



INSTRUCT TEACHING GUIDE

10. ADVANCED SEARCHING/REFINING RESULTS

For students with basic familiarity with searching, use the following resources to instruct them on more advanced search techniques and refining search results:

- [Tutorial: Search Techniques Part 2](#)
- [Video: Refining Search Results](#)

DISCUSSION TOPIC

Iterative Nature of the Research Process

As a researcher uncovers information, he/she may need to revise the topic or repeat searches with updated search terms. As the researcher outlines the argument, he/she may identify additional aspects for investigation and research.

ACTIVITIES

Search Scavenger Hunt

Have students retrieve sites with specific domain types relevant to the project they are working on and/or their area of study. For example, have them locate a specific government website (.gov) or an academic source by using Google Advanced Search.

Google Advanced Search

Have students conduct an advanced search in Google. Take note of their results. Compare them to the kinds of results they receive in the following activity (using controlled vocabulary to search scholarly databases). How do the search experiences and results compare?

Controlled Vocabulary

Instruct students to identify two or more databases or related tools. Students should write out their thesis, keywords, and synonyms. Within the database, have students utilize features related to controlled vocabulary to locate useful terminology. Students should make a list or chart of their keywords and the corresponding controlled vocabulary terms.

Real-Life Boolean Operators

Pick a topic and have students organize themselves into groups using Boolean operators (for example, students who are freshmen AND biology majors, students who live in the dorms OR are seniors, students who like English but are NOT English majors). Once the students are broken into groups, have them pick a topic to search and work together to choose a database, search for articles on their topic, refine their results using specific parameters (for example, only articles from the last 5 years, only peer-reviewed articles, etc.). Students then should use the thesaurus to look for different ways of wording their original keyword search, and with the same limiters as before, compare the results from the two different searches.

Within a database, have students work in pairs to explore Boolean operators, search strings, limiters, etc. Have them make use of any help features available. What helps, what seems too complicated to be useful, when might they use certain features, etc.?

This teaching guide can be used by Instruct customers who have selected the Information Literacy content package.