

Britannica Insights will help searchers cut through noise for good answers

June 11 2018, by Nancy Owano

The screenshot shows a search results page for "Martin Luther King Jr.". On the left, there are search results from HISTORY.com and other sources. On the right, a "Britannica Insights" card is displayed. The card features the Britannica logo with "250 YEARS" and a photo of Martin Luther King Jr. speaking at a podium. The text on the card reads: "Martin Luther King, Jr. American religious leader and civil-rights activist" and "Martin Luther King, Jr., Baptist minister and social activist who led the civil rights movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his death...read more >". Below the photo is a "Look Closer" section with a bulleted list of links: "Early years", "The Montgomery bus boycott", "The Southern Christian Leadership Conference", "The letter from the Birmingham jail", "Challenges of the final years", "Historical significance and legacy", and "Legacy". At the bottom of the card is a blue button with a white chevron icon and the text "Expand to Learn More".

The next time your niece asks you where 18 things come from, you may not need to worry over the quality of your answer that was snatched from a quick keyboard tap. Not if you download an extension. A

regarded information source can have your back, and it is the oldest English-language general encyclopaedia.

"Encyclopaedia Britannica wants people to slow down and think twice before accepting search results as facts," said the *Chicago Tribune*.

The regarded reference source launched a free Chrome [extension](#) recently. It delivers an additional layer of [information](#) at the top right of the results page. This is all about the Encyclopaedia Britannica's new [Britannica Insights Chrome extension](#).

An official announcement dated June 7 said, "The Encyclopaedia Britannica Group today announced Britannica Insights, a free Chrome browser extension that enables searchers to cut through the noise on the internet and provide trusted and verified information at the top-right corner of their search results [page](#)."

Britannica Insights is available for download at britannica.com/insights

"When you search Google with Britannica Insights installed, the extension will populate information from the encyclopedia above or alongside Google's own featured snippet," said *Wired*. "For example, next to the result from NASA, Britannica Insights displays its entry for 'Rayleigh scattering,' the technical term for the physics phenomenon that turns the sky blue. The [tool](#) works best for that sort of scientific or historical question."

So, people will be using this extension left right and center to get the facts, right? Not so fast. Ally Marotti, *Chicago Tribune*: "Northwestern University professor Brian Uzzi, who has studied how people consume information and behave on social media, said the success of the [extension](#) will depend on whether internet users still see the company as a bearer of truth."

The mere presence of this kind of entry though could bring us closer to a respect for looking critically at the instant information one is fed. "Most people don't know that Google ranks its [search results](#) on relevancy and utility. Seeing dissenting information from Britannica could start a conversation," said Marotti.

In 2012, Reuters reported that the oldest English-language encyclopedia still in print was moving into the digital age. According to Reuters, the encyclopaedia said "it will end publication of its printed [editions](#) and continue with digital versions available online."

The focus is as a digital media company with knowledge and [learning](#) products for homes, schools, libraries and workplace. "The media we work in may have changed, but our mission has not," said Karthik Krishnan, global CEO of the Britannica Group.

Krishnan was quoted in *Wired*. "We don't say Britannica is the only company providing verified information. The world needs to know that there are multiple sources to get good information."

Online information has its pitfalls of unverified information, as well as rogue entries and "digital vandalism." Krishnan raised another instance where you might walk off with the wrong answer. "On user-generated content sites an answer could be right today and wrong tomorrow because of warring factions trying to slant information to benefit their own agendas."

Wired commented favorably about Britannica Insights for historical topics. A look up for the French Revolution, for example, "gives you a list of links to key events, people, and topics—handy resources any time-crunched student would appreciate. "

More information: <chrome.google.com/webstore/det...>

[njnhepckmbf?hl=en-US](https://techxplore.com/news/2018-06-britannica-insights-searchers-noise-good.html)

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