

TRAILS

Tool for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills

TRAILS is an online tool that high school media specialists and teachers can use to determine the information literacy strengths and weaknesses of their students. This project has been developed by the Libraries at Kent State University as an initiative of the Institute for Library and Information Literacy Education (ILILE).

TRAILS is available at:

<http://www.trails-9.org>

TRAILS Highlights:

- Standards-based: TRAILS was developed using 9th grade Ohio Academic Content Standards and *Information Power*.
- Assesses performance at both the individual student and class levels.
- Freely available on the Web.
- Privacy insured.

How does it work?

1. Go to **<http://www.trails-9.org>** and [Create an Account](#).
2. Connect to the [My Account](#) option and go to [Create a Session](#). You can select from two different pre-defined assessments. Also, you can choose to get a report on total class performance only or also to include individual student outcomes.
3. After creating a session, you will see your new session listed on the same page in the [Current Sessions](#) area. By clicking on its name, you will get the unique Web address for your class to use, plus unique student identifiers (if you elected to receive individual student reports). Have your students go to the assigned Web address to do their TRAILS session.
4. When all students have finished, return to <http://www.trails-9.org> and sign in. On the [My Account](#) page, "Close" the completed session. Then, under the [Closed Sessions](#) area, you will be able to click on the link for "Reports." This will bring a PDF file to the screen for you to read, print, or save.

Your comments are valued:

We are still at an early stage of TRAILS development. Your comments can help shape the future direction of the project. Please send comments or requests for more information to Barbara Schloman (contact information below).



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Sample TRAILS Assessment Items

1. Three students have been given topics for research papers. They have decided to change their topics to make their papers better. Read their original topics and read their revised topics. Decide if the revised topic is **broader** (less specific) or **narrower** (more specific) than the original topic:

	Initial Topic	Revision	Broader	Narrower
Student 1	Describe the elements needed in an auditorium to reduce echoes.	Describe the elements needed in an auditorium for good sound quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student 2	What are the effects of plate tectonics on California?	What are the effects of the 1994 earthquake on Los Angeles?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student 3	How have recycling programs in the U.S. been successful in reducing the amount of waste?	How do recycling programs compare to landfills in terms of the effect of waste on the environment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. When using a research database, which search is the most effective to find articles on how weight affects self-esteem? [Choose one answer]
- how weight affects self-esteem
 - self-esteem
 - weight
 - weight and self-esteem
 - weight or self-esteem
3. You are responsible for writing a paper on the production of electricity in your state. Which resource is least likely to have biased information? [Choose one answer]
- Environmental Protection Agency* (<http://www.epa.gov>)
 - Freetheplanet.org
 - The Greenworks Gazette*
 - a newsletter written by an electric company
 - Sierra Club
4. Is it legal for you to use images created by another person on your own Web page? [Choose one answer]
- Yes, if the creator gives permission.
 - Yes, if you scan the image yourself.
 - Yes, if you alter the image.
 - No, it is not legal for you to use images created by another person on your own web page.
5. Using the citation below, select the page numbers of the magazine article. [Choose one answer]
- Jeffrey, Nancy. "Are Tanning Beds Unsafe for Teens?" *People* 63(19), 5/16/2005: 153-154.
- 2005
 - 153-154
 - 63 and 19