Boolean Searching

When you are looking for something specific from the Internet you would use a search engine. Typical search engines are:

Google.com

Ask.com

Bing.com

To use these programs we need to tell them what to look for. The word or words we use to do this are called **Keywords**.

For instance if I am looking for information on **George Washington** I would type his name into the Keyword search bar and the search engine would display the results. I would then be able to choose from a list of many different websites to see which ones offer the information that best suits my needs.

There are ways to narrow or broaden the search and these are called Boolean search operators.

We use the terms **AND, OR, NOT** to help narrow our search. They are capitalized and do have symbols we can use that are listed next to them.

AND +

The AND operator is the one we most commonly use now and is used when we type in 2 or more terms. So in the example above when we type in **George Washington** we are really saying “show me every website that has the word **George** in it and every website that has the word **Washington** in it.” In this example you notice that **AND** is the automatic default. You don’t have to type in the word **AND**. You can leave a space between the words **George** and **Washington** to get the same result. This helps narrow the search because it will only return the websites that have both terms.

OR [ ]

The OR operator is used when we are looking for a broader range of websites. So if we typed **George** **OR** **Washington** it will return the websites that have both terms. This will give us a great deal more sites to evaluate.

NOT -

The NOT operator eliminates websites that are typically associated with a term. For instance if we wanted to search for information about **dogs** but did not want to see any websites that have **cats** we would type **dogs NOT cats** in the search bar.