

ENG 101 LIBRARY VISIT

SEARCHING FUNDAMENTALS

There are two ways to search for information: to search by word and to search by idea. In word searching you choose your search terms; you have greater flexibility but you must try multiple searches using different spellings and synonyms in order to match all the variations authors *could* use. You will get results not related to your topic. Alternatively, idea searching is very organized and uses only librarian-determined terms; you find your terms -- usually called Subjects or Descriptors -- and you search using them to get fewer, more relevant results. Try using this procedure:

1. Perform a word search using important terms that define your topic
2. Find a good result and look at its Subject / Descriptor
3. Perform an idea search using the Subject / Descriptor you find

DATABASES [<http://library.sunyit.edu>]

- Academic Search Premier – full-text articles from over 3,600 peer-reviewed journals
- AH&L and Historical Abstracts – abstracts of scholarly journal articles in history
- JSTOR – full-text archive of core scholarly journals
- Library Catalog – a catalog of our library's print and electronic books
- Opposing Viewpoints – full-text articles on controversial issues, pro & con
- ProQuest – full-text articles originally from magazines, newspapers, and journals
- Sociological Abstracts – abstracts of scholarly articles, book chapters, books, and conf. papers
- WorldCat – an international catalog of books; some are available via Interlibrary Loan

FINDING MATERIAL

If necessary, you should divide your research into two stages:

Stage 1: Use the library databases to identify a source, e.g., a journal article

Stage 2: Use various resources to obtain the source, including:

- 360 Link / List of E-journals – a list of magazines & journals available via our databases
- List of Print Journals – a list of our print serials; the list is available in print & online
- Librarians – always feel free to ask a librarian to help you locate material
- Interlibrary Loan – fill out an online ILL form to obtain material we do not own

INTERLIBRARY LOAN (ILL)

Our library shares its materials with other libraries and those other libraries share their materials with us; this sharing is called interlibrary loan. If you want a book or journal article which we do not own then fill out an online ILL form and we will get the material for you.

**DO NOT LIMIT YOURSELF TO ONLY FULL-TEXT ARTICLES IN DATABASES.
USE THE LIBRARY'S PRINT JOURNALS AND MAKE FREE ILL REQUESTS.**

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EVALUATING WEB PAGES

Anyone can post anything to the Web at any time. The only real restriction is federal copyright law, which protects the rights of owners from seeing their material used without compensation; besides that limitation, anything goes. Evaluate sites based on the criteria listed below. Do not use sites that fail your evaluation: there are plenty of other good sites you can use.

- Accuracy: “exact, precise, correct, as the result of care” -- does the site misstate or misrepresent facts? does the site contain errors?
- Authority: “an expert” -- who created the site and what are their affiliations and credentials?
- Bias: “to incline to one side” -- does the site offer a point of view or opinion?
- Coverage: “the extent of reporting” -- how much information is there?
- Currency: “in progress” -- when was the site last updated? how new is the information?

LIBRARY BOOKS

The Cayan Library shelves its books in a Circulating Collection based on a system called Library of Congress Call Numbers. This system follows a very logical, linear order: Books whose call numbers begin with A’s are shelved at the beginning of the collection. Next come the books whose call numbers start with B’s, then the C’s, etc. A book with a one-letter call number will be shelved before a book with a two-letter call number, e.g., B 29 .E8 1970 comes before BF 173 .F625. As you would expect, BA books come before BF books, which come before BL books. Finally, within a call letter group, books with lower numbers come before books with higher numbers, e.g., BF 109 .F74 R64 1993 comes before BF 173 .F625, which comes before BF 713 .E74 .W74 1982. Here are what the letters stand for:

A	General	M	Music
B	Philosophy, Psychology & Religion	N	Fine Arts
C	Biography	P	Language & Literature
D	History	Q	Science
E, F	American History	R	Medicine
G	Geography & Recreation	S	Agriculture
H	Social Sciences	T	Technology
J	Political Science	U	Military Science
K	Law	V	Naval Science
L	Education	Z	Library Science

NB: Please do not ever reshelve books: if you reshelve a book incorrectly it could be lost for a long time. One book improperly shelved among thousands is hard to find.

More detailed examples are available online at: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html>

DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK

- The official MLA manual is on Reserve and in Reference
- Citation handouts are available online through the Library’s *Research Guides* page
- Make A Citation -- <http://citation.sunyit.edu>