



Webwords 4: Web resources for students

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Books

Is your image of a student a person with a book? It's a pleasing one that many of us share, and it fits with a love of language, reading, writing and scholarship. Perhaps it is only natural for speech and language professionals to have strong interests in, and affinities with, the written as well as the spoken word. The Internet provides rich pickings for us bibliophiles. Rare, used and out-of-print books can be located through Bibliofind (<http://www.bibliofind.com>) or Book Search (<http://www.booksearch.com>). We can frequent the Internet Public Library (<http://www.ipl.org>) and browse the shelves of great bookshops like Blackwells (<http://bookshop.blackwell.co.uk/>), Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com>), Barnes and Noble (<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>) and Bookwire (<http://www.bookwire.com>).

I parted with \$14.95 not so long ago in exchange for a content-rich little book called *Get great information fast* (<http://www.allen-unwin.com.au/study/infocast.htm>). Its authors, John Germov (<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/departments/so/germov.htm>) and Lauren Williams (http://www.newcastle.edu.au/departments/md/nd/staff_grads/williams.htm), both lecturers at the University of Newcastle, NSW, have produced an excellent resource for students, academics and researchers. They cover in reasonable depth and detail the use of www search engines and CD-ROM and on-line databases. The companion website for the book (<http://www.allen-unwin.com.au/study/infocast.htm>), located on the publisher's server, contains excerpts from the book and links to all the sites included in it. The combination of these two things, with the Allen & Unwin e-Study Centre (<http://www.allen-unwin.com.au/study/estudex.htm>) amounts to an accessible and useful treasure trove. It came as no surprise to find that Germov and Williams' favourite one-stop reference website is the astounding My Virtual Reference Desk (<http://www.refdesk.com>).

Seeking out reliable reference materials on the Internet has been likened to a mystery tour on a bus (<http://www.tourbus.com/>). You don't quite know where the bus will take you or how

well it will work. It can be a very time-consuming pursuit and it is easy to become distracted by links that are not precisely on topic. Focused and more efficient searching can be facilitated with the use of key Word Searches (<http://www.cios.org/www/keyword.htm>) such as the ones offered by The Communication Institute for Online Scholarship (<http://www.cios.org/INDEX.HTM>), the Educational Resources Information Center (<http://www.accesseric.org/>) and (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PubMed/>) in far away Bethesda, MD.

Bush

Speaking of far away, now and again I correspond with Joe Dodds, a senior speech pathologist in central Australia. Joe and his colleague Lyndal Sheepway work in Broken Hill, in a service area larger than the United Kingdom! Joe always has something interesting to contribute on the use of IT in providing "distance" speech pathology services. One of his great concerns is the management of recruitment and retention issues for speech pathologists working in remote areas.

Students can take advantage of many of the websites designed to cater for rural and remote healthcare delivery. There are, for example, the sprawling collections of links to rural and distance education resources on both the Open Learning Australia Site (<http://www.ola.edu.au/providers/edtech/index.html>), and the North Queensland Rural Health Training Unit (<http://www.medeserv.com.au/rhtut/open/home.htm>) pages. The National Rural Health Alliance (<http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>) and the Rural Health Unit (<http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/rural>) sites provide abundant information too. University websites, particularly their libraries (<http://www.anu.edu.au/caul/uni-lib.html>), often repay exploration yielding good sources of reference data for students and other researchers.

Brains

There is a vast array of resources (<http://www.nwu.edu/csd/CLINICS/SLP/splinks.html>) by and for students of all sorts on the Internet, from the cautionary Dangers of Student Pub-

lishing on the Web (<http://www.wsu.edu/~sachs/Academia/Present/dangers/index.htm>) to the orderly pages of the Co-Op Bookshop (<http://www.coop-bookshop.com.au>). The latest theses can be found by using Digital Dissertations (<http://www.lib.umi.com/dissertations/>). Australian funding opportunities are included at the National Health and Medical Research Council (<http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc>) and the Australian Research Council (<http://www.deetya.gov.au/highered/research/aboutus/arcmems1.htm>). The British magazine *Speech & Language Therapy in Practice* includes students' contributions (at <http://www.speechmag.com/students.htm>), while the ASHA (<http://www.asha.org/students/students.htm>) and CASLPA (<http://www.caslpa.ca/english/student/index.html>) sites have extensive student pages. Once a suitable electronic reference has been located (e.g., ftp sites, telnet addresses, www and gopher pages, newsgroup and discussion list postings, and e-mail messages), help is at hand in terms of how to cite it (<http://bas-a.bcc.ac.uk/HCS/electric.htm>).

Communication between students is constant at the bulletin boards on Trent Casberg's site (<http://www.silcom.com/~datcas/bulletin.html>) and the Communication Graduate Students' Bulletin Board (<http://www.socialnet.lu/handitel/wwwlinks/speechtherapy.html>). There are informational sites especially for students too. In the United States the 18 000 members strong National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (<http://www.nsslha.org/>) serves as the national organisation for graduate and undergraduate students interested in the study of normal and disordered human communication. It is the only official national student association recognised by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. It has chapters at more than 285 colleges and universities (<http://facstaff.uww.edu/bradleys/cdprograms.html>).

With all this talk of digital libraries and electronic references, you might think I would be tempted to overwrite my image of a student as a person with a book and replace it with a person with a laptop. But you would be wrong!