



**LIBRARY RESEARCH FOR WRITERS:
ENGLISH COMPOSITION I**

SHAKE LIBRARY - VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

By reading the information and working through the exercises in this unit you should learn enough about college-level library research to enable you to successfully find materials for completion of most of your Vincennes University courses.

Before starting to do research in the library, ask yourself, "What type of information do I really need?" It helps to save time and eliminate frustration to think in terms of four Information Pathways. They are:

A. The VU Libraries **Home Page** on The World Wide Web at <http://www.vinu.edu> (click the **Majors and Academics Link**, then **Libraries**)-- your research starting point. There is also a link to the library home page on MY VU, and many of the password protected resources can be accessed by students who have MY VU accounts. For more information, see http://www.vinu.edu/cms/opencms/academic_resources/library/libdised.html.

B. **VU WEBCAT** online catalog, for access to books, ebooks, videos, music CDs, and other library resources. Click the **Find Books** link for access.

C. **Electronic Periodical and Reference Resources**, such as the INSPIRE, NewsBank, and Credo Reference resources on the library's home page, are used to locate periodical and reference articles. Click the **Find Articles** link for access.

D. **Reference Books** in the library's print and electronic Reference Collection, including encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks and online electronic books.

I. VU WEBCAT ELECTRONIC CATALOG

WEBCAT is VU's computerized catalog of books, electronic books (ebooks), media (such as videotapes), and other library resources owned by Shake Library (such as titles of library owned periodicals). WEBCAT is available through the World Wide Web (go to the **VU home page at <http://www.vinu.edu>** , then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**, then **Find Books**, and then **VU WEBCAT**).

The user can find materials quickly through two main search formats: **Basic Search** and **Advanced Search**. This library unit will focus only on the Basic Search choice.

USING WEBCAT'S BASIC SEARCHING FEATURES

This exercise will cover the following types of searches: **author**, **title**, **subject**, and **keyword**.

To complete the exercises below, use computers on the VU campus or any Internet connected computer (see directions for Web access below). MYVU accounts are needed for most off-campus access.

1. Call up the computer's browser (Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Opera, etc.).
2. Type the Vincennes University address, <http://www.vinu.edu> , then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**.
3. Click **Find Books**, then click **VU WEBCAT LIBRARY CATALOG**.

4. You should now see the Basic Search screen, and can begin to complete the exercises below.

SAMPLE CITATION:

Items contained in the library are listed in bibliographic records in the WEBCAT system. A sample citation (or bibliographic record) is below.

Title: Sweet chaos : the Grateful Dead's American adventure / Carol Brightman.
Author: Brightman, Carol.
Publisher: New York : C. Potter, c1998.
ISBN: 051759448X (alk. paper)
Description: 1st ed.
viii, 356 p. : ill. ; 25 cm.
Subjects: Grateful Dead (Musical group)
Notes: Includes bibliographical references (p. 337-338) and index.
Held at: Vincennes University Shake LRC

Holdings Information

Database: Vincennes University Shake LRC
Location: Reference Desk Shake LRC (Circ loan)
Call Number: 782.42166 G711s 1998
Number of Items: 1
Status: Not Charged

HOW TO DO IT:

Type in a term or terms or a phrase (such as a subject, author, book title, or just some key words about a topic you are interested in) in the search blank. Then use the appropriate menu heading, and click search.

NOW YOU DO IT:

FINDING AN AUTHOR:

Use WebCat to locate books by a specific author or music CDs by a particular musician.

1. How many books does the library have that are written by novelist Terry McMillan? Hint: when searching for an author, always use the last name first, because WebCat alphabetizes authors by last name.

Number of Books: _____

2. Click on the highlighted number and the titles will appear. Select one book by clicking on its title, then record the following information about the book, so you will know how this is done.

Author: _____

Title: _____

Place of Publication: _____

Name of Publishing Company: _____

Date of Book: _____

Name at Least One Subject Heading Used to Categorize This Book: _____

Call Number of Book: _____

3. Now click **Search** at the top of the screen to return to the **Basic Search** blank for the next exercise.

FINDING A TITLE:

Pinpoint a specific book, videotape, music recording, or other item by its title.

4. Find out if the library own a book titled **America against the world : how we are different and why we are disliked**

Does the library have it? (Circle one) YES NO

5. Who is the Author of this Book: _____

6. Where is this Book Located (include call number): _____

FINDING A SUBJECT:

Often college research involves finding information about a topic or subject.

7. Use the bibliographic record you found for **America Against the World** (above), find out how many other books the library has about **this topic** by clicking on the terms in the Subject(s) category. By doing this, WebCat helps you find more information about your research topic by quickly generating new subject searches via hypertext Subject(s) links. If you find one book on your topic, chances are the Subject(s) links will help you find similar ones.

Name of Subject You Clicked: _____

Number of Books Under Subject You Clicked _____

8. Another way to do a Subject search in WebCat is to go to the Basic Search screen again, type in your term, select **Subject** from the **top menu tab (button)**, and click Search. How many items (books, etc.) does the library own under the subject heading **Cats**?

Number of Results: _____

KEYWORD SEARCHING:

Using Keyword searching allows you to search all parts of the record. Several special Keyword commands are available common to many electronic resources. 1) You no longer need to use **AND** to locate key terms or concepts within a single record (WebCat automatically ANDs your search terms); example: instead of typing **dogs AND cats**, simply use **dogs cats** to search for both terms in a record. 2) Use **quotations** for **phrase searching** ("**to have and have not**"). 3) Use the **question mark (?)** to truncate terms (such as **comput?** = compute computer computers computerization).

9. **Keyword** allows you to search the entire WebCat resource using key words. How many items do you find after completing the following search? "**world war ii**" **german** (be sure to use the quote marks around the phrase **world war ii**)? _____

10. **Truncation:** Now try the same search but include the **truncation symbol**, which is the question mark (?), as in "**world war ii**" **german?** How many items do you find? _____.

You should have found more items because the truncation of **german?** makes the search broader, thereby pulling up the words *german*, *german's*, *germany*, *germany's*, etc.).

II. HOW BOOKS ARE ARRANGED IN THE LIBRARY

A. Dewey Decimal System

Shake Library follows the Dewey Decimal System to classify nonfiction books into broad categories. It is a good idea to become familiar with this because many libraries throughout the United States - both small and large - use Dewey. The basic Dewey structure is below.

000-099 - General Works (encyclopedias, periodicals)

100-199 - Philosophy

200-299 - Religion

300-399 - Social Science (sociology, economics, government, law, education, etc.)

400-499 - Language

500-599 - Natural Science (math, chemistry, geology, biology, physics, etc.)

600-699 - Applied Science (medicine, nursing, engineering, agriculture, etc.)

700-799 - Fine Arts and Recreation (painting, music, etc.)

800-899 - Literature

900-999 - History (geography, travel, etc.)

These broad categories are subdivided by use of a decimal. For instance, the call number (also referred to as the "call number") for *The Sabbath in Puritan New England* by Alice Morse Earle is **277.4 E12s**. This means: 277.4 = Dewey Decimal number; E = the first letter of the author's last name; 12 = number assigned for Earle; and s = first letter of title of book.

B. Fiction Books

Many libraries have special book collections shelved separately from the 000-999 Dewey sections. Shake Library assigns many, but not all, fiction works to such special arrangements. WEBCAT lists these as "Fiction Collection" followed by a non-Dewey call number, such as Fic. K545sa for Stephen King's *'Salem's Lot*. Books designated CS can be found in the **Children's Stories** collection.

III. VU LIBRARY SEARCH (FEDERATED SEARCH ENGINE): SEARCH MULTIPLE RESOURCES FOR ARTICLES, BOOKS

VU Library Search, which is Shake Library's **Federated Search Engine**, can help you find your way through a confusing array of different electronic resources so you can find print books, e-books, and journal, magazine, or newspaper articles. This is a good tool to use when you don't know which resource to search for a particular topic, or would like to save time by searching numerous resources simultaneously. VU Library Search is found at the top of the Find Books or Find Articles web pages.

VU LIBRARY SEARCH – EXERCISES

Directions:

- Go to <http://www.vinu.edu>, select Majors and Academics, then Libraries, then Find Books or Find Articles (the federated search engine is at the top of both pages).
- Once the **VU Library Search** page appears, type your search terms in the search engine, select the **category** you want (such as Health/Medicine), click **Search**, and only the appropriate resources will be searched.
- **Discover books, too!** You can also click the box labeled **Include Library Catalog in Search** to find print books in the Shake Library book collection.

1. After accessing the VU Library Search page, type the words **violence schools** in two blanks, making sure the keyword search choice is selected. Click the **Social Sciences** box under **Select Category**. Also click the **Full -Text Articles Only** box, and the **Include Library Catalog in Search** box. Answer the following:

2. Which resource has the most results ("hits")? _____

3. Select one article from your listing and record the following information:

Title _____

Author _____

Source/Date/Page Number _____

IV. ELECTRONIC PERIODICAL RESOURCES

To find published articles from newspapers, magazines, newsletters, etc., use electronic resources like **EBSCOhost (INSPIRE)**, **SIRS Knowledge Source**, and **NewsBank**, and reference resources like **Encyclopaedia Britannica Online**. Access the home page by calling up a browser program (such as Internet Explorer) from any VU campus-based computer that provides web access and type <http://www.vinu.edu>, then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**. Resources are listed under the heading **FIND ARTICLES**.

Although you can connect with the library home page from off-campus PCs (such as from your home PC), some resources may not allow access, depending on licensing agreements and your Internet service provider. Students with **MY VU** accounts can access many password-protected resources from **MY VU's VU Libraries page** after **logging on to MY VU**. For more information, or if you have access problems, see http://www.vinu.edu/cms/opencms/academic_resources/library/libdisd.html.

Sometimes the full text of articles is available for printing and sometimes only the abstract/summary (bibliographic data) is listed. You may need to use the library's microform and bound periodical sections at times.

[NOTE: When using electronic resources, be sure and access help information within the programs to learn more or if you are having problems. Feel free to ask a librarian or your instructor for help.]

Below are exercises to introduce you to three important reference resources: EBSCOhost (Inspire), NewsBank, and SIRS. Feel free to explore other resources you see listed on the library home page.

A. EBSCOhost (INSPIRE)

EBSCOhost (INSPIRE) is a Virtual Library of assorted resources on the Internet provided by the state of Indiana. There are many resources, including Academic Search Premier, Masterfile Premier, Business Source Premier, Health Source, Newspaper Source, ERIC, Medline, Funk and Wagnall's New World Encyclopedia, and more.

EBSCOhost (INSPIRE) - EXERCISES

1. Access a Web browser (such as Explorer) on your World Wide Web connected PC.
2. Type in the address for the VU Home Page (<http://www.vinu.edu>), then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**. Once there, click the **Find Articles** link, then click on **EBSCOhost (Inspire)**.
3. Select your resource (for this assignment, try **Academic Search Premier**, which was created with college students in mind and features over 4,000 scholarly journals and popular magazines).
4. For this assignment, try to find articles written about the **Titanic** shipwreck. Type the words **titanic ship** in the search blank and click search. How many results did you get? Results: _____
5. Select any full text article by clicking on the **html or pdf** box beneath the citation and provide the information as requested below. You may need to scroll to the end of the article to obtain complete citation data.

Title _____
Author _____
Source/Date/Page Number _____

B. NEWSBANK'S AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS

NewsBank's America's Newspapers resource provides comprehensive coverage from over 1,000 Indiana, regional and national newspapers. Both current and archives articles are provided in America's Newspapers, which is updated daily.

NEWSBANK'S AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS - EXERCISES

1. Access a Web browser (such as Explorer) on your World Wide Web connected PC.
2. Type in the address for the VU Home Page (<http://www.vinu.edu>), then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**. Once there, click the **Find Articles** link, then click on **NewsBank**.
3. Select **America's Newspapers**.
4. Begin your search by typing terms in the search bar. You can use AND, OR, NOT and quotation marks for phrase searching (see example in the following question).
5. How many articles do you retrieve when you search for information about "**global warming**" and solutions ? (Note use of quotes for phrase searching, as in "**global warming**" combined with the AND command to narrow the phrase with the term **solutions**.)

Number of Articles: _____

6. Supply the following information for one article about "global warming" and solutions.

Title _____
Author _____
Source/Date/Page Number _____

C. SIRS KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

SIRS KNOWLEDGE SOURCE provides access to thousands of full text articles on numerous topics contained in three resources that can be searched simultaneously. These include SIRS RESEARCHER (many general topics), SIRS GOVERNMENT REPORTER (government documents and other information), and SIRS RENAISSANCE (arts and humanities and additional data).

SIRS KNOWLEDGE SOURCE - EXERCISES

1. Access a Web browser (such as Explorer) on your World Wide Web connected PC.
2. Type in the address for the VU Home Page (<http://www.vinu.edu>), then access the **Majors and Academics link**, then click **Libraries**. Once there, click the **Find Articles** link, then click on **SIRS**.
3. Begin your search by typing terms in the search light bar. You can select **Keyword** (searching within the text of an article) or **Subject Headings** (to pinpoint articles by specific topics).
4. For this assignment, how many articles do you retrieve when you do a **Subject Headings** search for the terms **rock music history**? (Be sure to click on the correct subject heading to see the list of articles.)

Number of Articles: _____

5. Supply the following information for one article you found?

Title _____

Author _____

Source/Date/Page Number _____

V. ADDITIONAL ELECTRONIC REFERENCE RESOURCES

Besides electronic resources that focus on providing published journal, magazine, and newspaper articles, libraries offer other electronic reference resources. Several of these that are important and useful for writing assignments are introduced below.

A. CREDO Reference

CREDO is a collection of over 270 (and growing) electronic reference books on many topics including art, literature, science, technology, humanities, and social sciences. The books may be searched collectively or viewed individually.

B. AccessScience

AccessScience is the online version of the acclaimed McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology. Besides encyclopedia articles, this resource contains biographies, news, a Study Center, image galleries, and multimedia information.

C. Biography Resource Center (INSPIRE)

Use Biography Resource Center to search for information about people, past and present.

ELECTRONIC REFERENCE RESOURCES – EXERCISES

For this assignment, refer to the list of electronic reference resources above. They are found under the Find Articles Heading from the VU Libraries web pages.

1. CREDO REFERENCE

After accessing Credo Reference, select Advanced Search, and search for an article about the **American Revolution**.

A. Name of Article: _____

B. Name of Source: _____

C. Date of Source (see **citation information** at bottom of article's page): _____

2. ACCESSSCIENCE

After selecting AccessScience, search for an encyclopedia article about the diesel engine.

A. Who is the author of the article? _____

B. What are two See Also listings the article suggests you visit for more information:

3. BIOGRAPHY RESOURCE CENTER

After accessing the Biography Resource Center, find information about **R. Emmett Tyrrell** (type last name first and select the Start of Last Name choice).

A. What publication did Tyrrell found? _____

B. What was this publication's political leanings? _____

C. When and where was this publication founded? _____

VI. REFERENCE BOOKS – PRINT RESOURCES

Most libraries contain special reference collections containing encyclopedias, almanacs, law books and many other works. WEBCAT lists these with a Dewey number and the term **Reference**. Several major reference works that college students should be aware of are listed below.

A. Encyclopedias

The first place to start your research is often an encyclopedia, especially if you do not know a lot about your topic. Find the index volume (usually the last volume of an encyclopedia set) to discover complete listings of information about your subject. Sometimes authors of the longer articles are listed, as are bibliographies that mention other information sources you might consult. There are both **general** encyclopedias and **specialized** encyclopedias geared toward a certain topic.

General Encyclopedias:

Encyclopedia Americana (Ref. 031 A512b)

World Book Encyclopedia (Ref. 030 W927w)

Specialized Encyclopedias (there are many):

The Encyclopedia of Religion (Ref. 200 E56)

The Dictionary of Art (Ref. 703 D554a)

B. *CQ Researcher* - (Ref. 070.442 C749e)

This is a weekly publication that provides research reports that analyze specific topics in depth, and as such is one of the most useful reference works in the library for writing assignments of many types. Use the cumulative index at the end of the latest volume to access the many years of this reference work. Near the front of each volume you will find a listing of that year's contents for easy access. Weekly updates are available in a binder at the Lending Services Desk.

C. *Statistical Abstract of the United States* - (Ref. 317.3 U58s)

Use this annual book to find statistical data about thousands of topics. Check index in back of the book.

D. *Editorials on File* - (Ref. 081 E23e)

This reference series is an excellent source for speeches and argumentation papers because it reprints the editorial opinions on numerous current topics from over 150 U.S. and Canadian newspapers since 1984. Each topic in the twice-monthly survey is introduced by a brief factual summary of the events that stimulated the editorials. Monthly indexes are printed on green paper and every quarter are combined in a cumulative index printed on ivory paper.

E. The Oxford English Dictionary - (Ref. 423 O98e)

The OED (as it is known by scholars) is no ordinary dictionary. This 20-volume reference set is the largest and most authoritative dictionary of the English language, and the ultimate source of information on the usage and meaning of English words and phrases. Every college student should be aware of this important scholarly work, which includes word origins and historical uses and appearances of words.

REFERENCE BOOKS - EXERCISES

For this assignment, refer to the list of reference books above. All are located in the library's Reference Collection.

1. Use any recent copy of **Statistical Abstract** (Ref. 317.3 U58s), find the heading **Child Care** in the **index in the back of the book**, and provide the name of one table/chart about this topic (your choice). (Remember that the number given in the index is for the Table you need to look up, NOT the page number in the book.)

A. Name of Table/Chart: _____

B. Table Number: _____ Page Number: _____

2. Select a copy of **Editorials on File** (Ref. 081 E23e), pick any topic discussed (your choice), then choose one editorial and answer the questions below.

A. NAME OF TOPIC: _____

B. TITLE OF ONE EDITORIAL (if listed): _____

C. NAME OF NEWSPAPER ABOUT YOUR TOPIC: _____

D. DATE OF ARTICLE: _____

3. Consult a recent **CQ Researcher** (Ref. 070.442 C749e), use the index in the back of the book, and find one report about Mental Health and Illness (your choice). Record the following:

A. NAME OF REPORT: _____

B. DATE OF REPORT: _____

C. VOLUME, NUMBER, and PAGES (see bottom of article's first page): _____

4. Consult **one** of the two **general encyclopedia** sets **mentioned above** and find a listing for any war ever fought.

A. NAME/DATES OF WAR: _____

ENCYCLOPEDIA NAME, VOLUME AND PAGE: _____

5. Consult **one** of the two **specialized encyclopedia** sets **mentioned above** (**Dictionary of Art**, Ref. 703 D554a or **Encyclopedia of Religion**, Ref. 200 E56) and find **one article** of **your choice**. Record the following:

A. NAME OF ARTICLE: _____

B. NAME OF AUTHOR (if listed): _____

C. NAME OF ENCYCLOPEDIA, VOLUME AND PAGE _____

6. Use **The Oxford English Dictionary** (Ref. 423 O98e) to find information about the name of any sport (baseball, soccer, etc.) or game (euchre, poker, etc.). After you choose your word, answer the following.

A. Name of Word You Chose: _____

B. Origin of Word (such as OF for Old French, G for German, but it isn't always listed--there is an Abbreviations Section in the front of each volume): _____

C. Date of Earliest Use of Your Word in Print: _____

VII. BEYOND THE WEB: WHY USE LIBRARY RESOURCES INSTEAD OF WIKIPEDIA, GOOGLE OR OTHER GENERIC SEARCH ENGINES?

Since almost anything can be put online, it is often difficult to critically evaluate the information you find on the Web. Web sites are often a blend of information, entertainment and advertising; this can make determining the credibility of a web site difficult. Resources from VU Libraries, such as the ones described in this guide, are considered more authoritative and a better use of a researcher's time. This is because many published articles (though certainly not all) are subjected to some sort of editorial process, fact-checking, or peer-review by professionals in a particular field.

At the very least, articles in library periodical resources or other electronic resources provide some type of publishing information such as names of authors and publishers, dates of publications, and source material such as works cited bibliographies. This is not to say that everything in a library resource is absolutely true, but that you are provided with more information in which to make a judgment about the validity of the information you are using.

Using the search engine Google.com or the reader-created online encyclopedia Wikipedia.com to look for general information about a non-controversial topic such as the large-mouth bass or how clouds are formed or the membership of an obscure rock band might seem okay. However, for college writing projects, especially those concerning highly charged controversial topics such as some political issues, published journal articles or e-books subjected to the peer-reviewing editorial process are considered more reliable and given more weight than many of the unsubstantiated opinions flying about the blogosphere.

Beyond Wikipedia/Google – Some Concepts to Ponder.

1. Example: go to **Wikipedia.com**, the popular free encyclopedia that contains articles written and edited by anyone, whether they are biased, not experts, or inaccurate. Search for a possible controversial term such as **Hamas**. Note the box at the top of the Hamas article that says “**The neutrality of this article is disputed.**” Wikipedia is being responsible in warning that the information may not be reliable or factual and may contain bias, but compare this article to the following source below in #2.

2. Now go to a library resource such as **Opposing Viewpoints** (located under the Find Articles heading from the VU Libraries web pages) and do a search for **Hamas**. The articles you find are likely to be written by professionals, selected by editors, often provide source information, and provide citation information such as authors, titles, dates and who published the article. Even though professionals also make mistakes, and any article you find anywhere should be carefully read and assessed for bias, college professors prefer these types of articles due to their reliability and accountability.

For more information, read the VU Libraries Guide titled [Evaluating Web Resources Library Resource Guide](http://www.vinu.edu/cms/export/sites/default/academic_resources/library/library_guides_download_gallery/Evaluating_Web_Resources_Library_Guide.pdf) . This can be found by going to the VU Home Page at <http://www.vinu.edu> , click on Majors and Academics, then Libraries, then Library Guides. Or access it directly at http://www.vinu.edu/cms/export/sites/default/academic_resources/library/library_guides_download_gallery/Evaluating_Web_Resources_Library_Guide.pdf