Database Searches Study Sheet

Goals of this Study Sheet
When conducting research, it’s important to include evidence to prove your claim. Part of writing a research paper comes from the evidence, which can usually be found in a database search engine. A database is a collection of scholarly articles, peer reviewed sources, and scientific based research. Upon looking over this study sheet, you should be able to understand where to find a database and how to use it.

Where to Find a Database
On the John Tyler website you are able to find a database search engine under the Libraries tab. The site provides six types of database search engines in finding credible scholarly research. Each database search concentrates on sources such as journal articles, newspaper articles, books, scholarly articles, periodicals or films.

- Advanced Search
- Research Guides
- A to Z List of Databases
- Films on Demand
- Academic Search Complete
- JSTOR

Google Scholar is an additional database in finding academic sources.

How to Use a Database

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Using Keywords:
Using keywords is a helpful way to specifically find the resource that you need for your research.

- Simply think about what your topic is and think of some keywords that will narrow down your idea to something more specific. For example, if your topic is...
about genetics--more specifically the effects of genetic editing--then include some key terms that could provide you with related content.

- Within the options that says “All Fields” you can specify even more. You can choose Author, Caption, Item Title, or Abstract. In addition, you can select an option “And,” “Or,” or “Not.” These will focus more on the keywords you include, unless you choose the options “Not”--which excludes a term that might associate with the subject. For example, if you wanted to avoid “politics” you would select “Not” then include the word “politics” within the search box.

- After entering in the data, you will be able to select from a variety of articles.

**Selecting Source Options**

- If you wanted to narrow the type of source you get you can check off the sources you want to focus on. For example, if you want a source that comes from articles or books you can select the option.

**Selecting which Database to Use**

Each database is different in what type of resource you are trying to find. Some have similar types of sources while others are more specific.

- **Advanced Search** -- This type of database mainly focuses on journal searches. There are other options such as books, videos, images, articles, and journals you can specifically select in the advanced search option. With advanced search you can also use the “EXACT” option to get information pertaining only to what you type in the search bar.

- **A to Z List of Databases** -- Provides a variety of supplemental databases for course subjects. For example, it gives databases to general subjects like science, history, business, art, engineering, law, etc..

- **Films on Demand** -- The database focuses on films. In the advanced search options, you can select a range of what type of film you want to search. Types of content would follow as: Documentary, Educational, Dramas, Cartoons, Lectures, Interviews, etc.
• **Academic Search Complete** -- Similar the databases like JSTOR and advanced search, the database provides sources like articles, journals, and books in addition to sources like newspaper articles, magazines, and periodicals.

• **Research Guides** -- This focuses on some popular databases used, as well as some additional guides to other courses here at John Tyler.

• **JSTOR** -- Another database where you can search for books, primary sources, and journals. With advanced search you can narrow down your topics to pull up articles, books, reviews, pamphlets, and research reports.

**Google Scholar**

Google Scholar is another option when finding scholarly sources. There are two options given to you through Google.

• **Article** -- provides specifically scholarly articles and books. You are able to look up keywords about your topic and get a list of articles in .pdf form that can be downloaded.

• **Case Law** -- This provides cases from a state or federal level court. You have the option to find court cases related to your state or another.

Very similarly to the advance search options within a database, with Google Scholar you are able to select a specific date for relevance to determine recent publication.

**In Conclusion**

Now that there’s been a breakdown of the types of sources available and how to use them, you should be able to apply that knowledge to your own work. Whenever you find yourself writing a research paper or gathering information to prove your stance, understanding how to use a database will make finding sources far easier.