Reference Extract is a targeted web search engine. It is built from the expertise of AskA services geared to the education audience. The Virtual Reference Desk team has identified high-quality archives of FAQ's and previously asked questions. These sites were then indexed, and the result is an easy to use, quality oriented search engine: Reference Extract.

Simply input your query and see what comes up. Most web based searching tools are included. For exact phrase matching put your query in “quotes.” Go ahead and add + before a term to ensure it is found in the results or - to ensure a word is not in the found documents.

Included on the front page is a listing of the sites included in Reference Extract organized by topic. Click and browse the archives of some outstanding AskA services.

Reference Authoring

Reference Extract is part of the Institute’s ongoing exploration of “reference authoring.” Reference authoring is the use of digital reference answers to create new products and services.

Transcripts, e-mail archives, even voice recordings are being used to enhance the digital library world. Reference authoring includes creating training programs, pathfinders, collections and, well, search engines, from the outstanding work of reference experts. Reference authoring is the way to put reference back in the center of the library.

-R. David Lankes

SOME SITES INCLUDED...

Sites indexed in Reference Extract are drawn from the AskA Locator maintained by the Virtual Reference Desk Project. Each site is vetted for quality and appropriateness for the education domain. Sites are indexed in accordance with site standards as laid out in robots.txt. Sites indexed in Reference Extract include:

- Scientific American
- The Math Forum
- NASA
- SeaWorld
- Earth & Sky
- VRD Learning Center
- Internet Public Library
- How Things Work
- MadSci Network

Want to be included? Let us know: rdlankes@iis.syr.edu