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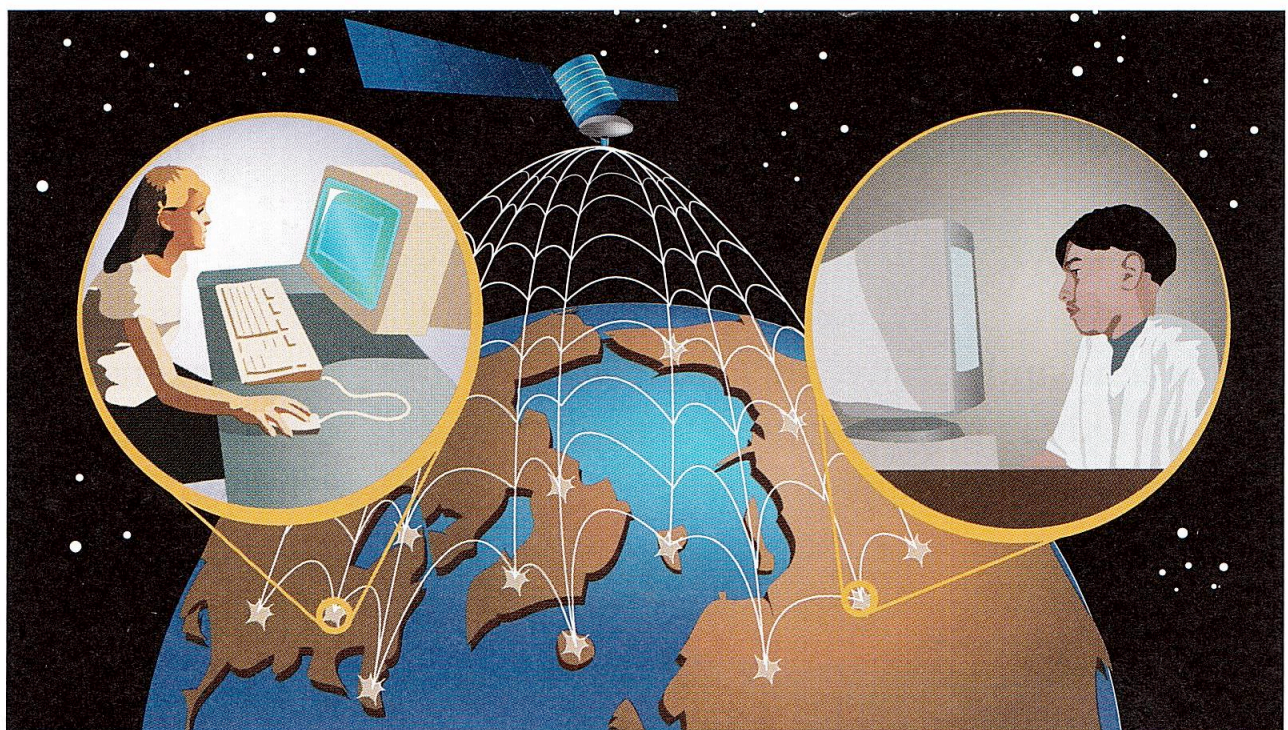
CyberSurfer

by Nyla Ahmad

Get Set for the Net!

The Internet, or "Net" for short, is a worldwide network of computer networks. What's that? Think of a spider spinning its web. First the spider spins a few strands of silk joined in diamond-shaped sections. As the web grows, the sections are attached to more sections. On and on the spider goes, building more

sections and attaching them to the rest until, finally, the web is complete. The Internet is like a spider's web except that, instead of silk, the Internet "weaves" telephone lines to create sections of linked computers. Computer experts began creating the Internet by linking a few computers together to form a group, or

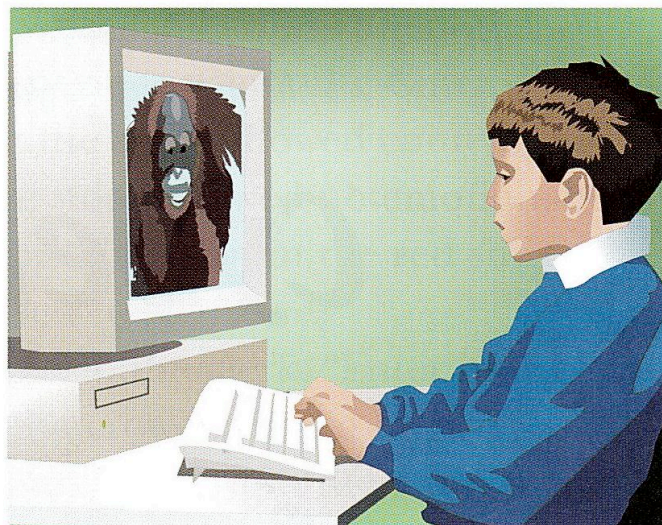


network. Then they linked, or hooked up, this first network to other networks with cables, microwaves, satellites, and the other high-tech systems that carry electronic information around the world.

A spider's web houses one spider, but the Net's web of computers is home to more than 40 million scientists, teachers, journalists, librarians, business people, and kids like you. The Internet web is set up to catch information, not flies. All kinds of information—messages, books, photos, video, and sound—travel across the web in just a few seconds. And, just as a spider wanders around its web, walking along interconnected strands of silk, Internet users wander the worldwide web of computers to get at some incredible stuff.

Cyberstories—Cyberpals Around the World

Some kids send and receive e-mail just for fun. Others use e-mail to save orangutans or to plan and build a new city.



Going Ape

The kids at Pasir Ridge International School in Kalimantan, Indonesia, are using cyberspace to help save orangutans. These kids started an adopt-an-orangutan program to help the Orangutan Reintroduction Project in their area. The Pasir Ridge kids got students from other classrooms around the world to “adopt” orangutans by donating money to the project. In exchange, the kids at Pasir Ridge work closely with the people at the orangutan centre to make sure that the money is spent on giving the orangutans the care they need. Then they e-mail progress reports, via the Internet, to kids around the world.

City in Cyberspace

How did kids from cities at either end of North America work together to build a new city? Through e-mail! The CitySpace project involved students aged 9 to 16 from the Exploratorium in San Francisco and from the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto. These kids used e-mail to communicate as they planned the “construction” of a city on the Net. They formed roadwork crews, teams of engineers, and waterworks departments to decide everything about their new city—its exact size;

all the road, bus, train, and subway systems needed to keep the citizens moving; the houses, schools, hospitals, and airports; the utilities; and all the other components of a working city. The buildings and other city pieces were constructed in 3D on computers at school, home, or the project site, and then were added to the CitySpace model on a powerful computer. When their city was complete, the kids “flew” around it in cybercrafts called “HoverBoys,” meeting up with their cyberpals from across the continent.

