# Featured Web Site: 21st Century Information Fluency Project Portal

**Reviewed by Rihkei Harris**
**Virtual Reference Librarian**
**Eastern Michigan University**

When Theresa asked me to write the website review for this issue of *LOEX Quarterly,* my first thought was, "Wow, sure!" This was swiftly followed by a sense of impending doom when I realized I had no idea where to start looking for a website to review. I turned to my dear friend Google, and was soon poring over information literacy blogs. Eventually, I stumbled across the 21st Century Information Fluency Project, located at http://21cif.imsa.edu. I was drawn in by the vibrant shapes and colors, and was impressed enough by the content to realize that I'd found the site I was going to review. Ranging from topics such as the FAQ "What is the Internet?" all the way to lesson plans about Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, this site has a great deal of breadth and content just waiting to be mined by *LOEX Quarterly* readers.

The 21st Century Information Fluency Project Portal is run out of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora, Illinois. The project is funded by a 2004-2005 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. IMSA is working with 100 schools across the state to form the 21st Century Information Fluency Project, which consists of "a variety of learning materials, learning tools, and learning experiences designed to enable them to help students enhance their 21st century information skills and improve their learning." These tools and experiences have been created with the National Educational Technology Standards, the American Association of School Libraries Information Power Standards, and the Illinois Learning Standards in mind.

The site includes tools that will appeal to people of all ages. It includes an evaluation wizard, which walks users through the evaluation of a website step by step. It also has a citation wizard, which helps students create citations in the most commonly used writing styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc). The search engine wizard includes a spellchecker and thesaurus, with links explaining why it's

important to have your search terms spelled correctly, and how a thesaurus can help you find a more appropriate search term for your query. However, the wizards aren't the only things that make this site noteworthy – it also includes FAQs, safety and searching tips, and lesson plans.

Like any site, though, 21cif has its flaws. Although the site does have lesson plans divided by age group, I'd like to see a better distinction on the front page of what material is appropriate for what age. While the site says that it offers information literacy strategies up to grade 16, I did not see any information specifically geared toward col-

lege students – though much of the information available on the site would be useful to them (for example, the citation wizard). I'd also like to see the material that is for librarians and educators more clearly separated from the information that is available for students.

All in all, this site contains many useful tools and lessons that individuals can work through at their own pace. Nice job, Illinois, and keep up the good work!