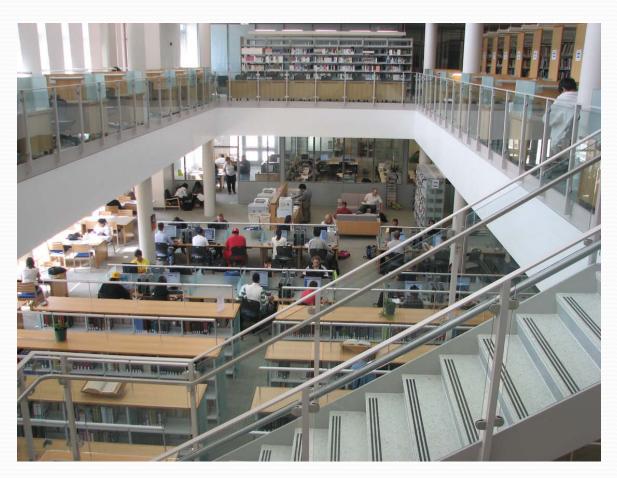
How to be a better researcher





Why not Google everything you need?

- Dihydrogen Monoxide
- Genochoice
- Save the Tree Octopus
- •RYT Hospital
- The Ova Prima Foundation

And for others, see this website

Different Kinds of Resources

- Books
- ❖DVD's
- Magazines
- Academic Journals
- Newspapers
- Web Sites

Magazines or journals... what's the difference?

Magazines

- Written for the general public
- Contain a wide variety of articles written by reporters or freelance writers
- May be opinionated or balanced and generally only reviewed by editors

Academic Journals

- Sometimes called refereed, peer-reviewed or scholarly journals
- Often highly technical
- Written by professionals or researchers in a certain field
- Generally contain original research, literature reviews or other articles within a certain discipline

What is a primary source?

- •An original document, creative work or artifact created during the time of study.
- •They include accounts of an event written by someone who witnessed the event.
- •Examples include:
 - Diaries
 - Newspaper articles
 - Original literary works
 - •Journals reporting research results

What is a secondary source?

- A secondary source interprets, evaluates or draws conclusions based on a primary source.
- Examples include:
 - Textbooks
 - Magazine articles
 - Critiques
 - Commentaries
 - Journal articles reviewing or interpreting previous findings

What types of information is best found in newspaper articles?

- Business and Economic news
- Information about the government, laws, elections, politicians
- Local news

What about web sites?

Know your source. Consider:

- **⋄** Who is the **author**?
- **❖** What is the **purpose** of the web site?
 - Is the information likely to be biased?
 - Is it trying to sell you something?
 - ❖ Is the page a satire, parody or spoof? (See <u>The Onion</u>)
- **❖** Is the **content** current and verifiable?
- ❖ Is the **design** easy to read and navigate and spelling and grammar correct?

For more, information watch this <u>video</u>

How do I find out more?

- *Check various sources. Can you find the same information in more than one source?
- *Research different web sites, such as:
 - Snopes.com
 - Urbanlegends.about.com
 - www.scambusters.org
 - www.fraud.org

Why do I have to do research?

- To become a better student
- To become a more knowledgeable consumer
- To empower yourself with knowledge
- To make life easier and save yourself some time
- To build on others' experiences and knowledge

Why do I have to cite sources?

- Allows readers to consult the original sources
- Helps to build knowledge and scholarship over time
- *Allows you to avoid plagiarism, and give credit where it is due

How do I get started?

- Get a little background knowledge about your subject
- ❖ Figure out what kinds of sources you want to consult
 - * Books
 - Articles
 - Websites

What is a search engine?

A search engine is a "tool for finding information, especially on the Internet or World Wide Web. Search engines are essentially massive databases that cover wide swaths of the Internet. Most consist of three parts: at least one program, called a spider, crawler, or bot, which 'crawls' through the Internet gathering information; a database, which stores the gathered information; and a search tool, with which users search through the database by typing in keywords describing the information desired (usually at a Web site dedicated to the search engine)."

From:

"search engine." *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009. *Credo Reference*. Web. 25 October 2010.

How to better use search engines

Phrase searching using quotation marks

- * Retrieves the exact phrase within the quotation marks
 - For example: "A Long Day's Journey Into Night"

Boolean operators

- ❖ AND retrieves documents containing <u>both</u> terms
 - Zinc AND colds
- OR retrieves documents containing <u>either</u> term
 - teenagers OR adolescents OR children
- NOT <u>excludes</u> documents containing the specified term
 - Harriet Tubman NOT juvenile

Truncation and Wildcard symbols

- * * shortens a word to retrieve all roots of a word
 - Teen* will retrieve teenager, teens, and teen
- ? Stands in for a single character
 - Wom?n will retrieve any documents containing either woman or women

Using parentheses

- Combines terms together
 - (children or adolescents) and discipline

Check help files in databases or search engines for which symbols to use.

Searching Using Subject Headings

- Library catalogs and many databases assign subject headings to <u>every</u> entry.
- Subject headings describe the **content** of the item using a controlled vocabulary of subject terms.
- This allows the researcher to identify items of relevance without having to think of every possible keyword or synonym.

Watch: Web Search Strategies in Plain English

What else do I need to do to research effectively?

- Be Flexible
 - •Try different search terms, and different databases if necessary.
- Be Observant
 - •What search features are available to you?
 - •What search terms and words do you see in articles that are close to what you're looking for?
- •Get Informed
 - •Find out a little about your topic from sources like:

Wikipedia

CredoReference

- •Take Your Time
 - •Good research takes time. Plan accordingly.
- •Be willing to ask for help!

Happy researching!

