

# EDU 253 Research Assignment: How To Find Scholarly Journal Articles

In today's Google world, it's tempting to hop onto the Internet and "google" to try and find what you need. But while Google can be a helpful tool if used wisely, it's not the place to begin your research.

That's where the Library's online databases come in! *Academic Search Premier*, *ERIC* and many other education- and psychology-related databases are treasure troves of scholarly journal articles! You just have to know how to find them. Below are some helpful tips.

*But starting a research assignment can be so hard! Where do I begin?*

## Keywords !



Start with your keywords! Unlike Google and Ask Jeeves, databases require a structured set of keywords in order to produce viable results. Using a **Concept Map** to help you brainstorm can be a valuable tool for beginning your search. How? By arming yourself with an arsenal of topic-related keywords, you will increase your chances of finding the articles you need!

After completing a Concept Map, you can begin your search in the databases. Just remember to join your words together with the word "and."

For example:            learning styles    **and**    elementary school

## Databases



*How do I know what databases to use?*

There are several online databases that you should find helpful. Some of them are:

### EBSCO Databases

- *Academic Search Premier*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)
- *ERIC*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)
- *Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)

### DISCUS Databases

- *Expanded Academic ASAP*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)
- *Educator's Reference Complete*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)
- *Academic OneFile*  
[\(On-Campus Access\)](#)      [\(Remote Access\)](#)

Try others that look interesting to you! Also, see the library's "Education" databases: From our homepage, click on **Find Articles**, then scroll down to **Education**.

### *Cool Tips!*

- Search multiple databases at once using the "Choose Databases" (**EBSCO**) or "Change Databases" (**DISCUS**) feature!
- Remember to select **scholarly/peer-reviewed** journals!       scholarly/peer-reviewed
- Adjust your date span! The last 5-10 years is usually acceptable.

## Internet



By and large, you will best find what you need using our online databases. But if you choose to use the web, here are a few things to keep in mind.

- **Bias** - Who/what organization put together the site and what agenda might they have?  
(Tip: Look for an "About Us" tab and read up on those responsible for the site's content)
- **Accuracy** - Are the facts accurate based on what you already know? A web site can be both biased and accurate; they may give you some of the facts, but not include *all* the facts about a particular topic or issue  
(Tip: Save your Internet research for last; you'll be a more discerning researcher!)
- **Design** - Is it easily navigable? Too busy or messy? This can say a lot about the overall quality of the website  
(Tip: Look for a top or left-hand margin that has easily identifiable navigation tabs)
- **Commercialism** - Are you attacked by pop-up ads as soon as the page opens? Are you asked for personal information? These can be 'red flag' warnings that you are not in a good place!

Websites that you might find helpful:

National Center for Education Statistics  
<http://nces.ed.gov/>

U.S. Department of Education  
<http://www.ed.gov/>

S.C. Department of Education  
<http://ed.sc.gov/>

Librarians' Internet Index (good alternative to Google)  
<http://lii.org/>

### *Can I use Wikipedia?*

Wikipedia is *not* considered a scholarly source of information. Anyone (yes, that means me, you, your little brother, or the dude at the gas station) can immediately publish anything on there. Sounds pretty cool, but if you think about it, that means you don't know what you're getting. Therefore, you shouldn't use it.

### *Can't I just google everything I need?*

In a word, no. We are spending a valuable hour of *your* time in the library for a reason: there are better ('better' meaning more scholarly) sources out there than Google. Use what you have learned in here to your advantage. Save Google for your personal recreational research.

Another resource you may find helpful is the library's featured section of Education-related websites. From the Library Homepage, click on "Find WWW Resources," then "Sites By Subject," then Education.

**REMEMBER, IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION, JUST ASK. YOUR FRIENDLY LIBRARIANS LOVE TO HELP!**



## J. Drake Edens Library Web Site *CHEAT SHEET*

J. Drake Edens Library Web Site (Library's Home Page): <http://lits.columbiasc.edu/edenslibrary/index.html>

*Note: All of these instructions are from the Library's Home Page*

TO GET TO...	CLICK ON... (from the Library's Home Page)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Search Premier</i></li> <li>• <i>Expanded Academic ASAP</i></li> <li>• <i>ERIC</i></li> <li>• <i>Educator's Reference Complete</i> (journal articles)</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Find Articles -&gt; Journals &amp; Magazines</i></b>            Select from the list of databases. If you're off-campus, click on <b><u>Remote Access</u></b>. (Login is the same as what you use to check your CC email with.)</p>
<p><b>Resource Guide for Education</b> (This has a <u>TON</u> of useful info on it!)</p>	<p><b><i>Library Resources Guides -&gt; then select "Education" from the <u>Subject Guides</u> Drop-Down Menu</i></b> (instructions are the same for ON or OFF campus)</p>
<p><b>The library's catalog</b> (books, journals, etc. that the library actually has and owns)</p>	<p><b><i>Find Books and more...</i></b> (instructions are the same for ON or OFF campus)</p>
<p><b>Web Sites of Interest</b> (Good web sites for Divergent Learning, Education, and Special Education)</p>	<p><b><i>Find WWW Resources -&gt; Sites by Subject -&gt; Education (or Special Education)</i></b>            * These web sites can also be found on the Resource Guide</p>
<p><b><i>Citation Information</i></b> (How to Cite, APA style)</p>	<p><b><i>I Need To/How Do I... -&gt; <u>Cite my sources</u> -&gt; APA (dianahacker.com)</i></b></p>

Columbia College Web Site: <http://www.columbiacollegesc.edu/>

Edens Library Reference Desk: 803.786.3703