Your mission: to find current information on the Web about laws that govern the ivory trade. This is important because international and US regulations on the harvesting, export, and import of ivory can change from year to year. You need the most up-to-date and accurate information to explain to customs officials why it is OK to possess a chunk of raw ivory while entering the US.

Governmental agencies, university scientists, and private organizations have web sites that provide information or advocate policies related to the ivory trade. Anyone, in fact, can create a web site and say anything they wish about elephants and ivory. Thus, when you encounter a new web site during this mission, ask yourself: how can I distinguish fact from fiction, responsible from irresponsible statements, and informed from uninformed opinion?

An Internet/Web Primer

The Internet consists of computers all over the world that distribute information (text, numbers, pictures, video, sound) and computers that receive this information. Much of the data is presented by **computer servers** in a special format (e.g., **html**) that can be viewed as **pages** on a computer screen. The network of computers that shares these pages is called the **World-Wide Web** (WWW). Your computer is probably connected to the network of **web sites** by a phone line, television cable line, or fiber-optic cable.

Each computer that serves web pages to other computers has two unique identities or addresses on the Internet, an Internet Protocol (**IP**) number and Universal Resource Label (**URL**) name.

To see web pages on your computer screen, you need a special program, called a **web browser**. The web browser calls up the address of another computer on the Web, interprets a stream of digital data, and presents the data in an appropriate graphical or audio format. The two most common web browsers are **Netscape Navigator** and **Microsoft Internet Explorer**.

Web Searches

Millions of computers share web pages about any subject you can imagine, including elephants and the ivory trade. To find pages on a specific topic, you need to use a program called a **search engine**. Search engines reside on computer servers around the world. Web browser programs use these search engines to find the addresses of web pages that match **search terms** that you enter.

Use a search engine such as **Google.com** or **dogpile.com** to find information on the ivory trade. You will need to choose some search terms. Logical choices might be ivory, elephant, and law. You can enter terms as a string of words separated by spaces (ivory elephant law). You can enter phrases between quotes ("ivory trade"). Some search engines allow you to pose a question.

Your search engine will scan a very long list of web pages, looking for those with words or phrases that match your search terms. A list of matching pages then appears on your screen. When you click on one of the choices, your web browser will take you to the web site that has that page.

Citing Internet Sources

To cite files available for viewing/downloading via the World Wide Web by means of Web browsers, provide the following:

Author's name (if known)

Full title of the document in quotation marks

Title of the complete work, if applicable, in italics

Date of publication or last revision (if available)

Full http address (URL) enclosed within angle brackets

Date of visit in parentheses

Example 1

Burka, Lauren P. "A Hypertext History of Multi-User Dimensions." *MUD History*. 1993. <http://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/1pb/mud-history.html> (5 Dec. 1994). (Note that this is similar to an article in a magazine, where the article title is put in quotes, and the magazine title is put in italics or underlined.)

Example 2

The citation for the document from which the information above was taken is as follows:

Harnack, Andrew and Gene Kleppinger. *Beyond the MLA Handbook: Documenting Electronic Sources on the Internet.* 25 November 1996. <http://falcon.eku.edu/honors/beyond-mla/> (17 Dec. 1997.) (Note that this example is similar to a book, which is not part of a larger work, so its title is put in italics or underlined).