

3. Why don't you teach iCONN to your students and teachers?

1. not enough rich content for lower grades
2. Time
3. It is not part of my course mandates at this time.
4. We do not have time allowed for the LMS to do any workshops although it has been requested by the LMS numerous times over several years. Our k-3 students that I see on a fixed schedule, are just learning the basics of using a computer. The 4-6 classes rarely come to the LMC at all! I have tried working with them in many formats, schudules, lessons, but it is like pulling teeth from a chicken. I keep hoping to get to more 'advanced' lessons/research/projects, but it is still in the 'trying to grab them' stages.
5. usually don't have time. Plus the school has several pay for databases that fit the bill. I do direct them to individual databases on Iconn.
6. I have a link to iCONN on my libraries' web sites and students and teachers both use iCONN. I don't specifically teach about iCONN mostly because I myself haven't had time to explore what is available on the site (I am a first year media specialist).
7. I find iCONN very difficult to navigate. my population of students would become frustrated quickly
8. Because it is too difficult to easily teach all the nuances of the program.
9. Actually, I have done so in the past, but this year have not been able to schedule classes for this. Hope to next year.
10. I only teach iCONN to teachers because the content is appropriate for teachers' professional reading and coursework when they pursue a higher degree. I also find it invaluable for my friends and family who are pursuing advanced management and nursing degrees. I do not spend time any more teaching iCONN to my elementary students (Grades 1-5) because the content is not appropriate. The content's quality and readability in Kids InfoBits is not consistent. I would not hand a 3rd grade students a copy of the Columbia Concise Encyclopedia to use for research because the reading level is way too high. Why then, do you expect me to steer that same student to an electronic version? I have also found that what look like "hits" in a results list are often just crumbs, like a cartoon illustration of a famous person with a single sentence, when they need about 2 or 3 paragraphs worth. I have found some success with science topics, and better success with the category "Inventions & Technology". Since my district provides us with Grolier and Worldbookonline, I steer them there instead. I still have problems with readability, but the content 's quality is consistent, usually with high quality graphics to enhance understanding as well. If significant changes have been made to Kids InfoBits, please tell me what I have been missing. Until then, I am sticking with Grolier & Worldbook online.

5. Describe any problem(s) you have when teaching the iCONN user interface to students and teachers?

1. It takes time to show the kids both interfaces. I do so because they will need to do this from home. We have shortcut links to both the federated screen and the classic screen in our Library Resources Folder for all schools in the district.
2. Do not like the way the main iCONN screen comes up--to confusing. Would prefer that the individual sections come up instead.
3. Not enough time in the curriculum to really teach skillful use.
4. Since Kid Info Bits and What Do I Read Next are about the only two databases iConn accessible/readable for the elementary student, the rest is seldom used by my constituents, except for the student teacher or staff member doing professional development work.

<u>5.</u>	Confusion when moving from one navigational tool bar to another when searching from one database to another (for ex, ProQuest to InfoTrac) Also records that are just citations cause discontent.
<u>6.</u>	If students are not aware that they need to select the option to search one database at a time, they automatically search all databases at once and don't know what is going on. They are used to having one database at a time from the school library page.
<u>7.</u>	I don't like the ICONN home page. I never teach using this page. I have students and teachers go into the links to individual resources. To search from the homepage is so frustrating that you might as well get rid of it. To click and clear sites is a waste of time to me. I would much prefer having the individual databases come up on the main screen and have students and staff choose from them.
<u>8.</u>	There are no problems at this time.
<u>9.</u>	Pages are very often slow to load.
<u>10.</u>	I do not like when you access a database and can't get back to our high school's home page.
<u>11.</u>	Gale databases are EXTREMELY slow to connect to- I have stopped using Iconn as much because of this!!
<u>12.</u>	Always have problems with Wilson Biography--no longer teach with it.
<u>13.</u>	Spelling is an issue for them. Some search engines are more forgiving than Google. It is just not as physically interesting to them as Google. However, when I can get a teacher to tell them they have to use it and they do we get students interested.
<u>14.</u>	The screen is not user friendly. Students are more visual now than before. Images or little icons are needed on some or all of the databases. For example, for AP photo have an icon of a camera or a photograph.
<u>15.</u>	Searching all databases at once brings up too many results and many do not pertain to what the user is after.
<u>16.</u>	The interface is overwhelming, even for high school students. I wish the listing of databases were annotated, so students could select the ones best suited to them. If they don't know what the Discovering Collection covers, they might not select it when they should, for example.
<u>17.</u>	When searching all the databases at once the results get blocked by our popup blocker. The students have to disable the popup blocker to access the results.
<u>18.</u>	Some of the databases are very slow to load and slow to provide results. Specifically infotrac onfile and discovering collection. In addition those same databases have very poor search engines. Often providing irrelevant or inconsequential results for the first five hits or so till you get what you want 5 to 20 hits down. For instance many biographical searches will provide news stories about the topic or timelines or other articles before they will actually show the biographical article. I find this frustrating. With today's children unless you can give them the result they want in the first couple of hits you have lost them. Make google engine the iconn search engine technology. It is all they want to use anyways...fool them with its interface.
<u>19.</u>	I don't like having to access hits by clicking on numbers It makes sense to click on the name of the database
<u>20.</u>	I teach grades K-5. It is difficult for them.
<u>21.</u>	When a class is accessing iconn at the same time, it can go very slowly.
<u>22.</u>	none
<u>23.</u>	Just stumbled into the fact that Legal Trac is not full text. Students in high school for shorter assignments cannot really use this as they would need the full text instantly for a week long

	assignment. ILL is rare and usually only happens with books and for our junior research papers which span the majority of a school year. Also just noticed the -1 which appears. Our students pretty much laughed at that, being used to seeing zeros when nothing is available. I am on the mail list for iCONN news and yet don't seem to receive info via email prior to changes occurring on the iCONN interface. Would love to receive info on what new databases iCONN may be purchasing for the next year as we are considering our purchases for our school this month.
<u>24.</u>	The opening page is too adult. Try having an link with a cute little picture next to it and from there a much more visual,yet simple entry. Also, there is a need for more specific subjects; example, history of medical inventions. Broad, yet cross-disciplines.
<u>25.</u>	
<u>26.</u>	The problem is getting the students to use iCONN when working independently. Many teachers do not even know what iCONN has to offer. Those that come in for lessons see it, those that do not are not aware of it.
<u>27.</u>	I HATE the iConn main search portal. It is not user friendly at all and just overwhelms students and faculty. I always teach my classes to click on Link to Individual Resources for the list and descriptions of the databases for students to select which databases they need. We rarely use reQuest for class/research use. It does not serve us well at all. I miss the old school bus link... The old version of iConn was much more user-friendly.
<u>28.</u>	Kids InfoBits is very well received at primary grades. Teachers get "scared off" by volume of information. I focus on one at a time if possible.
<u>29.</u>	Advanced searching is difficult - would be so much easier if it could be done in a natural language. Also - students always forget to check full text - our age level really can't use abstracts.
<u>30.</u>	no problems
<u>31.</u>	At times the response is very slow depending on the database. Also, a negative number comes up as the result of a search...if you click on the zero, there are articles.
<u>32.</u>	Often I am unable to access ICONN because of pop-up blockers. Since there are 28 available computers, this is an impossible task to correct since we want to protect the students and computers from pop-ups on other sites. Because of this, we haven't used ICONN very much.
<u>33.</u>	The search reQuest "button" on the home page is not obvious to infrequent/non-users.
<u>34.</u>	Students have trouble using the combined user interface until they understand the differences between the individual databases.
<u>35.</u>	Students "Google is easier and faster"
<u>36.</u>	We liked the old version of searching in the InfoTrac databases (as in the Student InfoTrac). Searching in the Ebsco databases are too hard and complicated for the students.
<u>37.</u>	For middle school students: the multiple menu's and the hit is so many databases that often do not really prove to be helpful results.
<u>38.</u>	Because they are all different it presents problems for students. The kids are easily confused.
<u>39.</u>	Having students select the most appropriate database(s) for their needs.
<u>40.</u>	Seems slow at times; In the advanced search menu, it would be better to list all the databases with the "clear checkmarks" feature first before entering the search strategy. It is more logical for students and new users.
<u>41.</u>	I found the search all databases extremely confusing for students. I would love the individual database links to be the default when entering.

42.	For the research projects our middle schoolers and 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders have, I have not had great success with many hits for their topics. We've subscribed to Nettekker and Britannica Online and have had better results. The magazines on iCONN only include a few years back issues, which is disappointing, especially when I was hoping to find back issues of "Calliope" for ancient history.
43.	too confusing for many students - not enough info when they open up the IConn menu
44.	the classic menu has descriptions of the databases and included all of them, the new one does not (AP Photo Archive and Student Resource(Research?) Center for example
45.	Currently we only teach Kids InfoBits as it is the only grade-level appropriate database for research. I don't have any problems teaching it nor do students have any problems using it.
46.	Patience from the researchers! Not an iConn problem!!
47.	The interface is too complicated for students, you need to put the kid stuff on a link on the main page so they don't get distracted and start using the databases that aren't applicable to them. I must be CLEARLY labeled and appeal to kids. On that aforementioned link they need to be able to get directly to kids infobits, the info tracs, student research center, Wilson Biographies plus, iconn newstand, people places events etc., the gale virtual reference library, literature, student research center, magazines & journals, assoc. press photo archive, general reference center gold, history reference center, and the additional research resource section that has the encyclopedias, art & images, etc. They can't locate this stuff without 4 or more clicks to get there and they won't take the time, they don't have the attention spans or the determination to wander around and locate things. Even if we show them the navigation and give them practice at it, they won't use it spontaneously because the interface is poorly designed. Also, fix that "What do I Read Next". The database is too small, whatever algorithm you are using to connect books to each other is inaccurate and again, it's buried where the kids who need it won't find it and can't use it. Look at amazon.com's approach for starters and improve upon it by not using a commercial focus.
48.	som
49.	None

9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions concerning iCONN? (If not, simply hit the "Done" link below.)	
1.	More important than how you see the databases is WHAT databases are available. WE need more elementary level databases.
2.	Instead of the main page being the blocks to click on, please list all the individual databases together (ex. the columns shown when I click on link to individual databases.)
3.	Access to ICONN databases is a great asset any improvements would only enhance this resource.
4.	A concerted effort my Teacher/Librarians to "de-Google" our elementary users and steer them to age appropriate accessible sites is critical. Much frustration and wasted instructional time is experienced with open-web searching. iConn needs to be more broadly marketed as an age appropriate source.
5.	Yes, open to a screen that shows all the databases at once or have a button that allows you to do this.
6.	We find the iCONN databases to be very useful!
7.	I have had some feedback from outside individuals that they find it very confusing to use.
8.	I do not like iCONN's current interface. I liked the old way better. The reason we put the links on our library home page, was so our students can access the databases easier. I would also like to see our school district as well as all of the other districts in Connecticut

	contribute the money spent on databases. This would enable our students to have access to more databases geared to the academic research we ask students to complete. I have a plan and you may contact me at navars@danbury.k12.ct.us or 203-797-4830.
<u>9.</u>	I have heard you are considering World Book. That would be wonderful!
<u>10.</u>	Students find it an odd concept to have to click on the number instead of just the topic. Once they get the hang of it they are ok, but it takes awhile.
<u>11.</u>	I would prefer that you don't arrange the databases by grade level. I direct many of my students to use the lower level databases because I know their reading level is low. Many students are not aware that they are using a database that is geared for younger students and do not feel embarrassed by using it. I love iCONN. I direct students and teachers to it all the time and everyday I find resources that help students and teachers find the information they need and want.
<u>12.</u>	I have suggested and introduced iConn to teachers on individual basis, as they are looking for references/data bases for their own classes or research. I also recommend it to others, as well. I personally, use iConn, especially for courses.
<u>13.</u>	I like that they are grouped by topic on the classic page - but it is still not visually friendly to our kids. Many of them don't get the scrolling down thing. Perhaps shortcut buttons at the top of the screen? (i.e. History databases . Biography databases etc.) And though I prefer to teach with the direct links - they only work that way in school. Kids have a lot of confusion when they try to click on them from home. They also have a lot of confusion when they click on the main ICONN screen from home - they don't know to click on Links to individual databases. I can't replicate their home experience here because of the IP stuff. . .hmmm... Food for thought!! Love the databases though!!!
<u>14.</u>	We still need to simplify the interface for the adults so they do not get bogged down in too many results - for example book reviews come up in results when that is so not what they are looking for - they need information. For the kids, eliminate many of the articles that are not informational, put them under fun pages or something - like many of the pages from Highlights. Also Grolier provides a much better reference database - the Columbia encyclopedia articles are very often too brief - The New Book of Knowledge is much more kid friendly.
<u>15.</u>	Iconn is a gold mine! We love it!
<u>16.</u>	Add a dadatabase like opposing viewpoint or controversial issues. Add a books on tape download database. Fix the lousy search technology which fails both on speed and relevancy. Add literature databse as a seperate area. Add novel list.
<u>17.</u>	The interface could be more attractive and friendly It is a wonderful service that I believe is underutilized
<u>18.</u>	I also work in the public library, and find the iConn classic menu, with its ability to search all or several databases at once, very useful there. In school, having the individual icons on the school network menu is a much better approach, since it saves time and confusion at the beginning of the lesson. In any case, this is a wonderful resource for the libraries and citizens of our state.
<u>19.</u>	Would like to see World Book Online or Grolier Online added. The encyclopedia available for elementary students is very poor.
<u>20.</u>	What I have seen is great and very useful. There are other media specialists in my district who recently attended a workshop demonstrating some of the iCONN resources and they will be sharing what they have learned. Perhaps then I will be teaching iCONN to the students and staff.
<u>21.</u>	I love iCONN! My students are active users.
<u>22.</u>	I find the databases extremely useful, and hope this service will continue to be funded by the State.

<u>23.</u>	Basically despite prior comments made about improvements, I love iCONN. We use it daily with our students. It is fantastic that this comes to us with tax dollars and not directly out of our library budget. We would be lost without it. Keep up the good work. We totally appreciate all you are doing at the state to keep this going.
<u>24.</u>	I hope you can make some useful changes so that iConn has a more user-friendly search. Getting us to the list and descriptions of all the databases would be WONDERFUL. Thank you!!!
<u>25.</u>	ICONN is an incredible resource...Congratulations!
<u>26.</u>	The variety of databases available through IConn are wonderful. Students can gather so much information that is timely and reputable. Keep up the good work!
<u>27.</u>	For students, iCONN is hard to navigate. It is hard to manage all the data presented to them. They are often confused about where to go. I don't think the first page makes it easy for them to understand what is what. I personally feel the changes have made it harder rather than less complicated.
<u>28.</u>	Our competition is Google and Wikipedia
<u>29.</u>	I really found the older set-up and format so much easier to teach and use. Thank you for making this wonderful resource available for schools who could not afford to purchase these on-line databases!
<u>30.</u>	A valuable tool - keep increasing the databases as so many of us are on limited budgets and cannot pay for online subscriptions!
<u>31.</u>	I wish that indexing for magazines went back at least 10 years. For history magazines that should cover the cycles they go through for covering most topics.
<u>32.</u>	This is a wonderful tool that allows all students in the state access to online databases. The idea is solid, it needs reorganizing to address the student clientele or they will go to google, because that is "easier".
<u>33.</u>	I think I pretty much unloaded it all in the previous screen.