

Bridging the Gap for Information Literacy: Connecting High Schools, Colleges, and the Workforce

Academic librarians from Jefferson Community College and secondary school librarians from Jefferson and Lewis counties have met in a collaborative project to ensure that students are prepared to meet the demands and expectations of college level research, workforce preparedness, and informed citizenship.

The Association of College & Research Libraries' *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* and the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES School Library System's *Scope and Sequence of Information Literacy Skills* are the foundation of this effort.

The group has identified common information literacy skills from these documents that, when mastered, ensure that students exiting high school are prepared to access and evaluate information required in the workplace as well as for the general welfare of themselves and their families. Students entering college with these skills are poised for successful college level research.

To facilitate the acquisition of these skills, the group developed the following list of 6 student outcomes. Examples of specific skills and knowledge associated with each outcome are indicated by the bulleted items.

Working with high school teachers, school library media specialists will focus on the following information literacy skills to ensure that their students:

1. Understand the information problem and create a workable thesis statement
 - Narrow or broaden topic
 - Identify the information needed
 - Do appropriate background research to identify keywords

2. Know how to select relevant sources
 - Choose resources appropriate to the research problem (specialized encyclopedias, newspaper or magazine articles, books, scholarly research articles, government documents, community members or Internet websites, etc.)
 - Use criteria to judge research material: author's credentials, objectivity, accuracy, currency, and depth of coverage

3. Know how to efficiently and effectively locate and use sources
 - Understand how information is organized (call numbers, topics, chronological, alphabetical, etc.)
 - Use keywords, search strategies and appropriate electronic resources to locate books, articles, statistics, etc.
 - Understand and use the parts of a book (index, table of contents, glossary, chronology, bibliography, etc.) to access relevant information

4. Draw on sources to write or present a well reasoned research project
 - Use information from several sources
 - Present a thesis, a discussion and a conclusion

5. Present the product in an appropriate and ethical format
 - Understand the concept of plagiarism
 - Understand how to quote and paraphrase from sources without plagiarizing
 - Use a prescribed style (MLA, APA or other) to properly cite sources
 - Understand that while it is possible to copy and share print, Internet, audio and video media, it may not be legal to do so

6. Examine and evaluate the final product and process that was used
 - Know when more research is needed
 - Revise search strategy as needed
 - Assess the product and process in terms of strengths and weaknesses