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Reverse Dictionary – Ever asked yourself "Whats the word for..."

By Jarrod Hunt

I just happened to stumble on a pretty interesting tool today.

I was trying to find a word for "People that are behind the times" for my previous blog post. I did a couple of searches in Google without avail and eventually started scouring for a tool that did a reverse lookup on a word. A tool where I would give the definition, and it would give me some words that matched that definition. What I discovered was Onelook.com's Reverse Dictionary.

Reverse Dictionaries allow you to "Describe a concept" in order to find words that match that description.

Cool Stuff, especially for all of us non-harvard graduates.

What I find the most interesting though is all of the uses for this tool. It is actually a very smart search engine. You would be suprized the sort of answers you could get from asking a variety of questions. Here are some of potential applications that OneLook describes:

- Find a word, when you know its definition, [or a portion of the definition].
- Explore related concepts. Baseball, clouds, cities.
- Generate a list of words in some category. I.E. Large Birds, Green fruit, Canadian authors.
- Answer basic indentification questions. What is the capital of Vietnam, Who is big birds friend on Sesame Street. What is the longest River in the world

In actuality Onelook is indexing much more then just dictionaries to find these answers. They index encyclopedia's and other reference sites as well.

I dont know about you guys, but if I had a very large amount of money, I might consider trying to buy their technology. There are a lot of times I wish the major search engines could do some of the stuff that they are. Ask.com (askjeeves) does some of this, but you cant get lists from Ask, its usually

websites that come up that require you to sift through several pages to find your answers.

For all of you content mongers out there, this sort of technology could feed some very interesting sites.

I would love to see some sort of API.

<http://www.onelook.com/reverse-dictionary.shtml>

Jarrold Hunt is the CEO of

<http://www.textlinkbrokers.com>

. Please do place an active link when publishing this article.

Dictionary.com

By Danny Wirken

Dictionary.com is a free website that offers a wide range of features. Obviously, the main service is to give definitions to words you look up. When you key in a word, you get a lot of useful information. Different meanings and usages will be presented, together with the pronunciation guide. One drawback of this guide is that you have to be familiar with the pronunciation symbols. You can also find out the origins of the word on the same page. More than that, you can find links to other specialized dictionaries which may have the same word.

What I really like about this online dictionary is that you can search for an idiomatic expression or slang and chances are, you will find it there. It also shows the meanings of different collocations for a particular verb. This way, if you are not really sure what you want, you are able to choose from a wide range of words.

>From the main page, you can access an online bookstore, a thesaurus, an encyclopedia, feature articles, puzzles, and a translator. You can even make use of tools such as the

<http://Dictionary.com>

toolbar. If you need to look up a foreign word, there are links to foreign dictionaries as well. Do you want to improve your vocabulary? You can click on the Word of the Day link and even subscribe to the email for this feature. Are you a sucker for historical trivia? You can increase your knowledge by subscribing to a "What Happened on this Day?" email. For writers, there are links to writing styles and grammar usage guides. Even if you are not a writer, you will benefit from the simple, straight-forward

<http://Dictionary.com>

Style Guide.

If you want to hear how a word is pronounced, you have to subscribe to the premium service. Another advantage of this service is ad-free access. No more irritating pop-ups every time you enter a word. You will also have access to color illustrations not available from the free site. The fee is not too high, only about \$19.95 per year. Subscriptions are also available on a monthly basis but the rates are a little bit higher.

I haven't tried the premium service but I think that the free service offers enough in terms of features and information. If you use the dictionary very often and you have no idea what the pronunciation symbols mean, then you can opt to shell out a few dollars for premium service.

For more information please visit

<http://www.444.net>



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