

Getting Started

Teachers and Parents Working Together

Learning to read and write has traditionally involved paper, pencils, and books. Today a new medium has been added to the equation: the Internet.

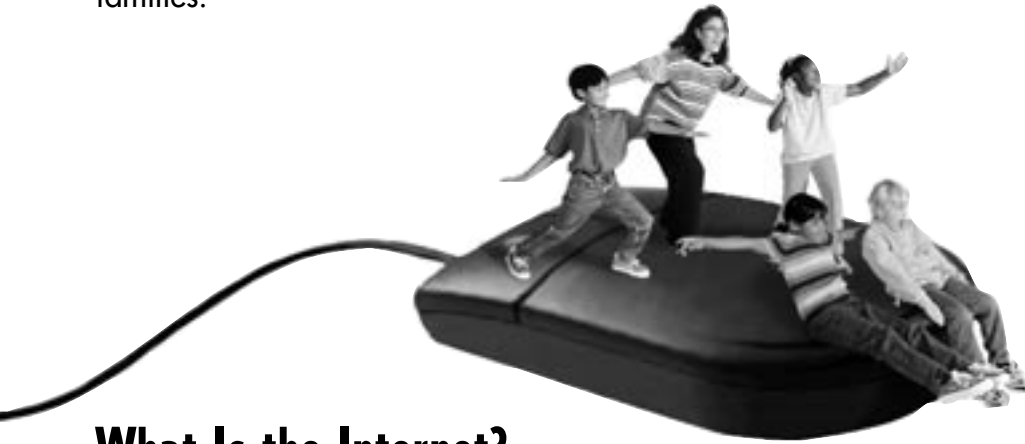
The Internet allows teachers, students, and families to gain access to information and resources that in the past were unavailable or only accessible at great expense. Via computers at school and at home, students can use the Internet to browse collections from far-off libraries, read newspapers from faraway cities, share stories and experiences with friends and family through electronic mail, and connect directly with others through video and audio conferences. This guide is designed to give classroom teachers

Internet

A global computer network that began in the late 1960s as a U.S. Department of Defense project linking university computer science departments. It has since grown to include millions of business, government, educational, and individual computers around the world. Often called the Net, for short.



an introduction to the Internet and a glimpse of some of the possibilities that this communication medium can bring to education. You may want to share this guide with the families of your students. A key to successful and safe use of the Internet by students is the guidance of caring adults who are involved in their children's activities and knowledgeable about the use of this technology. It is our hope that after reading this guide you will be a more confident and knowledgeable user of the Internet—and can share your knowledge and confidence with students and their families.



What Is the Internet?

The Internet is a large system of computer networks that are linked together by a common language called the Internet Protocol. This large “network of networks” links computers of many different types and sizes and allows the users of these computers to communicate and share information through a variety of methods. The two most popular uses of the Internet are e-mail and the World Wide Web.

The Internet is not controlled by a single entity or organization, but rather is a collection of organizations (both private and governmental) that share resources and jointly fund the regional backbones that interconnect these organizations. The idea to remember is that the Internet is a network of networks. Each network is responsible for the information contained on its computers. There is no single place where the Internet is housed.

Internet Protocol
The common programming language linking the computer networks that make up the Internet.

E-mail
Electronic mail, or messages sent from one person to another via computer.

World Wide Web
Usually called the Web, for short; a system on the Internet that weaves information and resources together through the use of hyperlinks. Allows text, graphics, sound files, and film clips (movies) to be mixed together.

Historical Background

The Internet has its roots in government research. It was originally funded by the Department of Defense and the National Science Foundation to allow for the sharing of computing resources at universities and governmental research facilities. Computer experts, engineers, and scientists were the early users of the Internet.

Developed in the late 1960s, the original network was called the ARPANET. Its purpose was to connect research and development sites so that they could communicate with one another and share valuable information and resources. The name ARPANET was chosen because it was funded by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), and NET was short for network.

In 1975, major languages, or protocols, that computers could use to talk with one another were established. Several major universities and defense contractors were linked together on a network using the same protocol, which is now known as TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol).

In the mid-1980s, many more colleges and universities were connected to the Internet. This allowed these learning centers to share research information and computing resources.

In the early 1990s, the Internet was opened up for commercial use. During this time the growth of the Internet was steady, but with the development of special programs called Web software, the popularity of the Internet with the general public rose to great heights.

ARPANET

The network funded by the Department of Defense and the National Science Foundation in the late 1960s, designed for sharing computing resources at universities and governmental research facilities. The name ARPANET is a combination of the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and the word *network*.

Protocol

Set of standards assuring that different network products can work together. Any device using a given protocol should work with any other device using the same protocol.

TCP/IP

Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol: a communications protocol for connecting computers via a network.

