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LIRT's Top Twenty 2009

Archer, Joanne, Ann M. Hanlon, and Jennie A. Levine. "Investigating Primary Source Literacy." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35.5 (2009): 410–420.

Giving a much needed boost to research on "primary source literacy," librarians at the University of Maryland set out to investigate their students' knowledge of primary source materials. The authors developed an online guide of tools and resources to assist in primary source research. They then studied students' knowledge of these materials by arranging a user study consisting of undergraduate students. The goal was to determine if the online guide successfully assisted students in their research efforts. Although the results were mixed, the article demonstrates the need for students to be able to define primary sources, familiarize themselves with key terms and tools, and apply their existing knowledge to locate primary resources. As more classes delve into primary sources, this article will be of interest to instruction librarians, history bibliographers, and archivists alike.

Baildon, Mark, and James S. Damico. "How Do We Know?: Students Examine Issues of Credibility with a Complicated Multi modal Web-Based Text." *Curriculum Inquiry* 39.2 (2009): 265–285.

This article examines the way learners engage multi modal texts— texts that mix images, music, graphic arts, video, and print—and the methods used to evaluate credibility of them. Using *Loose Change*, a documentary first published on the Web in 2005, as an example of a multi modal text. Baildon and Damico parse the process by which a group of 32 ninth-grade students judged the credibility of the film's claims. The first half of the article discusses the theories surrounding the analysis of multi modal texts. The second half outlines the research methodology and describes the research outcomes. A particularly interesting outcome from the study was the impact of visuals in assessing credibility. In the authors' own words, "this supports the notions about print being supplanted by images in the new media age and the corresponding need for greater attention to issues of visual literacy as a core component of multi modal literacy education." This article is particularly useful to librarians and faculty members who engage learners with text, images, and video that can be increasingly complex to evaluate.

Ballard, Susan D., Gail March, and Jean K. Sand. "Creation of a Research Community in a K-12 School System Using Action Research and Evidence Based Practice." *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 4.2 (2009): 8–36.

Interesting both for the data collected as well as the methodology used, this article reports the results of an investigation of high school and elementary school students' knowledge about "ethical... use of ideas and information. The authors used action research which is intended to lead to specific action rather than generalizable data, though they claim it may be transferable to similar populations. High school students were surveyed to assess their understanding of the ethics of behaviors such as fabricating data or plagiarizing. While a high percentage of students were able to identify "direct instances" of plagiarism as unethical, far fewer were clear on the ethics of behaviors including "random citations" to meet assignment requirements. High school teachers were surveyed about their perceptions of typical student behavior relating to the ethical use of information as well as which behaviors they had challenged. Fifth-grade students were given a similar (but simplified) survey about their understanding of ethical uses of information. Students then completed a unit that included a research project and direct instruction about ethical use of information. A post-survey showed improvement in students' understanding of ethical use of information. Of particular interest was that 31% of fifth-grade students in the pre-test weren't sure or believed it was not ethical to ask a librarian for help. Even in the post-survey the number was 10%. In addition to an improved understanding of students' understanding of ethical use of information, the research also led to a stronger collaboration between classroom instructors and library media specialists, improved information literacy instruction, and even funding of continued research projects.

Barratt, Caroline Cason, Kristi n Nielsen, Christy Desmet, and Ron Balthazor. "Collaboration is Key: Librarians and Composition Instructors Analyze Student Research and Writing." *portal: Libraries and the Academy*. 9.1 (2009): 37–56.

This article provides helpful guidance for librarians working with composition programs, but the tool used to gather data is what makes it truly fascinating. All students taking First-year Composition at the University of Georgia are required to upload their papers into, an "open-source electronic markup and management application" developed by the university allows both students and instructors to use XML to mark up students' work. The result is a valuable assessment tool that also serves as a repository of useful data for citation analysis. The features of allowed researchers to take a broad and anonymous sample of the student citations, and allowed researchers to see specific assignment feedback. Researchers' findings were in line with earlier citation research, which finds that a combination of "carefully considered" assignment design and formal library

instruction result in the best student bibliographies. Researchers also noted some disciplinary differences in the values of writing pedagogy and library research that should be explored further.

Dahl, Candice. "Undergraduate research in the public domain: the evaluation of non-academic sources online." *Reference Services Review* 37.2 (2009) 157–163.

Dahl makes a good case to add some needed complexity to the ways students are taught to evaluate web-based information sources. She suggests a switch to evaluating whether items are suitable for a particular purpose rather than simply evaluating whether an item is "academic" (as many traditional checklists do). She also argues for valuing non-peer reviewed/scholarly information found online for undergraduate research, noting that "the lines between traditionally defined academic and non-academic sources are becoming continually more blurred." Dahl draws on other authors' work to suggest new methods for students to evaluate materials based on the appropriateness of the task to the level, if the material supports their point in some way, if the material adds value, and if the material presents legitimate information. She also recommends that students compare websites to one another and to other sources of information. Dahl is careful to note that it is essential for librarians to be aware of the stance of the faculty member giving the assignment when doing this. The article does have one unfortunate flaw: Dahl uses the term "public domain" to refer to any freely available web resource. This does not, however, detract from the author's key message.

Figa, Elizabeth, Tonda Bone, and Janet R. MacPherson. "Faculty/Librarian Collaboration for Library Services in the Online Classroom: Student Evaluation Results and Recommended Practices for Implementation." *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning* 3.2 (2009): 67–102.

In an effort to make a long-term connection with distance students, librarians at the University of North Texas created the program "Librarian in the Classroom" (LITC). This article includes a comprehensive review of the literature relating both to distance students' library service and instruction needs as well as to the integration of librarians into the classroom. This study leads to an exploration of the reactions of the students, the professor, and the librarian to the LITC program. It is important to note that the LITC course examined in this paper was a Library Science course and the course professor is also a librarian which may impact the respondents' interest in library services. Students were surveyed both before and after the class. While many more students completed the pre-survey than the post-survey, a wide majority of both groups indicated that the LITC program was a "value-added service." While responding to reference questions for an online student took more time for the librarian than it would face-to-face,

the use of a class bulletin board allowed all enrolled students to see the answer. The class librarian also felt that a personal interaction with an individual librarian improved distance students' comfort using the library in the future. The professor, while also a librarian, found that having an "insider librarian" allowed her to focus on teaching rather than troubleshooting problems. An appendix to the article includes a lengthy list of recommended practices for both librarians and for faculty interested in implementing a Librarian in the Online Classroom program.

Fleming-May, Rachel, and Lisa Yuro. "From Student to Scholar: The Academic Library and Social Sciences PhD Students' Transformation." *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 9.2 (2009): 199–221.

In this article, the authors discuss a project to shed light on the information-seeking behaviors of doctoral students in order to provide academic librarians with insight into how best to assist them. The authors began their research by conducting a pilot survey of graduate students. The survey asked the students to explain their research process from beginning to end, how they prepare to conduct research, and their approach to the literature review. This data led the authors to investigate the doctoral students' behavior more deeply by conducting three focus groups of 24 students. The focus groups were asked how they conducted research, how they used the library, what role library resources and services played in their research, and how the library could serve them better. The focus group discussions and the authors' observations led to the revelation that "emphasizing ... the changes in knowledge, skills, responsibility, and the internal and external identity that students experience shape their information behavior." It became apparent that doctoral students were hesitant to ask for help from a librarian and often relied more heavily on assistance from faculty mentors. The authors also surveyed academic librarians to determine gauge their familiarity with the nature of doctoral study and how well they understood doctoral students' information needs. They found that most academic librarians lack the kind of research background akin to that of doctoral students and that "familiarity with the nature and process of earning the PhD would give academic librarians helpful insight about opportunities for providing services and assistance" to doctoral students.

Giullian, Jon. "Slavic Folklore, the Library, and the Web: A Case Study of Subject-Specific Collaborative Information Literacy at the University of Kansas." *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 10.2/3 (2009): 200–220.

This article details the steps taken to integrate information literacy skills into a 100-level Slavic folklore course at the University of Kansas. The course is geared towards first- and second-year students who need to take a course in the humanities. Librarians went beyond the typical 'one-shot' and worked with the

instructor on designing multiple instruction sessions. Over the course of about two years, the librarians and instructor tried many different assignments incorporating research and evaluating sources, including online tutorials, course research assignments, a “bibliographic trail” exercise, bibliographic essays, and even a student-compiled Dictionary of Slavic Folklore. The article is useful in that it shows in great detail how librarians modified their approach to instruction over time. The author is also refreshingly honest about what strategies worked, and his theories on why some strategies did not work. The article offers an excellent outline of the thinking and effort required for effective instructional design and how librarians might engage in instructional design. It also showed how committed the librarians were to making the instruction sessions successful. The article clearly shows that it takes teamwork, communication, flexibility, and a can-do attitude in order to integrate information literacy into a course.

Jacobs, Heidi L M., and Dale Jacobs. “Transforming the One-Shot Library Session into Pedagogical Collaboration: Information Literacy and the English Composition Class.” *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 40. 1 (2009): 72–82.

Collaboration is an aspect of academia in which librarians are becoming key players. Jacobs and Jacobs present an article detailing the result of a collaborative effort between a rhetoric and composition professor and an information literacy librarian. The observation that research is a process much like writing led the authors to develop questions and reflect on the teaching of information literacy in English composition courses. Understanding that multiple perspectives provide insight and opportunity, an additional aspect of the collaborative effort was implication for the future. The authors provide an overview of their collaborative effort, development of assignments, and the resulting spread of dialog to other faculty concerning their findings. This article is useful for librarians looking to develop information literacy initiatives through collaboration with faculty.

Jeffrey, Keven M., Lauren Maggio, and Mary Blanchard. “Making Generic Tutorials Content Specific: Recycling Evidence-based Practice (EBP) Tutorials for Two Disciplines.” *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*. 28.1 (2009): 1–9.

This article outlines the efforts of librarians at the Alumni Medical Library, Boston University Medication Center. The librarians developed two evidence-based practice tutorials which were adopted by courses at the University. Since the mid-1990s, the librarians at the Alumni Medical Library have taught students the skills to formulate clinical questions and locate information by using medical resources. The tutorials were developed to assist with this process and provide access to knowledge. Details are provided on the methods used to develop the tutorials, format, and customization of content. Medical librarians will find this article useful

for the subject specific detail and tutorial development for the discipline while general readers will be interested in reading of the technical aspects of developing tutorials.

Julien, Heidi, and Shelagh K. Genuis. "Emotional Labour in Librarians' Instructional Work." *Journal of Documentation* 65.6 (2009): 926–937

With increased emphasis on the teacher-librarian model comes both rewards and stress. Emotional labor—where workers are expected to espouse certain emotions as part of a job and to promote the organization's goals can readily be applied to teaching librarians. In this article, the authors look at how librarians perceive their teaching role, with the positive and negative experiences associated with it. Focusing on Canadian public and academic librarians, the study draws from qualitative interviews and participants' diaries. Although many of the participants derived pleasure from their instructional work, many had negative or stressful experiences as well. The authors recommend that institutions take into account the "affective experiences" of librarians by offering pedagogical training, increased preparation for classes, and that they the opportunity to express frustrations and stresses associated with teaching. Those interested in the "burn out" factor among instruction librarians will enjoy this article.

Knecht, Mike, and Kevin Reid. "Modularizing Information Literacy Training via the Blackboard eCommunity." *Journal of Library Administration* 49.1 (2009): 1–9

In this article, librarians at Henderson Community College in Kentucky describe their experiences using the eCommunity feature of Blackboard course management software as part of their information literacy program. Among the advantages of using Blackboard are convenience of access and immediate feedback for students. In addition to popularity among students, the authors point to increased faculty participation in information literacy programs as one of the positive effects of using Blackboard. The ability of the Blackboard system to monitor and document student results is highlighted as a way to provide concrete outcomes for accrediting agencies. This article provides a detailed example for others who are considering online instruction efforts.

McMillan, Margy. "Watching Learning Happen: Results of a Longitudinal Study of Journalism Students." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35.2 (2009): 132–142.

As part of a five year qualitative, longitudinal study of journalism students at Mount Royal College, MacMillan charts and analyzes changes in personal growth, university curriculum, and the online information environment. The students attended sixteen formal library sessions during their regular course

work, and sessions included close collaboration with faculty and exposure to reference, database, and information management tools, as well as authentic assignments. Throughout the duration, students reported and reflected upon their experiences through a series of ungraded resumes called I-Skills, and, after MacMillan's phenomenographic analysis, she posits that learning about databases and the internet is not as much about skill as a "set of strategies." The richness of the study lies in its study of students' own words.

Maggio, Lauren A., Megan Bresnahan, David B. Flynn, Joseph Harzbecker, Mary Blanchard, and David Ginn. "A case study: using social tagging to engage students in learning Medical Subject Headings" *Journal of the Medical Library Association*. 97.2 (2009): 77–83.

Students in a Master's of Arts in Medical Sciences program who were enrolled in a required Biomedical Information course completed an assignment that used natural language tagging in order to better understand the controlled vocabulary of MeSH. Students learned firsthand the pitfalls of natural-language tagging including an abundance of synonyms, spelling errors and differences, and varying levels of specificity. This assignment helped the students to understand the purpose of controlled vocabulary. While less than 10% of this 186 person class were able to "recognize and select MeSH terms related to a specified MEDLINE article" before the exercise, that number jumped to slightly over 78% afterwards and 46% of students found MeSH to be a clear concept. The activities described could easily be adapted to teach students about the value of any controlled vocabulary and would likely be effective with other students as well.

Markey, Karen, Fritz Swanson, Andrea Jenkins, Brian Jennings, Beth St. Jean, Victor Rosenberg, Xingxing Yao, and Robert Frost. "Will Undergraduate Students Play Games to Learn How to Conduct Library Research?" *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35.4 (2009): 303–313.

Many academic libraries have explored the idea of creating games in order to teach students how to use library resources. The authors of this article explore whether or not students are interested in an online game as a method of library instruction and how their feelings about games compare to their feelings about more traditional instruction methods. Game-activity logs and post-game interviews were used to gauge students' level of interest in this method of instruction. The article includes many direct quotes from the interviews and provides insight into the thoughts of college students. It will be useful for librarians thinking about developing their own online library instruction games.

Oakleaf, Megan, and Neal Kaske. "Guiding Questions for Assessing Information Literacy in Higher Education." *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 9.2 (2009): 273–286.

This article aids academic librarians seeking to assess information literacy by asking six questions applicable to a wide range of institutions. After addressing these questions, such as "What are the stakeholder needs?" and "Will the assessment tell us what we need to know?" readers will be able to better evaluate which assessment approaches are most suitable at their institution. The authors explain the significance and intent of each question, breaking the larger guiding questions into sub-questions to allow for full explanation. This article will prove highly useful to librarians involved in information literacy assessment, as well as those interested in information literacy more generally.

Oud, Joanne. "Guidelines for Effective Online Instruction using Multi-media Screencasts." *Reference Services Review* 37.2 (2009): 164–177.

Oud draws upon the field of cognitive psychology to provide a number of criteria to consider while developing instructional multi-media such as screencasts and videos. Because multi-media is more difficult for learners to process than text or images alone, the author advises tutorial authors to minimize the cognitive load required of learners. It is also recommended to incorporate several key characteristics of effective online instruction such as interactivity, feedback, and promoting critical thinking.. This article will be particularly useful to librarians who provide online instruction, especially those planning to create screencasts or revising existing tutorials. A helpful checklist summarizing the author's recommendations is included.

Sorensen, Charlene, and Candice Dahl. "Google in the Research and Teaching of Instruction Librarians." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 34.6 (2008): 482-488.

The authors designed a survey to assess how and why librarians use Google; how that use either aligns with or contradicts the way they teach students to use Google for research; and how much of what librarians teach about Google is influenced by faculty. The survey consisted of 22 questions, five of which were open ended. Out of 144 surveys sent out, 49 responded, for an overall response rate of 49%. Findings included that librarians use Google as both a starting point for research and as a last resort when other methods have failed. Survey respondents also used Google because of its convenience and because it includes sources such as government information, grey literature, and conference presentations that are not indexed in library databases. There was also a significant difference between how often librarians teach students to use Google and their own use of Google for research. The survey also found that

when faculty provide guidelines for acceptable use of Google, librarians were significantly less inclined to incorporate that into their instruction. The authors feel that discussions about Google need to move away from its viability as a research tool, and instead focus on encouraging the critical thinking skills required to use it effectively for academic research.

Tronstad, Bryan, Lori Phillips, Jenny Garcia, and Mary Ann Harlow. "Assessing the TIP Online Information Literacy Tutorial." *Reference Services Review* 37.1 (2009): 54–64.

This study provides the assessment results for a homegrown tutorial at the University of Wyoming Libraries. The tutorial known as TIP, or Tutorial for Information Power, includes five modules addressing and incorporating the 2000 ACRL Information Literacy Standards. To study the tutorial's effectiveness in student learning, researchers developed and administered pre- and post-tests. Additionally, the time students used to take the tests were compared and contrasted with students who took and performed well on the tests. This data demonstrates to readers that online tutorials are useful for teaching information literacy; however, more study is needed in terms of students' knowledge base before designing pre- and post-tests.

Yukawa, Joyce, and Violet H. Harada "Librarian-Teacher Partnerships for Inquiry Learning: Measures of Effectiveness for a Practice Based Model of Professional Development." *Evidence Based Library & Information Practice* 4.2 (2009): 97–119.

This article analyzes the outcomes of a practice-based professional development course designed for teams of teachers and librarians. Teams worked collaboratively over the course of one year, creating and implementing units of inquiry-focused study for their K-12 students. The authors include a detailed description of how the course was designed, and detail the various tools participants used to report back data needed to assess and modify the course. Based on the study's findings, this practice-based model of professional development appears to be effective long term. Although devised for K-12 educators and librarians, the study provides a framework that could be modified for professional development at the postsecondary level. Additional refinement is ongoing to ensure the model is widely applicable.