



Information Literacy/Library Skills Assessment
for Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Department Classes
Fall 2012

Purpose:

The purpose of this assessment is to determine the basic knowledge of library information and research skills learned in these classes by the students. Also, to see how the student has applied this information, at a future date, and how much of this information has been retained.

Student instruction will emphasize the finding of reliable sources from the QCC online databases, and the Internet (Internet evaluation on selecting sources) for their speeches.

Students participating in one session will be introduced to four online databases (Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), LexisNexis Academic, Opposing Viewpoints, and Virtual Reference Library (Gale). The content of the class will be the same information provided to the students participating in two sessions. Hands-on time will be provided.

For those students who will participate in two Library sessions, three online databases will be demonstrated during the first session. The content of the second class will be to provide a quick review of the previous class. Also, students will be shown the use of a fourth database (Opposing Viewpoints) during this session. Hands-on time will be provided.

Participants:

Twelve Speech Communication (SP 211) classes

Library information literacy classes will be approximately one hour and 50 minutes to two hours in length with hands-on time provided to the students.

Four classes are scheduled for two sessions

Four classes are scheduled for one session each

Four classes are a control group with no Library sessions scheduled

Library classes will be taught by Ms. Neera Mohess and Prof. Suzy Sciammarella, members of the Library Faculty.

Student participation in the Library assessment is optional. Student names are not a requirement on the Library skills assessment form, and are not connected with any grade assessment determined by the classroom teaching faculty. Assessment results will be shared with all participating Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Department Faculty.

Students taking two library sessions will be given an assessment two weeks after the second session.

Students in classes with one session will be given an assessment two weeks after the initial session.

Students who do not participate in a Library class will receive an assessment between the eighth and ninth week of the semester.

Procedures: Students will be instructed in the following areas:

Content of Library Information Literacy Class

1. General Overview of Library Services

- Circulation Desk – Benefits of activating CUNY ID Card
- Check-out for circulating book
- CLICS – Intra-Library Loan Service
- ILIAD – Inter-Library Loan Service
- Reference Desk Services – Librarian's role and services provided to the students
- Reference Area – Explanation of the purposes and usage of reference books
- Stacks – Circulating Books

2. Online Homepage of the QCC Library

- Library url and remote access
- Location of CUNY+PLUS
- Location of E-Journals and Databases
- Subject Guides

3. Online Database Searching

- Explain E-journals and databases
- Review remote access
- Types of sources available in a database
- Overview of databases for Speech Communication Classes
- Boolean searching
- Citation information
- Selection of articles
- Abstracts
- Magazines versus journals
- PDF versus HTML

Printing directions

Databases to be used:

Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)
LexisNexis Academic
Opposing Viewpoints
Virtual Reference Library (Gale)

4. CUNY+PLUS Online Catalog for Books

Search type: All fields (Boolean searching), Author and Title
Explain search results (holdings, location, call number, item status)

5. Internet Evaluation

6. Plagiarism

7. Student Hand-outs:

Copy of homepage of the Library
List of databases demonstrated during the instruction
The Library Modern Language Citation Style Handbook (MLA)
Internet Evaluation Sheet

The following goals and objectives will be incorporated into the Library Information Literacy class.

INFORMATION LITERACY GOALS

The Library Information Literacy Advisory Council proposes a set of information literacy learning goals and objectives for CUNY students to achieve by the time they have completed 60 credits. The purpose is to ensure that our efforts at information literacy fully articulate within CUNY. These learning objectives have been approved and endorsed by the *CUNY University Librarian* and the *CUNY Council of Chief Librarians*, who agree to work with campus leaders, faculty and administrators to ensure that the learning objectives are met.

Learning Goals Summary

The Learning Goals for every CUNY student with 60 credits includes:

1. How information in various formats is organized and how to locate it;
2. How to define and refine a topic and how to search for information related to that topic;
3. How to evaluate information and its sources;

4. How to use information responsibly.

Learning Objectives Detail

The specific objectives/outcomes relating to each of these broad learning goals are described below.

1. How information in various formats is organized and how to locate it.
 - a. Students will be able select and search the appropriate database or information source based on their specific information need.
 - b. Students will use their understanding of where and how information originates (i.e., information sources -- government, news media, social networking sources, and the scholarly communication cycle) during the research process to guide their selection of relevant and appropriate sources.
 - c. Students will find and navigate appropriate resources in print and online. (Including the free Web, online library catalogs and subscription databases)
 - d. Students will differentiate between scholarly, popular and trade publications and use the various types of literature appropriately.
2. How to define and refine a topic and how to search for information related to that topic.
 - a. Students will translate research questions into search statements by identifying key vocabulary terms, concepts and synonyms.
 - b. Students will determine whether a research topic is too broad or too narrow, given the guidelines for the assignment, and be proactive searchers by responding to results and revising or refining their searches.
 - c. Students will formulate effective search statements using tools such as keywords, subject headings and Boolean operators.
3. How to evaluate information and its sources.
 - a. Students will distinguish between types of information sources and demonstrate through their choices that not all information sources are appropriate for all purposes.
 - b. Students will apply basic evaluation criteria to Web sites and demonstrate an understanding of why information found on Web sites needs careful evaluation.
 - c. Students will critically evaluate information for usefulness, objectivity and bias, currency and authority and demonstrate the benefits of examining diverse opinions and points-of-view.
4. How to use information responsibly.
 - a. Students will demonstrate their understanding of ethical, legal and social issues surrounding plagiarism, copyright and intellectual property and apply principles of academic integrity in their use of information.
 - b. Students will identify the elements that go into a citation and create a correct citation using an online or print style manual for guidance.
 - c. Students will quote, paraphrase and attribute ideas correctly.

**Kurt R. Schmeller Library
Queensborough Community College of the
City University of New York**

Assessment: Fall 2012

**Dear Student: Your participation in this Library assessment is optional.
Please do not place your name on this evaluation.**

1. Name a QCC online database, or databases, you are using for your research.

2. Why is it necessary for a researcher to document their sources when giving a speech or writing a research paper (such as writing a Works Cited page)?

3. When selecting an Internet site for your research an important factor in determining if the site is providing you with the best information available would be (**select and circle only one of the responses listed below**)

- A. the reliability of the person providing the information
- B. the length of the article or information provided
- C. the amount of reference links the article provides
- D. the copyright mark on the bottom of the page

4. A basic boolean search means (**select and circle only one of the responses listed below**)

- A. selecting key research words and linking them with the word **and** when doing online database searching
- B. using the Internet (Google, Yahoo,) for research
- C. selecting the first three results from an Internet search for sources
- D. providing an abstract (a summary) of the article
- E. you type your research request in the search box in the form of a question

**Kurt R. Schmeller Library
Queensborough Community College of the
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Test Item

Answers

Scoring Rubric for Fill-In the Blank Responses

1. Name a QCC online database, or databases, you are using for your research

Acceptable answer: any database(s), on the QCC Library Homepage

2. Why is it necessary for a researcher to document their sources when giving a speech or writing a research paper (such as writing a Works Cited page)?

Acceptable answer: any explanation using the word plagiarism, academic theft, borrowing without credit, necessary to give credit to an author, falsification, stealing ideas, etc.

Scoring Rubric for Multiple Choice Responses

3. When selecting an Internet site for your research and important factor in determining if the site is providing you with the best information available would be

Acceptable answer: A. the reliability of the person providing the information

4.A basic boolean search means

Acceptable answer: A. selecting key research words and linking them with the word **and** when doing online database searching

**Results and Analysis
of the Information Literacy/Library Skills Assessment
for
Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Department Classes
Fall 2012**

Participants: 170 Students **Student participation in the assessment was optional.**

Twelve Speech Communication (SP 211) Classes:

- 4 classes participated in two Library Sessions / 56 students
 - 4 classes participated in one Library Session / 62 students
 - 4 classes were the control group with no Library Sessions/ 52 students
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Time Frame for the Assessment

Students participating in two sessions were given an assessment approximately two weeks after the second session which was about a month apart from the first session

Students having one session were given an assessment approximately two weeks after the initial session.

The Control Group received an assessment towards the end of the semester.

Results:

Students participating in two Library Sessions:

- Had a much higher correct response rate to Question 1 regarding knowledge of the online databases at QCC
- Had a much higher correct response rate when asked Question 3 regarding the criteria for selecting Internet sites

Students participating in two Library Sessions:

- Regarding the topic of plagiarism in Question 2 and Question 4 on boolean searching the students attending one session scored higher than the students with two sessions

Control Group (no Library Sessions)

- The Control Group in the areas of knowledge of online databases (Questions 1) and the concept of plagiarism (Question 2) had a positive response rate of over 55%

Analysis:

- Since all groups did not contain the same number of student participants, the results overall must be viewed as an analysis within the group itself. Certain comparisons can be drawn between the groups.
- Library Information Literacy classes are beneficial to all students conducting academic research.
- The two session classes did the best overall (except for Question 3), and would seem to indicate that two session classes are the most ideal of the three conditions. Reasons for this include more time to flesh out information literacy concepts and the ability to review concepts from a previous class. Efforts should be made to promote two session classes with faculty for this reason.
- In the same vein, with the exception of Question 3, those with one information literacy class did better than those who had not taken one. Efforts should be made to encourage all faculty to schedule a Library instruction class.
- A good percentage of students answered questions correctly. This is especially notable since these questions are not necessarily intuitive (name a database; describe a Boolean search).
- Sixty-two % of the control group students could identify a QCC online database they were using for research. But, only 35% (Question 4) selected the correct answer on using a boolean search in an online database. This would indicate that while students may be using the databases, they may not be using appropriate boolean search techniques to obtain the best results.
- The students participating in One Session and Two Sessions scored well on Questions 1, 2, and 4.
- Question 3 regarding Internet Evaluation scored the lowest for Session One students. This would indicate students need more practice in learning how to select appropriate Internet sources using the criteria presented (attachment) during the Library class. This skill set would need additional reinforcement.
- Part of the assessment was to determine what information literacy skills the students retained from the class after a period of time passed. The students who participated in the assessment did well in the evaluation and retained a fair amount of information to respond correctly to the questions.

Limitations on interpreting the data:

- It is unclear how many students (especially in the control condition) had prior knowledge of library resources and search tools through reference desk visits, prior information literacy classes, or instruction by their professors.

**Kurt R. Schmeller Library
Queensborough Community College of the
City University of New York**

Library Assessment Results of SP 211 Classes / Fall 2012

**170 Students Participated in the Assessment
Two Sessions 56 Students / One Session 62 Students/ Control Group 52 Students**

1. Name a QCC online database, or databases, you are using for your research.

The following results showed how many students could identify one or more QCC online databases they used for their research.

Two Library Sessions/ One Library Session/ Control Group (No Library Sessions)

91%	74%	62%
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2. Why is it necessary for a researcher to document their sources when giving a speech or writing a research paper (such as writing a Works Cited page)?

The following indicates how many students were able to correctly explain the concept of plagiarism.

Two Library Sessions/ One Library Session/ Control Group (No Library Sessions)

63%	79%	58%
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3. When selecting an Internet site for your research an important factor in determining if the site is providing you with the best information available would be (**select and circle only one of the responses listed below**)

The following are the correct responses / Correct Answer: A

Two Library Sessions/ One Library Session/ Control Group (No Library Sessions)

61%	45%	46%
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- A. the reliability of the person providing the information
- B. the length of the article or information provided
- C. the amount of reference links the article provide
- D. the copyright mark on the bottom of the page

4. A basic boolean search means (**select and circle only one of the responses listed below**)

The following are the correct responses / Correct Answer: A

Two Library Sessions/ One Library Session/ Control Group (No Library Sessions)

64%

68%

35%

- A. selecting key research words and linking them with the word **and** when doing online database searching
- B. using the Internet (Google, Yahoo,) for research
- C. selecting the first three results from an Internet search for sources
- D. providing an abstract (a summary) of the article
- E. you type your research request in the search box in the form of a question

Speech Department Faculty Participants: Dr. Celia Braxton
Prof. Diane Carey
Prof. Andrea Kreinik
Prof. Sherry Rada
Prof. Rosanne Vogel
Control Group Anonymous

Library Assessment conducted by: Ms. Neera Mohess
Prof. Suzy Sciammarella

January 2013