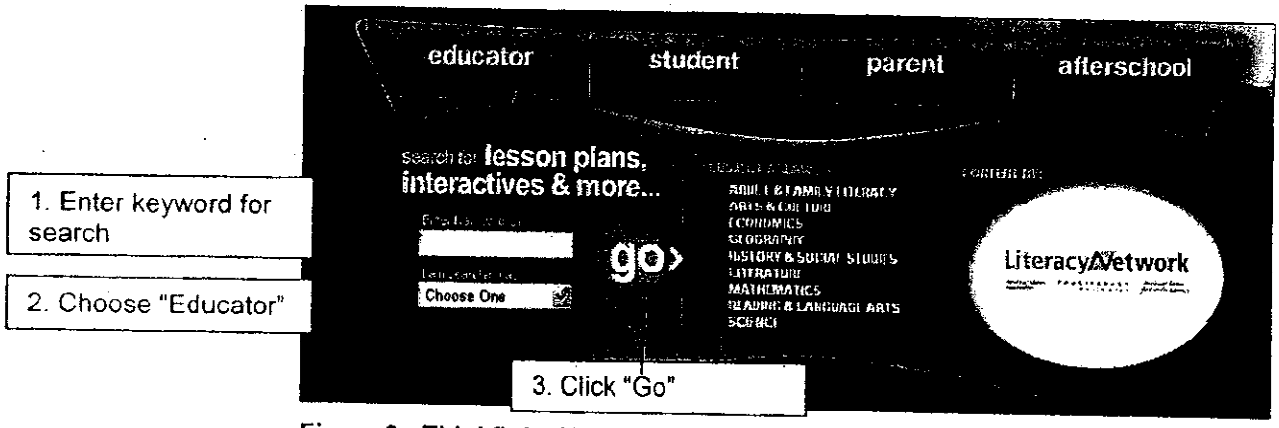


Figure 6 - Thinkfinity Home Page Search

- Any of the educator resources pages on Thinkfinity

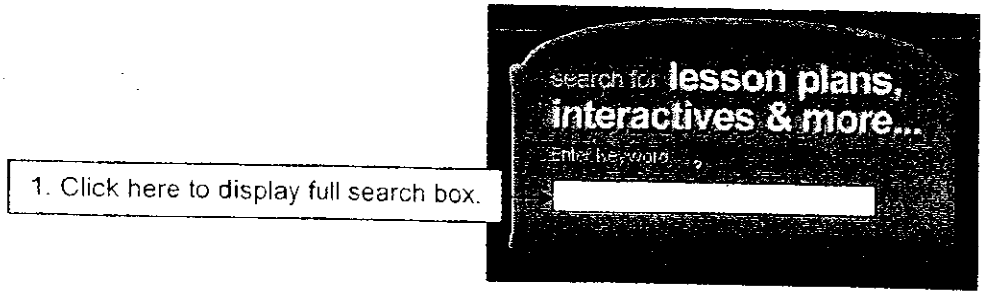


Figure 7 - Educator's Resource Page Search box

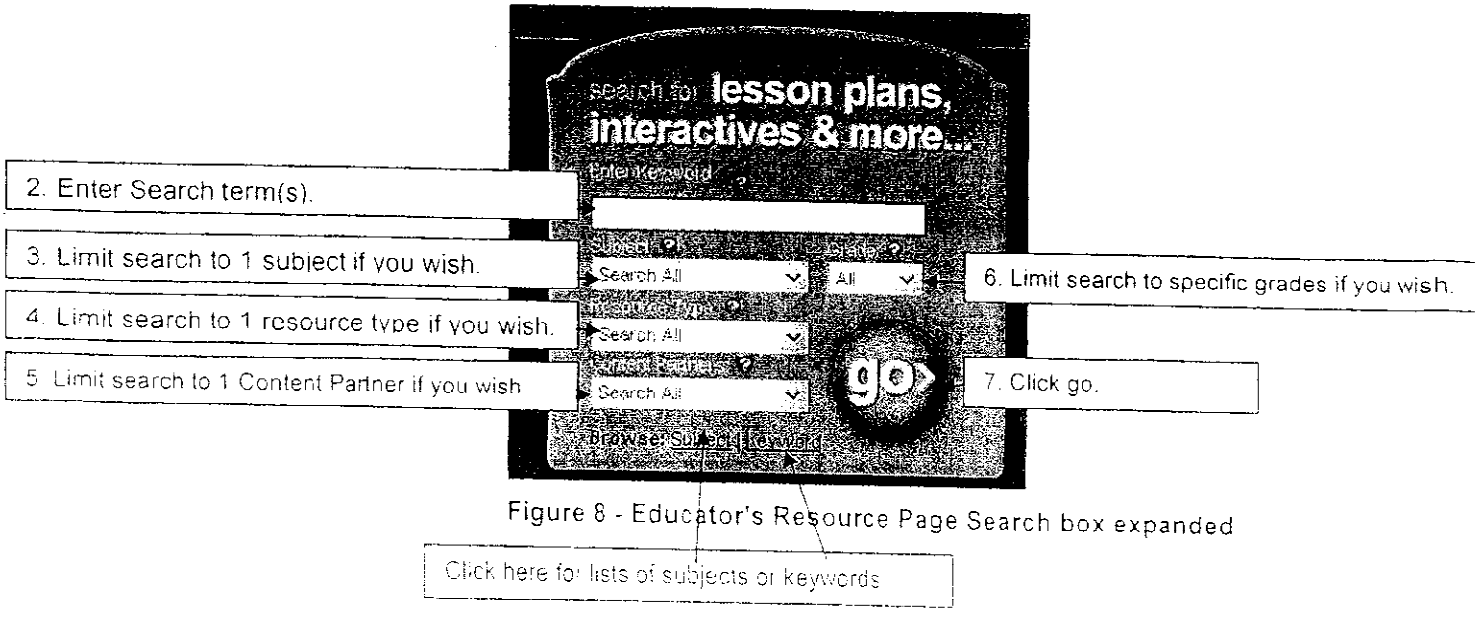


Figure 8 - Educator's Resource Page Search box expanded

- Any of the Partner's websites:
  - On most of the Partner's pages, the Search button on the top of their pages takes you to a joint search for that partner and all other partner pages.
  - **ArtsEdge** has two Search buttons, one for searching just ArtsEdge and one for searching all of the Thinkfinity partner sites
  - In **Xpeditions** the Search button is part of the Resources panel on the left of the screen
  - A screen with content similar to that on the Educators' resource page is displayed. Fill in the relevant items.

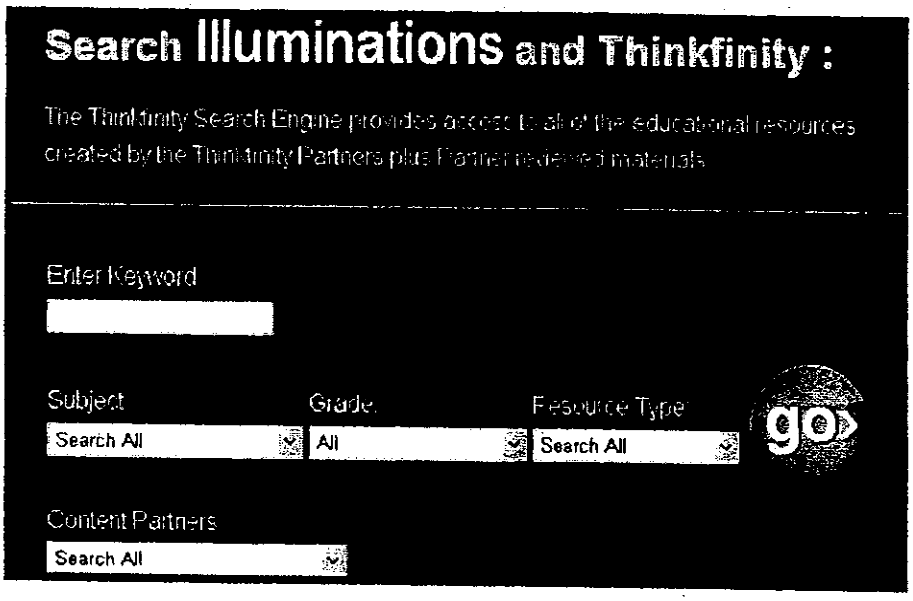
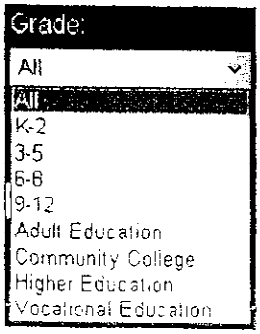
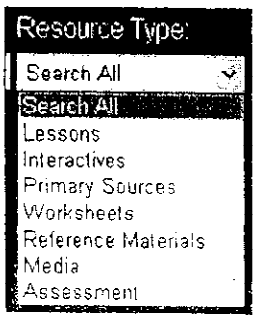


Figure 9 - Search box displayed from search button on Partner Site

NOTE: To limit the search to the Partner Page you are currently on, choose that Partner from the Content Partners drop-down list.

Choices for the four drop down search lists

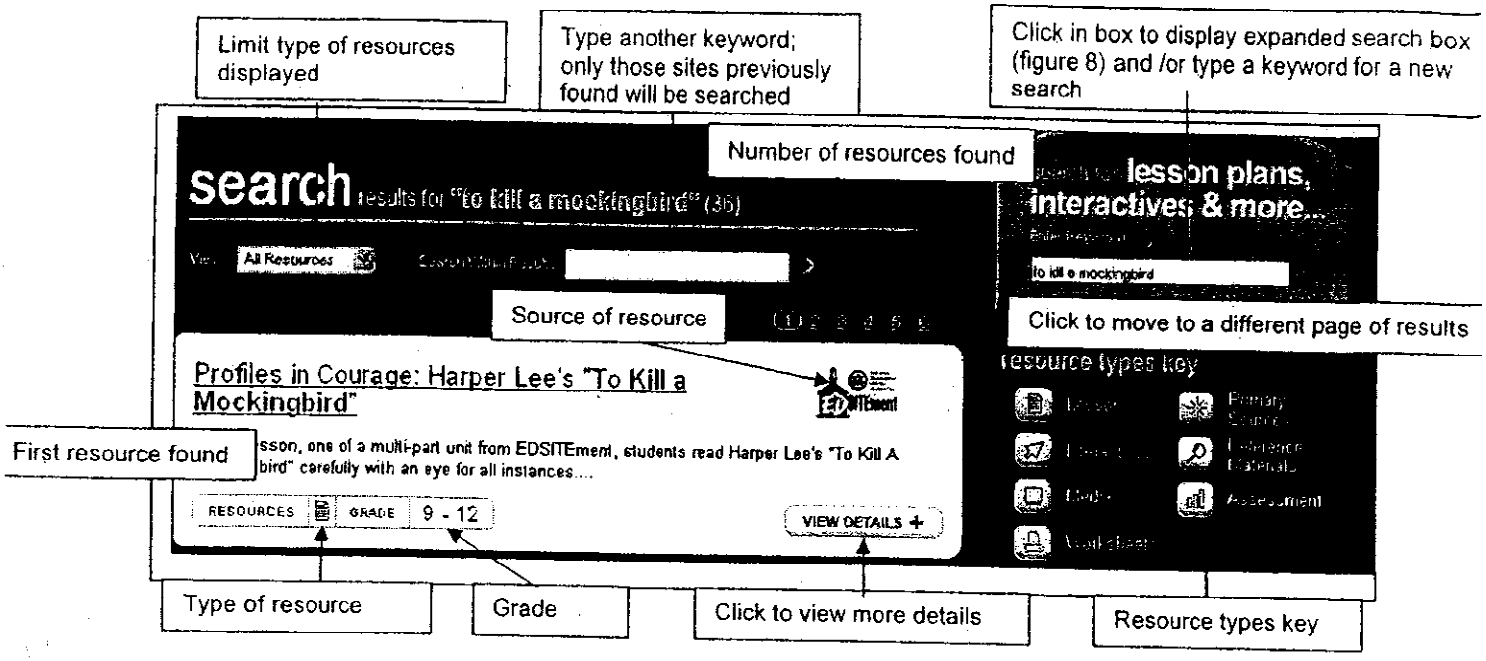




Search Results

Below is the Search Results page.

Once you are on this page, you can use it to search using a new keyword, or refine the current search by limiting it to only one type of resource, subject area or partner, or by typing a new keyword(s) that will be used to search within the current results.



Organization of Search Results:

- Resources displayed 7 at a time
- First resources from Partner sites are listed; then resources from reviewed Web links
- Searches, particularly broad ones in the humanities, usually find links from multiple partners.
- One resource may fit into more than one type category
- A large number of listings are found for many searches. This is partially because the contents of one lesson can be listed many times – once for the lesson, and additional times for the other resources included in the lesson . Some of the activities on Web sites referred to in the lesson are also listed separately
- Some of the resource type classifications are broad. For example, while "interactive" resources include interactive web activities, they also include activities where student interaction is limited to respond ing by using a worksheet.
- REMEMBER: Not all resources that might be relevant are necessarily found by the search – the resource might not use the specific words for which you are searching

Sample Searches

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
  - 109 resources – from the following Partners and their reviewed Web sites
    - 66 – ReadWriteThink
    - 34 – Edsitement

        - 2 – EconEdLink
        - 4 – ArtsEdge (reviewed sites only)
        - 1 – Xpedia (reviewed site only)
        - 1 – Smithsonian National Museum of American History (not yet fully online)
    - Searching within results for "I have a dream" limits results to 42
- **To Kill a Mockingbird**
    - 36 resources – from the following Partners and their reviewed Web sites
        - 20 – Edsitement
        - 15 – ReadWriteThink
        - 1 – Xpeditions (reviewed site only)
    - Types of resources
        - 0 – assessments
        - 2 – interactive
        - 3 – media
        - 3 – primary resources
        - 3 – worksheets
        - 13 – lessons
        - 18 – references
- **Volcano**
    - 1410 resources
    - How would you refine the search?
    - What other key words would you search for?

Common and Unique Features of Thinkfinity Web sites

Common Features

A common aspect of every Thinkfinity Partner Web site is that each site presents content within the framework of the four common features: Lessons, Web Sites, Standards and Student Materials. Although they may be named differently, each Partner Site has lessons, a listing of reviewed Web sites, reference to national standards, and materials and interactive tools / activities for students.

Partner Site	Lessons	Web Sites	Standards	Student Materials
ARTSEDGE	Lessons	WebLinks	Standards	Look-Listen-Learn
EconEdLink	Lessons	WebLinks	Standards	Tools in CyberTeach's Teaching Resources ; student pages with interactives embedded.
EDSITEment	Lessons	All Web Sites	Standards	Interactives / activities embedded within lessons
Illuminations	Lessons	Web Links	Standards	Activities
ReadWriteThink	Lessons	Web Resources	Standards	Student Materials
Science NetLinks	Lessons	Resources	Benchmarks	Student sheets and Interactives embedded within lessons and on Tools page
Xpeditions	Lessons	Recommended Links	Standards	Xpedition Hall & Interactives embedded within lessons and interactive Atlas

Unique Features

There are many unique features on the Partner sites. Below you will find a few unique features that have been highlighted.

Partner Site	Unique Features
ARTSEDGE	• How-To's • Spotlights
EconEdLink	• DataLinks • Current Events • CyberTeach • State Standards Correlation
EDSITEment	• Calendar • This Month's Feature • Reference Shelf
Illuminations	• Explorations
ReadWriteThink	• Calendar
Science NetLinks	• Science Updates • Student E-Sheets
Xpeditions	• Atlas • Xpedition Hall • Activities

Thinkfinity Literacy Network

National Center for Family Literacy

PROLITERACY WORKS

- More than 40 online courses for literacy instructors, community-based organizations, students and volunteers
- Exclusive best practices like the Life Span Literacy Matrix and Literacy Program Self-Assessment Tool
- Activities and instruction for English language learners and ESL instructors
- Searchable databases of hundreds of literacy organizations in need of volunteers
- Studies, research and statistics highlighting the importance of literacy development across the life span

Smithsonian's National Museum of American History

Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

The National Museum of American History dedicates its collections and scholarship to inspiring a broader understanding of our nation and its many peoples. We create learning opportunities, stimulate imaginations, and present challenging ideas about our country's past.

The Partner site from Smithsonian's National Museum of American History is coming soon. See http://thinkfinity.org/about/partners.aspx#smithsonian for more information

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Goal

Create one or more activities or lessons that use Web-based Technology:

- Tool, not goal, starting point or decoration
- Only use technology to add value
- Consider current lessons to technologically enhance

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Critical Question

What are the ways in which technology can add value to a lesson?

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How Can Technology Add Value?

Access to resources otherwise unavailable

Involve multiple modalities/medias

Allow students to manipulate information/data/events

Involve higher order thinking skills

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How Can Technology Add Value?
continued

- Increase student control of learning
- Increase motivation
- Increase involvement/time on task
- Individualize instruction

Characteristics of Value Added Sites

- Multi-media
- Interactive
- Primary sources
- Unique
- Current
- Cultural differences/differences in perspective
- Multiple options allowing for individualization

Thinkfinity

Portal for :

- High-quality, standards-based *resources* to use in *technology-enhanced lessons*

Includes access to a large collection of:

- Lessons
- Reviewed, annotated web links
- Embedded links
- Interactive activities

http://www.thinkfinity.org
http://www.thinkfinity.org/partners.asp

Thinkfinity Partners

- ArtsEdge - Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
- EconEdLink – National Council on Economic Education
- Edsitement – National Endowment for the Humanities – art & culture, literature and language arts, foreign language, history and social studies
- Illuminations – National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

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Thinkfinity Partners

- ReadWriteThink – International Reading Association; National Council of Teachers of English
- Science NetLinks – American Association for the Advancement of Science
- Xpeditions – National Geographic Society
- Smithsonian's History Explorer – National Museum of American History (coming)

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Structure of Our Program

Today
April 4 whole group session
One-on-one sessions

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Final Product

One or more activities to do with your students

- Using an interactive tool
- Using one or more already-created lessons
- Modifying an existing lesson to create your own
- Using resources to create a new lesson

NOTE: Website available if you want to post your lesson for easy access

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Final Product

continued

- Teach the lesson
- Provide feedback
  - Lesson
  - Thinkfinity
- Bonus: List of Web resources that you can use in future activities

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