

Digital Information Literacy Rubric

What is Digital Literacy?

Digital Literacy describes a process whereby students and library patrons conduct research using online databases via computers or mobile devices to find answers to their personal or academic questions.

When it comes to information literacy, it is clear that technology and the research process go hand-in-hand.

In using the research process to create a “new product” such as a research project or paper, or a panel discussion or debate, students/patrons learn to use search strategies and a combination of keywords to search one or more databases in user-friendly EBSCO interfaces.

Database Content

When explaining database content to new users, the following description may be useful:

Imagine a library filled with hundreds and thousands of magazines or journals, often dating back twenty or more years. Add to that hundreds of reference books, monographs, and primary source documents. With a single search term or phrase in the database Find field, the researcher can search the entire collection in a second or two. The results (articles) will appear on the researcher’s computer screen to be printed, emailed, saved, etc.

Licensed from reputable publishers, these materials offer a reliable alternative to the sometimes questionable results from general search engines.

Characteristics of Digital Literacy

The researcher can:

- Demonstrate perseverance in the process and adjust search strategies as necessary, using limiters, expanders and “narrow by...” features such as clustered subject headings and source types.
- Use information responsibly – cite sources.
- Develop analysis skills, critical thinking skills, writing skills, and communication skills.
- Use technology and critical thinking skills to sort and evaluate materials which answer specific research questions.
- Work from the “general” to the “specific” as a result of adopting and utilizing one’s research skills.
- Organize resulting information, such as the content of articles, videos, and images, to create a new “product” such as a science fair project, a debate position, or a persuasive essay.

Rubric for Digital Literacy

Level 5 – This level of researcher:

- is an effective researcher who uses advanced features of online databases.
- is an independent researcher who uses research techniques for his/her own work and who is capable of teaching research techniques to others.
- uses analysis skills to navigate his/her search results to then create a new product such as a research paper or project.
- is an independent researcher who understands and demonstrates the ability to cite a variety of sources using standard bibliographic citation formats.

Level 4 – This level of researcher:

- is capable of demonstrating effective research using databases and citing sources with limited or no assistance.
- is not fully independent and is learning advanced research skills.
- is developing analysis skills to determine the best use of his/her search results.
- is learning how to cite information accurately.

Level 3 – This level of researcher:

- is developing research skills in online databases.
- is learning additional research methods to move towards effective research and critical thinking.
- recognizes the importance of being a responsible researcher and citing all sources used.

Level 2 – This level of researcher:

- is new to researching and is learning to use online databases.
- is developing an understanding and practice of citation in various formats.

Level 1 – This level of researcher:

- is just beginning the research process, the use of computers and online databases.
- is new to the concept of copyright and source citing.

Additional Resources

Research & Writing Tips for Students:

<https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/Research-Writing-Tips-for-Students>