Information Literacy in the Escape Room: A Sample Guide

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Information: There are many ways to enhance your information literacy workshops. Have you considered designing an escape room model?

An escape room is a physical activity game where players can work together to solve a series of clues based on a theme. You can consider a series of clues related to research and prompt students to conduct research like a scavenger hunt. Here you will instructions and guidelines to help you create an escape room experience for your students.

Target Audience: First year students, new students, transfer students or international students.

Time Length: 1 hour (5 minutes for late-comers and 10 minutes at the end to debrief with everyone and 45 minutes total for the activity)

Guidelines: Students will need to work in teams. If this is a drop-in workshop, it is highly recommended to add an RSVP into the list in case you get many students. Be sure to have a library classroom available for students to walk around and explore the room to find physical clues and items. You can write hidden messages on the board, or leave notes around, or create envelopes for students to open. You can be creative but you want to make sure that it direct students to open up the envelops and solve the clues one piece at a time. They should be keeping tracking of their research in a Google Doc where they will list the citations or responses in that doc for you to see.

Checklist:
- Classroom available (computer lab preferred)
- Number of students in groups
- Computers or laptops available?
- Design a series of clues for each group or in the room
- Describe the theme of the workshop
- Play "scary" music in the background

Preparation:

- Make sure you have activities designed to help students conduct research as a group and explain what is an escape room to the students or instructors beforehand:
    1. What is the theme of the workshop or escape room? Harry Potter, Game of Thrones, or just a general escape room learning activity?
    2. Make sure you have props, items and clues disseminated in the classroom

- **What are some clues you can make students to conduct research?**
    1. Search for a few books in the library catalog and cite it in APA/MLA
    2. Search for a non-peer reviewed article in a library database and cite it in APA/MLA / or search for a specific article and explain how they found it
    3. Explain what a scholarly article is, find an example in library database and cite it as APA/MLA
    4. Search for Wikipedia entry (provide a few) and have them see what is wrong with the Wikipedia entry (lack of citation, bias information, or no context?)
    5. Find a Tweet and cite it in APA/MLA
    6. Some of these activities in the clues can lead to bigger discussions relating to the ACRL Frames such as Research as Inquiry and Searching as a Strategic Exploration

- **Debrief and Follow Up**
    1. When all of the students are done, spend some time to debrief and ask what worked and what didn't and what did they like or learned the most? Make sure you give at least 5-10 minutes to this part. Also award the winners with candy or bookmarks.
    2. You can also do a formal assessment with a quick survey or a 1-minute reflection of what they learned and collect it to analyze the feedback.
    3. If you do this session again, make sure to change it up. You may have same students in the workshop.