

A Pathfinder to Develop Pathfinders

Explanation of what a Pathfinder is/does

My *Macquarie 3rd Edition* says 'one who finds a path or way, as through a wilderness'.

This is obviously not the specific library meaning that applies to what we are talking about.

CMIS definition

A Pathfinder is an in-depth guide to finding information on-line and off-line for a specific subject area or topic. It may be presented on a school's Intranet or Internet to scaffold student research. In a school, Pathfinders may be prepared by teacher librarians in consultation with teachers to support students researching specific topics set by the teacher.

www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmisis/eval/curriculum/pathfinders

Other Library-related definitions:

A pathfinder differs from a bibliography in that it does not necessarily contain a complete list of sources on a topic. Rather it serves as a resource and guide for the user to find his/her own specific information on a topic. It provides enough basic resources to get the user started and may even help him/her plan a strategy for future searching. Above all, it answers the question raised by the user.

Kay Vandergrift, SCILS, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/YoungAdult/path.html

A pathfinder is a guide to information within a library that includes standard reference tools, stack collections, as well as integrating electronic sources on a selected topic. This should include all types of resources beginning with print and moving on to the electronic.

Priscilla "Prilla" Speer, Asst. Professor, School of Education, Trevecca Nazarene University
www.trevecca.edu/html/Library_Staff/PrillaSpeer/MLI5050Asgn.htm

A pathfinder is like a roadmap. It leads you in a particular direction and suggests the most direct route for your research. The CLL pathfinders are designed to narrow your search to a number of key information sources available on the Web in special areas of the CLL curriculum. While pathfinders can save you time, they are not intended as an all-inclusive resource. You should still plan to locate additional information resources on these topics.

College for Lifelong Learning
www.cll.edu/services/library/pathfinder.htm

Journals

Search recent issues of: *Access, Incite, Orana, Scan* Examples found:

Internet Pathfinders, *Access* 14:2 May 2000 p. 38

Peter Genco describes how his students make up pathfinders of web resources for other teachers and students to use.

A Day in the Life of a Primary Teacher-Librarian, *Orana* 33:1 February 1997 p. 35
Maggie Roche describes an incident in her day:

I begin preparing a pathfinder for a Year 6 class on their unit 'Water'. The search is more complex than I realised: 304, 333, 363, 551, 574, 910... and still going. I check the shelves to see if the collection will sustain 30 students all researching the same topic at once. Could do with more resources. Make a note to visit bookshops to have a look at what's available to prepare an order. Probably have to be Saturday. I wonder if an order placed next week could come through in time? Could be a clash with another Year 5 unit, 'Environment Matters'. Will print a list of resources for all classes involved.

Also online: archive.alia.org.au/sections/cyss/orana/33.1/roche.html

Web Resources

Why

Virtual services for virtual readers: reference reborn in the E-library

www.alia.org.au/conferences/alia2000/proceedings/roxanne.missingham.html

Roxanne Missingham explains how in a networked environment, libraries can make guides and pathfinders available online, often integrated with digital resource lists.

How to

Vandergrift's Pathfinder

www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/YoungAdult/path.html

Kay Vandergrift explains how to create a pathfinder to her students in the Rutgers Library School. This is a very useful beginning reference.

Examples

PLC Library & Information Services Website, Melbourne, Victoria

Two excellent pathfinders created by Di Wilson can be accessed whenever or wherever a student has an Internet connection:

The Universe

www.plc.vic.edu.au/Library/ID/univ.htm

Living in a Modified World: The Impact of Genetic Engineering

www.plc.vic.edu.au/Library/geneng/geneng.htm

Each Pathfinder has an introduction to set the background for the topic and is divided into three sections with a helpful commentary on the resources available in each:

- Getting Started: Keywords and Phrases
- Resources in the Library
- World Wide Web Resources

St Josephs Nudgee College Library, Brisbane, Queensland

www.nudgee.com/library

Click on *Resources for Assignments* to see their huge variety of pathfinders created by Linda Hughes.

Teenage Depression [Year 11]

library.nudgee.com/yr11-4.htm

Jobs/Resumes [Year 12]

library.nudgee.com/careers.htm

Primary Industry [Year 9]

library.nudgee.com/yr_9_primary_industry.htm

Torts [Year 11]

library.nudgee.com/year11-9.htm

Adelaide Library, Adelaide, South Australia

www.adelaidehs.sa.edu.au/ahsintranet/subjects/Subjectindex.htm

This subject links page includes pathfinders, hotlists and online assignments for students in a wide range of learning areas and topics.

Internet Public Library Pathfinders

www.ipl.org/ref/QUE/PF

Written by IPL staff, the pathfinders are intended to help users start researching a particular topic, both online and at a local library. At present there are more than eighty available for the general public to use.

Lakewood Public Library

www.lkwdpl.org/study

The library offers to create a pathfinder for any topic requested by a teacher in the Lakewood District. Follow the links to see a list of these pathfinders for Elementary, Middle and High Schools.

American Memory

memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/start/gs_src_path.html

Contains five kinds of pathfinders to identify some of the major subjects represented in the American Memory collection.

My Brief:

CMIS - Jill Midolo - In this session Jill will look at the *Pathfinders* developed by CMIS and discuss the processes for developing Pathfinders for your staff and students on an Intranet or school website. A Pathfinder is an in-depth guide to finding information on-line and off-line for a specific subject area or topic. In a school, Pathfinders may be prepared by teacher librarians in consultation with teachers to support students researching specific topics set by the teacher. CMIS has developed **Pathfinders** on its website for teachers and teacher librarians to provide them with information about quality resources available to schools.

Pathfinders [CMIS] www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmisis/eval/curriculum/pathfinders