Library Research

DeDe Dawson
Science Liaison Librarian
Outline for Today:

- Library basics
- Search planning
- Search tips
- Demonstration
  - Library catalogue (books)
  - Web of Science (review articles)
- Assignment
Purpose of this Session

(& the Library Research Assignment!)

- Introduce you to using the Library
- Learn some skills for searching the Library collection
- Give you some practice searching
LIBRARY BASICS
Library Basics

- Student card = your library card
- 30 day loan period (undergrads)
  - You can renew 2 times, can renew online
  - Subject to “recall”, check your email!
- “Reserve” books held behind desk
  - Shorter term loan
Library Branches:

- 7 branches
- Science Library
  In Geology Building (by the T. rex!)
  Mon – Thurs: 8am-8pm
  Fri: 8am - 5pm
  Sat: CLOSED
  Sun: 12pm - 5pm

- [http://library.usask.ca/](http://library.usask.ca/)
SEARCH PLANNING
Types of Sources

- Books
- Edited books
  - Each chapter written by a different author
  - Usually there is an introductory/overview chapter
- Journal articles
  - Likely be too technical though
  - Look for “review” articles that summarize research in your topic area
Concepts in your topic

- What are the main "concepts"?

"I’m interested in the evolution of flowers"
Brainstorm some synonyms, alternate spellings, related terms...

- Background reading on your topic!
- Learn some basic information about your topic and discover more terms to search by...
  - Wikipedia
  - Encyclopedias
  - Course textbooks
  - Popular science magazines (e.g. Scientific American)
Search Terms

Brainstorm some synonyms, alternate spellings, related terms...

FLOWERS:
flowering plants, Angiosperms

EVOLUTION:
diversification, speciation
SEARCH TIPS
“Boolean Operators”

- The small joining words between your terms:
  - Flowers AND Evolution
  - Flowers OR Angiosperms
Search Tips: *Boolean Operators*

**AND** narrows the search

Use to combine different concepts

Flowers **AND** Evolution

Flowers  **AND**  Evolution
Search Tips: *Boolean Operators*

**OR** broadens the search

Use for synonyms

Flowers **OR** Angiosperms
Search Tips: *Truncation*

* = truncation

- Used to look for multiple endings of words
- For example:

  Flower* = *flowers, flowering*

Important to put the * at the base of the word!
Search Tips: **Phrase**

“” = quotation marks

- Used to look for an exact phrase
- For example:
  “Burgess Shale”
  “Plate tectonics”
General searching advice:

- Be Persistent!
  - Check several sources
  - For this assignment: Library Catalogue (for books), Web of Science database (for review articles)

- Be Creative!
  - Use various terms and in different combinations
  - This is an iterative process – you learn as you go and adapt
DEMONSTRATION
Searching the library:

http://library.usask.ca/
What are databases?

- Also called indexes
- Index the contents of thousands of scholarly journals (library subscribes to ~60,000 ejournals)
- Library subscribes to many different databases (~500) – many very subject-specific, others multidisciplinary
Web of Science (WoS)

- Large multidisciplinary database, excellent coverage of the sciences
  - Comprehensive but not all-inclusive!
- WoS indexes 12,000+ journals; updates added weekly
Science Library

Need Help?

▪ DeDe Dawson dede.dawson@usask.ca
  Office 180.6 in Science Library
▪ Staff in the Science Library can help you too!
▪ A library guide to geology resources:
  http://libguides.usask.ca/geology
  (Under “Course Pages” see tab: Geol109 M. Cuggy’s class)