

LESSON PLAN 18: CREATING A CUSTOMISED SEARCH ENGINE

Objective: Identify appropriate online resources and use Google Custom Search to make a search engine for a specific task

Age range: 10-18



What is Google Custom Search?

Imagine a Google page that returns results from your hand-picked websites only – that's Google Custom Search, a hugely useful tool and largely unknown. Creating a customised search page takes just a few minutes ... and your whole class can get involved.

YOU WILL NEED

- ▶ Computer and Internet access
- ▶ Browser
- ▶ Topics to research

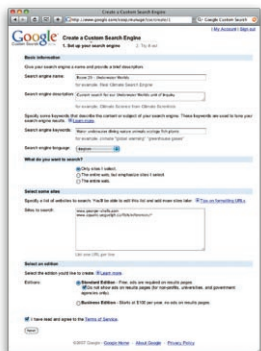
DEVELOPING SKILLS

Planning and researching, project management, safely and responsibly using online resources, and problem-solving

METHOD

Identify the topic to research – it could be an entire course or simply an assignment, an event or a person – almost anything.

Identify suitable resources – ask your class to select websites and online resources that will be appropriate to search to find the results needed for the project. Discuss and set guidelines for what's suitable and what's not. Here you can also have input on suitable resources.



How do you set up your own Custom Search?

1. Go to www.google.com/coop/cse/
2. If you haven't signed in yet, you'll need a Google login to create and manage a Custom Search page (although anyone can subsequently use it).
3. Complete the setup options:

- **Search engine name;**
- **Search engine keywords** – so others can find and use it;

- **What do you want to search** – to search only your selected sites choose 'Only sites I select';
- **Sites to search** – list the sites to search (these can be whole websites or individual pages). Check out 'Tips' for some good examples;
- **Editions** – select Standard Edition and 'Do not show ads'.

Now tick "I have read and agreed to the Terms of Service" and you're almost there!



4. Test your new search engine and make sure it returns the pages you're expecting to see.

5. If things don't look quite right, you can go back to the previous step and fix those selections. By the way, you can change anything later on, so feel

free to experiment. If all is right click Finish and your custom search is ready!

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TOPICS TO DISCUSS

- What makes a resource suitable or not?
- How do you identify suitable resources?
- How do search engines work?
- How can you test and improve your customised search?

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

- Create customised searches for other topics
- Add the search box to your school website, department page or class blog



THE FINAL PRODUCT

This is my **Room 20 Underwater Worlds** custom search page. When I'm logged in, Google recognises me as the owner of the page, allowing me to edit settings, access usage statistics, and invite collaborators.