INFORMATION RESEARCH PRACTICES

Your Experiences with Information Research

Please respond to the following questions by describing your experiences or attitudes during your senior or last year of high school.

1. How often in your last year of high school did you use resources from each of the following kinds of libraries for course assignments, research projects, or other academic purposes? (Scale: Once a week or more, Once or twice a month, a few times a year, Never)
   a. High school library
   b. Internet
   c. Public or community library
   d. College or university library

2. People use libraries for many reasons. In your senior year, which of the following was your MOST FREQUENT reason for using a library? (choose one)
   a. Recreation or other non-academic purposes (leisure reading, checking out music or videos, checking email, etc.)
   b. Conducting research for course assignments or projects
   c. Doing other academic work (studying, doing homework, doing a group project, etc.)
   d. Other
   e. I did not use a library in my senior year in high school.

3. In your senior year, did a teacher or a librarian talk with one or more of your classes about how to use library resources, including internet resources?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. How many assignments, papers, or projects have you completed in the past academic year that required you to include at least three sources in a Bibliography, References, or Works Cited list?
   a. Five of more
   b. Three or four
   c. One or two
   d. None

5. Which of the following PRINT sources did you use for information research in your senior year? Check as many as apply
   a. Library books
   b. Encyclopedias, almanacs, dictionaries, etc.
   c. Academic or research journals
   d. Newspapers or magazines for the general public
   e. Other
   f. I did not use any print sources to research in the past academic year.
6. Which of the following ONLINE sources did you use for information research in the last year of high school? Check as many as apply.
   a. Google, Yahoo Search or other general internet search engines
   b. Online journals, magazines, newspapers or encyclopedias
   c. Online Library catalog
   d. Online booksellers (such as Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, etc.)
   e. Online indexes or databases (such as EBSCO, JSTOR, Expanded Academic ASAP, etc.)
   f. Google Scholar
   g. Other
   h. I did not use any online sources for information research as a senior.

7. Which of the following did you use in your last year of high school to organize or manage the information you gathered for your research projects? Check as many as apply.
   a. Paper, folders, files, or note cards
   b. Computer folders or files (My Documents, Microsoft Word Files, etc.)
   c. Online tools (bookmarks, blogs, etc.)
   d. E-mail
   e. Bibliographic management software (Endnote, Reworks, ProCite, etc.)
   f. Other
   g. I did not use any tools for organizing or managing research information

8. In your senior year of high school, when you were given research project assignments, how often were you required to use a specific format (such as APA, MLA, Chicago, or some other style) for the sources in your bibliography?
   a. Almost always
   b. Often
   c. Sometimes
   d. Rarely
   e. Never/not applicable

9. In your last year of high school, when you were working on research assignments, how often did you seek help or advice from the following? (Scale: Almost always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never/not applicable)
   a. Teachers
   b. Librarians
   c. Parents or other adult family members
   d. Peers
   e. Writing Centers/Labs
   f. Internet help options

10. Over the course of your last year in high school, how often did you talk with a librarian about a research project you were doing?
    a. Five or more times
    b. Three of four times
11. Which of the following best describes the way you pace your work on a research assignment?
   a. I do most of the work soon after an assignment is given
   b. I divide the work pretty equally across the available time
   c. I do a little work soon after the assignment is given, but do most of it toward the end
   d. I do all of the work just before or on the due date

Your Attitudes and Beliefs about Information Research

12. How challenging are the different components of research for you? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following using the following scale:
   • Very easy (“I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor”)
   • Somewhat easy (“I can usually do this with some initial assistance”)
   • Somewhat difficult (“I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage”)
   • Very difficult (“This is hard for me even when I’ve received help”)
   • No experience (“I have not had any assignments requiring this kind or activity”)
   a. Narrowing your topic
   b. Developing a list of sources to investigate
   c. Revising your search strategy as necessary
   d. Developing your main argument or thesis statement
   e. Organizing your materials into a logical and unified structure
   f. Writing the paper
   g. Documenting your sources

13. How challenging is it for you to identify and retrieve sources? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following using the following scale:
   • Very easy (“I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor”)
   • Somewhat easy (“I can usually do this with some initial assistance”)
   • Somewhat difficult (“I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage”)
   • Very difficult (“This is hard for me even when I’ve received help”)
   • No experience (“I have not had any assignments requiring this kind of activity”)
   a. Using a library catalog
   b. Using an electronic index (Academic Search Premier, ProQuest Research Library, etc.)
c. Using a print index  
d. Using an Internet search engine  
e. Physically locating sources in a library  
f. Obtaining materials through inter-library loan

14. How challenging is it for you to use sources? Please rate the difficulty of each of the following using the following scale:
   • Very easy (“I can usually do this easily without assistance from a teacher, librarian, or peer tutor”)  
   • Somewhat easy (“I can usually do this with some initial assistance”)  
   • Somewhat difficult (“I need a fair amount of help to do this, but I can manage”)  
   • Very difficult (“This is hard for me even when I’ve received help”)  
   • No experience (“I have not had any assignments requiring this kind or activity”)  

   a. Determining whether a source is appropriate for an academic project  
   b. Deciding what information from your sources to integrate into your project  
   c. Knowing when to document a source  
   d. Knowing how to document a source

15. In general, how much do you enjoy researching for your class assignments, papers and presentations?  
   a. Very much  
   b. Quite a bit  
   c. Some  
   d. Very little

16. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements: (Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)  
   a. There is one right way to do research.  
   b. When two researchers disagree, one of them must be wrong.  
   c. Successful researchers understand things quickly.  
   d. Careful researchers can ultimately get to the truth.  
   e. Good research yields clear results, poor research yields ambiguous results.

Your Familiarity with Information Research Terms and Strategies

In this portion of the questionnaire, some of the terms and concepts may be familiar to you, but other may not. Please respond as accurately as you can, and feel free to use the “don’t know” response wherever appropriate.
17. Which of the following searches would retrieve the MOST results in an online search?
   a. Movies OR films
   b. Movies AND films
   c. Movies NOT films
   d. Movies INSTEAD OF films
   e. Don’t know

18. Which of the following is the correct way to truncate a search word?
   a. Typing in only the first syllable of the word as a keyword
   b. Combing search words with “and” “or”, or “not”
   c. Using the * or ! symbol in place of the last few letters of the word
   d. None of the above
   e. Don’t know

19. Situation: You have retrieved the following information from a library catalog search:

   Gothic modernisms/ edited by Andrew Smith and Jeff Wallace.
   Stacks
   PR888. M63 G67 2001
   AVAILABLE
   xii, 232p. ; 23cm.
   Includes bibliographical references and index.
   English fiction – 20th century – History and criticism.
   Modernism (Literature) – Great Britain.
   Modernism (Literature) – United States,
   Gothic revival (Literature)
   Smith, Andrew, 1964-
   Wallace, Jeff, 1958 -

   Which of the following would be the most efficient way to find a comprehensive listing of other books in the catalog on this topic? Choose one.
   • Identifying other books written by the same authors
   • Examining the bibliography in the book
   • Scanning the shelves where the book is located to see what books are nearby
   • Searching again using the subject headings that most closely match your research topic
   • Don’t know

20. When students do research for papers and assignments, it is helpful to distinguish between academic journals and popular magazines. Which of the following statements are true? Check all that apply.
   a. Academic journal articles provide objective facts; popular magazine articles do not.
   b. Articles in academic journals usually include a list of references to other scholarly works; articles in popular magazines usually do not.
c. The intended audience for academic journals is mainly other scholars; the intended audience for popular magazines is the general public.

d. Authors and editors for academic journals are usually employed in higher education; authors and editors for popular magazines are usually employed by the for-profit media.


In what issue of Latin American Politics and Society will you find this article? (Choose one)

   a. Volume 2002, Number 44
   b. Volume 44, Number 1
   c. Volume 2, Number 145 – 153
   d. The issue cannot be determined

22. For each of the following, indicate whether the item is an entire book, a journal article, or a portion of a book. (Options: Entire book, Journal article, Portion of a book, Don’t know)

   • Jorgenson, Lars W. “Reinterpreting Navajo Rites.” Navajo Culture 6 (1946): 469-78.

23. When you are doing research for papers and assignments, you must distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Which of the following statements is TRUE?

   • Primary sources are more scholarly than secondary sources.
   • Primary sources are old, secondary sources are new.
   • Primary sources examine first-hand; secondary sources examine the findings of other scholars.
   • Primary sources are more appropriate for academic projects than are secondary sources.
   • All of the above are equally accurate.
   • Don’t know.

24. Which of the following best describes the difference between peer reviewed journals and other journals? (Choose one)

   • A journal that publishes reviews of other articles.
   • A journal that publishes articles that have been approved by other scholars.
   • A journal that includes only articles written collaboratively by peers.
   • A journal that includes references for each article it publishes.
25. In a scholarly article or research paper, a citation is:

- A direct quotation from someone else’s work.
- Source information for any ideas or text from someone else’s written work.
- The physical location of a source (book, journal, etc.).
- All of the above.
- Don’t know.

26. In a class assignment or paper, a citation is NOT required when:

- You are paraphrasing, rather than quoting, a source.
- More than one source says the same thing.
- You are describing your own feelings or analysis.
- All of the above.
- Don’t know.

Your approach to evaluating sources

Among the challenges of research is determining whether a source is scholarly. Below is a list of source characteristics. For each characteristic, if this were the only information you had about a source, what conclusion would you draw about whether the source is likely to be scholarly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a source…</th>
<th>More likely to be scholarly</th>
<th>Less likely to be scholarly</th>
<th>Not at all scholarly</th>
<th>Cannot be determined</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27. is available online</td>
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<td>28. is translated from another language</td>
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<td>29. is published in a peer-reviewed journal</td>
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<td>30. is posted on a political blog</td>
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<td>31. has a lengthy list of references</td>
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<td>32. is long</td>
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<td>33. was published by a university press</td>
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<td>34. was published in the last ten years</td>
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<td>35. is an article in Time, Newsweek, or US News &amp; World Report</td>
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36. You are required to write a research paper for your American History class examining the roles of women in the American Civil War. You find the following article on Wikipedia. Which of the following references is/are not scholarly (check any that apply)?

- All of the above are scholarly
- I don’t know.

37. Suppose you have more relevant sources than you can use in a class assignment. Assuming it’s not 2 a.m. with the assignment is due in the morning, which of the following is the best way to determine whether to use a particular source? *(Choose one)*

- Whether the source is a print or internet source
- How recently the source was published
- How easily you can get the source
- Whether the author is an expert in the field
- All of the above are equally valid criteria for choosing among sources