## Offline Search Exercise: Choosing the Best Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>circus</th>
<th>rainforest</th>
<th># calories in pizza</th>
<th>skin cancer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Wayne-1st movie</td>
<td>population of Detroit</td>
<td>nickel</td>
<td>Gettysburg Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lyrics to “One Sweet Day” (Mariah Carey)</td>
<td>cosmetics safety</td>
<td>turtle recipe</td>
<td>salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fractions</td>
<td>geology</td>
<td>Kwanzaa art activity ideas</td>
<td>volcanoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish word for “gum”</td>
<td>famous chemists</td>
<td>When was ice cream invented?</td>
<td>author of Independence Day (book)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Work with a partner. Cut apart page one. Consider the following questions:
Is the topic broad or narrow? Is there likely to be lots or little online about this topic? Would it be better to use a topical search tool or a key word search tool to *start* the search? Decide together which tool will give you the most focused and relevant results and sort into categories below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topical</th>
<th>keyword</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Topical Searching

Choose a term from the topical column on page 2 for you both to work on together.
Choose the best topical search tool below and work together to search for your term. If time allows, perform the
search again using another search tool. Compare the results, and compare how the tools format the results.
Discuss pros and cons of the tools in terms of ease of use, formatting of results, quantity of results, etc.

http://www.yahoo.com

http://www.about.com

http://www.school.discovery.com/schrockguide/

http://www.mel.org

http://www.about.com

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators

The network of sites led by expert guides
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Keyword Searching

Choose a term from the keyword column. Work with your partner to perform a keyword search using one of the keyword search tools below. To prepare for your search, consider the following questions:

Is the term ambiguous, common?

Could the term be mistaken or misunderstood by the search engine?

How can you make your meaning clear to the search engine? (Hint: use connectors and operators)

Rephrase your search if necessary to reduce the number of “hits”. Remember to consult the search tool’s help area for tips on constructing good searches. Try your search on one of the other keyword search tools. Compare and discuss differences in results.