Search tools comparison (jigsaw group activity)

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| LEARNING OUTCOMES | | | |
|  | After this activity, learners will be able to:   * Identify the characteristics of a search tool, including scope and search control parameters * Present the salient points to peers, including types of materials found through their search, ways to limit their results, and privacy considerations * Select an appropriate search tool for their present information need (i.e., finding articles for a course assignment). | | |
| **Context**  This activity is conceived of as part of a larger session about finding academic books and articles. It could be an opportunity to address emerging AI tools like Elicit and the various chatbots.  **Preparation**   * Select three search tools to be compared, ideally one from each of the following categories:  1. Google Scholar 2. AI tools such as Elicit, Bing AI, Bard, QuillBot or ChatGPT 3. Article databases such as Academic Search Complete or a relevant subject-specific database  * Prepare worksheets for each group, each of which will be assigned one of the three search tools (more than one group will have each tool, depending on class size) * Select a relevant topic for the search exercise * Customize slides as needed   **Classroom setup**  Students will need to work in groups. They will need to have at least one computer per group, although one for each student is ideal. If the technology allows, each group can project their computer to the main classroom screen or additional monitors/screens. For a virtual session, students can work in breakout rooms and one person can share their screen as each group reports their findings. | | | |
| CONTENT OUTLINE | | | |
| **Time:** | **Instructor Activity** | **Student Activity** | **Assessment** |
| 3 minutes | Introduce the concept that there are many tools for finding academic information – there is not one tool that finds everything, and tools have different benefits and limitations. Explain that databases can be found on subject guides and the database finder page. [Using slides] | Respond to prompts about search tools they have used or are aware of. | n/a |
| 15-20 minutes | Clarify instructions / assist where needed, listen to group conversations. | Complete the activity in groups. Each group is given worksheets that assign a search tool. Students investigate the tool and answer the questions on the worksheet. | Observation of students’ ability to complete the tasks |
| 15 minutes | Offer clarification of details, context as needed while students report back. | Take notes as each group reports their findings. Each group projects a laptop onto a pod screen to show to the rest of the class. | Observation of students’ ability to complete the tasks |
| 5 minutes | Wrap-up: summarize the activity and reiterate the importance of understanding how different search tools work. | Respond to a poll about which search tools they plan to use to find information for their own work and how confident they feel in understanding the tools. | Poll results |
|  | | | |

Search tool evaluation learner worksheet

# Tool name

Google Scholar: scholar.google.com

AI tool such as Elicit, Bing AI, Bard, QuillBot, or ChatGPT [enter link]

Academic Search Complete or subject database [enter link or shortened URL]

# Instructions

1. Go to the link above to access the search tool.
2. Conduct a search for peer-reviewed journal articles on the topic of:   
   **the role of social media in perpetuating climate change denial**.
3. Discuss the evaluation questions below as a group.
4. Assign one person in the group to share their screen to show your search results and report your findings to the class.

(15-20 minutes)

1. Each group reports back on their discussion.

(15 minutes)

# Evaluation questions

1. How did you conduct a search for articles on **the role of the media in perpetuating climate change denial**? (That is, what did you type in the search box(es)?)
2. How many results did you get?
3. What type of sources can you find with this tool? For example: do the search results include books, journal articles, newspaper or magazine articles, a text-only answer, or something else?
4. Does the tool search for sources only in a particular subject area or type of publication?
5. How can you access the full text of the article from the search results page?   
   Bonus question: if not, what should you do to find the full text?
6. What are some ways that you can limit your search?
7. In what way is searching with this tool different from searching with Google (or another web search engine)?
8. Can you tell if your private information is being tracked as you use this tool?
9. Who is making money from your use of this search tool (if anyone)?
10. If you’re using an AI tool (ChatGPT, Bard, Bing AI, Elicit, etc.), can you verify that the citations are real?
11. Do you think that this search tool would be useful to you as you complete your assignment? Why or why not?