**Activity Title:** The Value of Citations

**Purpose:** The goal of this assignment is to help students develop a better understanding of the need to provide citations. Moving beyond a focus on citations as giving appropriate credit to an author, this activity is intended to help students appreciate the value of citations for the reader (or scholars in general). Students will review a source without citations and attempt to answer a series of questions, then will discuss/reflect on what the activity contributes to their understanding of how scholars use and value citations.

**Framework Concept(s):**

* **Information Has Value**
* **Scholarship as Conversation**

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Recognize the need to provide proper attribution and citation
* Become familiar with the ways in which scholars utilize sources to support and develop their interpretations, as well as to provide context for their research

**Activity Description**

* Provide students (individually, or in pairs or groups) with a relevant journal article in which references or citations have been removed or hidden.
  + **Note: Citations can be hidden by using the** [**redact feature in Adobe**](https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/removing-sensitive-content-pdfs.html#:~:text=Choose%20Tools%20%3E%20Redact.,in%20the%20floating%20context%2Dmenu.)**.**
* Ask students to answer questions about the article and the findings without being able to use the references. Sample questions could include:
  + Prior to this work being published, have any previous researchers conducted studies related to the current research?
    - If yes, select a few of the studies that you consider to be most relevant and list them here:
  + How does the current research compare to previous research on the topic?
  + On page \_\_, the authors describe a theory (or a research method) that informed their work. Who developed that theory/research method?
  + How do the findings of the current study compare with the previous research on the topic? Does it confirm or reject findings by any previous researchers? If so, which ones?
  + What are some of the relevant journals that appear to commonly publish research on this topic?
* After giving students time to consider the questions, ask them to discuss how easy or difficult it was for them to answer the questions without being able to see the citations.
* Have students write a short reflection in which they consider what they learned about the value of citations for understanding research articles.