Disclosed herein are systems methods and non transitory computer readable storage media for preserving references in sandboxes. A system implementing the method receives a document for use in a sandbox environment and passes the document to a parser via a coordinator. The parser finds references in the document to other resources and outputs a list of references. The system passes the list of references to a verifier that verifies each reference and outputs a list of verified references. The system passes the list of verified references to the sandboxed application which extends the sandbox to include the resources on the list of verified references. In one embodiment the system preserves references in sandboxes without the use a coordinator.