

Get Lost

Use this to: develop skills for using the Internet and map reading skills

Materials: Access to the Internet, a local street map

Time: 20 minutes

Using the Internet to find directions can be a time-saver. There are several good Web sites that can route you from where you are to where you want to go. They include maps.yahoo.com, mapquest.com, and mapsonus.com. Although their formats may differ, they all have some things in common: the user enters an address to indicate her location, enters an address to indicate where she wants to go, and has the ability to print out maps. The Web sites in general will route you through streets and highways using both maps and text.

They are, however, not always accurate. For example, there are freeway off-ramps shown on some of these Web sites for streets that don't exist. Most of the Web sites cannot show you construction zones or detours. In many cases the streets, roads, or freeways shown on the maps are not the best route—traffic patterns and the time of day should be considered. Perhaps the best way to use these map Web sites is to print maps from more than one site and compare them. We also suggest you contact someone at your destination to confirm details such as major cross streets, construction zones or detours in the area, and the exit number or name of the off-ramp.

1. Using at least two of the Web sites shown above, select two or three destinations your student is familiar with and enter them on the Web sites.
2. Print out the maps. Since she used a destination she is familiar with, she can check the printed maps and decide if the map provides clear and accurate information.

Use this interactive to develop skills to use the Internet and map reading skills.

*Use this interactive with a
Speak → Read, or
Read → Write
student.*

3. Compare the directions printed from the Web sites with a street atlas, and note any discrepancies.
4. If she is not familiar with reading maps, this may be a great introduction to map reading. By using familiar destinations, she can [1] compare the maps she printed out with the street atlas, and [2] compare the information she knows (how to get to one of the destinations) with the information she obtained from the Web sites.
5. Discuss which map is the best to use.