

Details

Smart Searching: Strategies to Support Online Searches - 196

In this episode, I share tips for tackling the often daunting task of student online searches with actionable teaching strategies you can start using right away! You'll also hear about skill-building activities to set up students for success when independently navigating online spaces in their own research.

Link to live show notes: <https://classtechtips.com/2023/01/03/searching-strategies-196/>

*searching strategies

Introduction

Hello there, my name is Monica Burns and welcome to today's episode of the Easy EdTech Podcast!

I'm a former NYC public school teacher and started the Easy EdTech Podcast in 2019 to share my favorite tips, tricks and strategies for technology integration. You'll hear stories from my time in the classroom, the work I do now with schools and districts, and my travels to different EdTech events.

Each episode is designed to give you ideas you can try yourself, share with a colleague, or bookmark for later in the school year — so don't forget to head to my website classtechtips.com/podcast for all of the show notes and resources from today's episode.

If you're listening to this episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or Google Podcasts, or another podcast player you'll see the show notes link in the description, too.

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This episode is sponsored by my free weekly planner pages! I've created a downloadable set of planner pages for you that you can start using today. It's a great way to stay organized in the new year or any time you like. Print them out to write in your daily schedule and tasks, or use the file on your tablet or computer to keep track of your to-do list and set your priorities each day. These planner pages are totally free, and you can find them at classtechtips.com/planner

Today's Intro

This week's episode is titled: *Smart Searching: Strategies to Support Online Searches*

Searching online can become a daunting task for students. If you've ever looked for an answer to a question or tried to find more information on a topic, you know that online

search engines are both helpful and frustrating at times. In order for students to effectively navigate online spaces, they need practice and support to master online searches.

As educators, we go out and search for resources on Google, YouTube, and Pinterest, to bring the very best resources to students. There is an entire chapter of my book *EdTech Essentials* dedicated to the idea of *curation* and how to find the best resources to share with your class. But in today's episode, we'll explore how teachers can set up students for success when they are on their own searching online.

Let's dive into Strategies to Support Online Searches!

Episode Transcript

In today's episode, I have five tips to support your students' online searches you can tailor to your own classroom learning environment.

First up on the list of 5 is to Share keyword search strategies.

It's easy to think that a search engine is intuitive when we've spent so much time on them ourselves. Without putting much thought into it, we know to keep our queries short, that we don't have to worry about capitalization, and that a search engine will often place advertisements as the first few responses.

To support students with keyword search strategies, model your own thought process or the decisions you make. For example, you might say:

- *Instead of typing the entire question "When was Rosa Parks born?" I can type "Rosa Parks birthday"*

One helpful strategy is to model for students how to Brainstorm search terms.

In addition to sharing [keyword search strategies](#), you may want to set up students for success by brainstorming search terms. This is especially helpful if students aren't sure where to start or feel overwhelmed with a big topic. For example, if your students are researching supporting evidence for a science experiment hypothesis, you might encourage them to make a list of possible search terms before opening up their web browser.

Next on the list is to Post common search queries.

Sharing a list of common search queries can give students a head start for their online search. If your students are searching for something similar to their peers, you might make a class list of common search queries that you post in your learning management system (like [Google Classroom](#) or [Microsoft Teams](#)) or on an interactive whiteboard for easy access. For example, if your students are researching animals for a science project, you might make a list of common words like: *habitat, geography, weight, length*

This strategy can also help students avoid spelling errors, which can lead to unhelpful results and frustration.

Another important skill to Model is troubleshooting during an online search.

If you've ever had a technology failure in your classroom, you know there are a few options on how to respond. One way that can help students see you as a lifelong learner, is to model how you troubleshoot by thinking aloud. This transparency can show students how to tackle a problem that may arise in any part of their online interactions, including navigating a search engine.

You can model troubleshooting by setting yourself up to encounter a problem. For example, you might type in a search query that you know is misspelled and talk to students about how you can double check your spelling. Or you might model for students how an advanced search (something available on many search engines, [including YouTube](#)) can help you when the "right" responses haven't come up in your search.

The final tip on today's list of strategies to support online searches is to Try voice-to-text options.

Voice-to-text options encourage you to introduce a popular way of searching that students may already have experience with – using their voice. If students use a device like Alexa in their home, they are probably familiar with the concept of asking a question aloud in order to get a response. Voice-to-text is a feature built into many online tools and is an accessibility feature you can enable on digital keyboards, too.

You can share with students that voice-to-text search options are available on many websites and mobile apps. Students might see a pop up that will require them to grant the tool permission to use their device's microphone. If your students like using a voice-to-text option, you may want to share a few reminders including the importance of getting close to the microphone if they are in a noisy classroom.

Helping students with online searches might feel intimidating at first, especially if this is a skill they've had only a little practice trying out. This school year, you can help students strengthen their navigation skills by sharing keyword search strategies, brainstorming search terms, posting common search queries, model troubleshooting, and even exploring voice-to-text options.

So let's make this EdTech easy with some key points from the episode...

Share keyword search strategies.

Brainstorm search terms.

Post common search queries.

Model troubleshooting.

Try voice-to-text options.

Remember, you can find the shownotes and the full list of resources from this episode on classtechtips.com/podcast and finding today's episode #196!

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Outro

Thank you for tuning into another Tuesday episode of the Easy EdTech Podcast. If you are listening on Apple Podcasts or Spotify, or another favorite app, don't forget to hit the "Follow" button – this way next week's episode will be waiting for you first thing next Tuesday morning.

And if you want to share an idea from the episode with a friend or colleague, text, tweet or post the link on your favorite social media platform – and of course you can tag me @ClassTechTips with any questions!

Episode Resources

- [Google](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Pinterest](#)
- [Google Classroom](#)
- [Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Keyword search strategies](#)
- [7 YouTube Tips for Teachers with a Free Download](#) (Blog Post)
- [The Keyword Search Activity That Teaches Critical Thinking](#) (Edsurge Article)
- [5 Tips for Teaching Students to Improve Their Online Searches](#) (Edutopia Article)
- [Google's management has reportedly issued a 'code red' amid the rising popularity of the ChatGPT AI](#) (Business Insider Article)
- [EdTech Books](#) by Monica Burns
- [EdTech Essentials: A Sneak Peek Inside My New Book](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [EdTech Essentials Free Study Guide](#)
- [How to Help Students Better Navigate Digital Spaces \[EdTech Essentials Spotlight\]](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [5 Tips for Picking the Best Resources for Your Students \[EdTech Essentials Spotlight\]](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [Exploring the World With Virtual Field Trips \[EdTech Essentials Spotlight\]](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [3 Types of Audience for Student Work \[EdTech Essentials Spotlight\]](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [Tech Tips for Giving Student Feedback \[EdTech Essentials Spotlight\]](#) (Podcast Episode)