Web Basics

1. <u>What is an **operating system**?</u>

An operating system (OS) is software that allows you to use your computer in various ways. This software is usually pre-installed before you purchase the computer. Such functions as searching the internet, using email, and creating documents are all made possible by the OS.

Mac (Apple) users use the Apple OS operating system. PCs generally use a version of the Microsoft Windows operating system. Our library computers use **Windows 7**. Click on the link below to watch a short video about the main parts of the Windows operating system:

>   *Getting Started with Windows* (time: 3:18)
>   http://www.gcflearnfree.org/windows7

2. <u>What is the **Internet**?</u>

The internet is a *physical* network connecting millions of computers all over the world.

3. <u>What is the **World Wide Web**?</u>

The World Wide Web is the network of websites that are connected by links via the internet.

4. <u>What is a **browser**?</u>

A web browser is the tool that you use to access the World Wide Web. Some common browsers are *Internet Explorer*, *Firefox, and Chrome*. Most PCs come with *Internet Explorer* preloaded but you can easily download and use a different browser. The public computers at Calvert Library use **Internet Explorer 8 (or IE8)** as a web browser.   Click on the link below to watch a short video about the basics of using a browser:

>   *Browser Basics* (time: 2:20)
>   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Yp_ItUjoPo

5. <u>What is a **Website?**</u>
   A group of World Wide Web pages usually containing hyperlinks to each other and made available online by an individual, company, educational institution, government, or organization (Source: *Merriam Webster*).

6. <u>Searching the Web</u>

Click on the link below to find out how to get the most out of your searches:

   http://www.gcflearnfree.org/internet101/5.1

7. <u>Anatomy of a Website</u>

Websites are unique and varied but most have the same basic set-up. The main content of the website is usually in the center area of the page. There is usually a navigation bar or tabs along the top of the website page. Often there are ads on the left or right side of the webpage.

Most websites have a footer at the bottom of the webpage. The footer usually has a way to **c**ontact the company or organization, and an about us link that will tell you information about the company/organization or website creator. If you are interested in employment with the company or organization that sponsors the website, there is often a link on the footer for jobs, employment, or careers. When you download something from a website, you are copying the information from the website to your computer.

Basic Tips for Reading a Webpage

- **Locate the main content.** This is usually the most relevant part of the page. On most pages, it is easy to find, although you may sometimes have to scroll down to find it.

- **Make sure you're on the right webpage.** If you don't see any relevant information, use the navigation bar or Search box to find the page you're looking for. You can also do a Google search to find other websites.

- **Don't read every word.** With most websites, you can skim the page to find what you're looking for. To read faster, you can just read the first sentence of each paragraph.

- **Use headings to help you skim the page.** Many online articles have a heading at the beginning of each section. If the heading doesn't seem to be relevant, you can simply scroll down to the next heading.

- **Ignore ads.** Ads are often embedded in an article or disguised as links. They may look like they're relevant, but they usually won't help you find what you're looking for.

- **Use the Back button.** If you've clicked on a link that isn't helpful, you can go back to the previous page by clicking your browser's **Back button**. If the link was opened in a new window or tab, you may need to close it instead of using the Back button.

Try out what you've learned by exploring some websites. If you need some ideas, check out some of the following sites for some practice and fun.

http://www.gamesforthebrain.com/

http://refdesk.com/

http://www.usatoday.com/

http://www.rd.com/jokes

Source: Tutorials and videos courtesy of *gcflearnfree.org*.