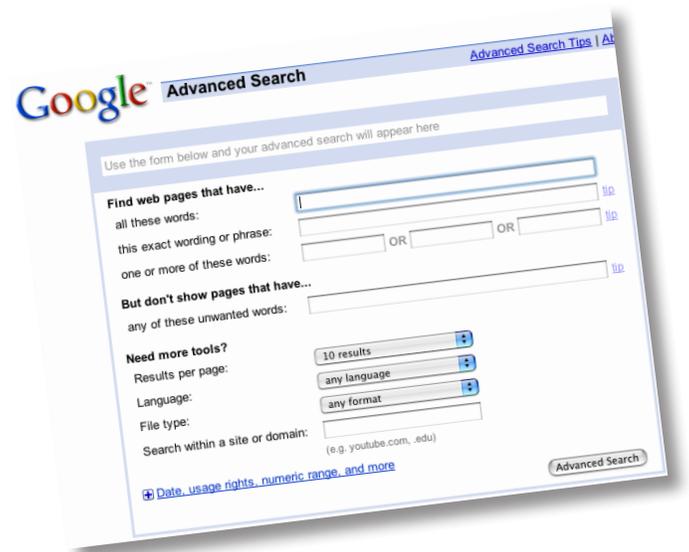# Google Search *in the Classroom*

**Get the tool:** http://www.google.com

## What is it?

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Google Search is now widely recognized as the world's largest search engine, an easy-to-use free service that usually returns relevant results in a fraction of a second. Using Google, students and teachers are able to access a variety of information in many different languages: stock quotes, maps, news headlines, videos, images, books, and much much more. Students' curiosity is no longer bound by the limits of the school and local libraries - they can search billions of sources from around the globe.

## Why use it?

Students can use Google Search to:

- Research class topics
- Find pages similar to ones that are relevant to their school work. Simply click "similar pages" below a successful search result.
- Search for images to use in multimedia projects. *http://images.google.com*
- Search the web right from their mobile phones. *http://sms.google.com*

Teachers can use Google Search to:

- Translate web pages for English Language Learners. *http://www.google.com/language_tools*
- Search for instructional materials in specific file formats including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PDF. *http://www.google.com/advanced_search*
- Use Google's "Safe Search" settings to restrict the search results on student computers. On the Google homepage, just click the small "Preferences" link next to the search bar.

## Expert Tip

Create a custom search engine to focus students' search efforts on safe and relevant sites. *http://www.google.com/coop/*

# Instructional Ideas

**Elementary.** Teachers can use the Q & A function to model inquiry driven learning during class discussions. When students ask a question, instead of giving them the answer, say, "Let's find out together!"

**Middle School.** Students can use the "define:" function to complete vocabulary assignments in every subject or look up challenging words as they read. The multiple definitions given in the results can quickly demonstrate words in different contexts.
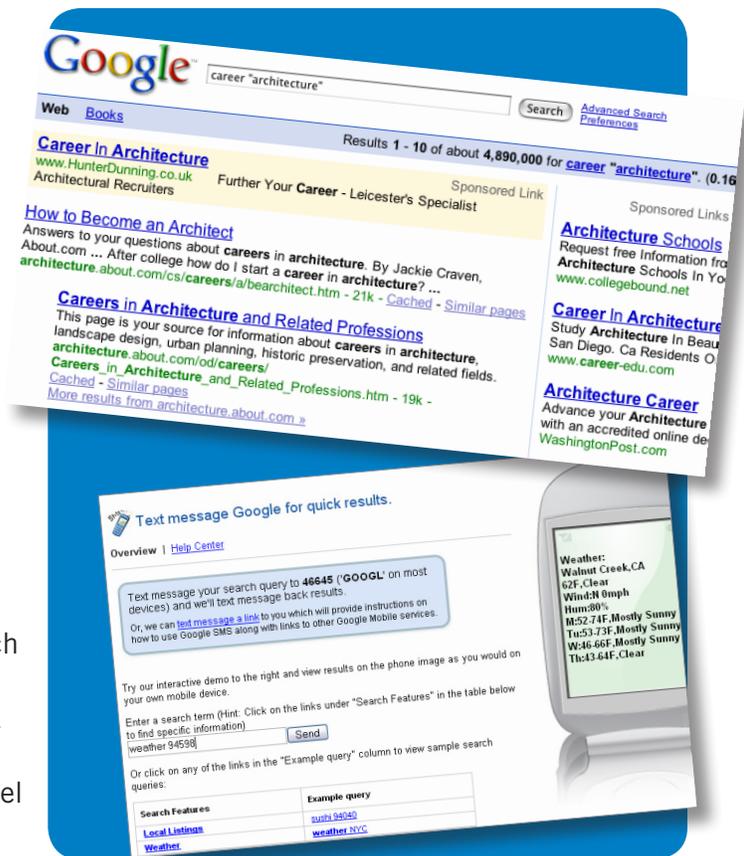
**High School.** Students can make calculations right from the search box. It even performs square roots, logarithms, and trigonometric functions such as sin and cos. Google also performs unit conversions, including currencies.

# Google Search in Action

**Project:** Senior Project
**Grade/Subject:** High School English

Seniors spend time during their final year of school researching a possible career. Topics can vary from journalism or architecture to yoga instruction or night club management. In the first phase of the project, the students conduct research and compose an essay. Google Scholar, Google Books, Google News, and Google Blog Search offer a killer combination of resources, ranging from the most authoritative to the most current. In the second phase, students interview a professional, who can be located using Google Local, Google Maps, or by searching the phone book from the Google home page. Next comes the third phase, in which students get hands-on experience in the field, where they can still have access to Google SMS and Goog-411 through their mobile phone. Finally, in the forth phase students present their research and experience to a panel of teachers and community members.



# Additional Resources

### Specialized Search

- Google Scholar - Search scholarly sources
  *http://scholar.google.com*

- Google Books - Search full text books
  *http://books.google.com*

- Google News - Search worldwide news sources
  *http://news.google.com*

- Google Blog Search - Search the latest scoop
  *http://blogsearch.google.com*

- Even More - Explore other specialized searches
  *www.google.com/options/*

### Google Labs

- Google Labs - A showcase of new tools!
  *http://labs.google.com*

- Google Trends - See global search trends!
  *http://www.google.com/trends/*

- Google Sets - Create lists from a few examples!
  *http://labs.google.com/sets/*

- Experimental Search - Check out Google's latest!
  *http://www.google.com/experimental/*