

Locating Journal & Newspaper Articles

For the purpose of this library workshop, you have the following hypothetical assignment:

Write an 8-10 page persuasive essay about some aspect of the topic **Internet Privacy**. Your instructor requires you to use at least one scholarly or peer-reviewed journal article as one of your sources. All of your supporting information must come from sources that you have judged to be credible and reliable.

The following exercises ask you to explore some of the Library's databases as you do the research for this pretend assignment. Write down all the steps you take on the worksheet below. You might be asked to demonstrate and/or explain your search during our discussion; the notes you have made will help you give an outstanding presentation.

EXERCISE I:

Internet Privacy has emerged as an important and controversial issue. The topic is huge and unmanageable for the scope of an 8-10 page paper. Your essay, therefore, must have a specific focus in order to be persuasive and effective. Use the concept map on the previous page for some ideas for a specific research question and terms you might use to search library databases for articles.

Write your research question here: _____

ProQuest is the biggest, most comprehensive database we have at GCC. It's a good place to research almost any topic because it includes many kinds of articles—newspaper, magazine, journal—in all subject areas.

1. In the space below write the terms (words) you will use to search **ProQuest** for articles that will help answer your research question:

2. List ALL the steps you take to search for articles on your topic in **ProQuest**. Where did you enter your search terms? Did you limit your search in any way? How?

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3. Describe the results of your search. How many results did your search retrieve? Are the results relevant to your research topic, that is, will they help you to answer your research question? Are any of the articles "peer-reviewed?"

4. Did you find it necessary to revise your first search? Why?

5. How did you revise your first search?

6. How do your new search results differ from your first search? Are the articles you retrieved more focused and relevant?



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EXERCISE II:

In this exercise, you will search for articles on the same focused topic as in Exercise I, but this time you will search a different database. Write down all the steps in your search process on the worksheet below. Compare the second database with your previous experience using *ProQuest*. Think about ways the databases are similar and different.

1. From the GCC Library's list of databases, choose either *Gale Opposing Viewpoints in Context* or *Gale Science in Context*. Choose the one you think might be best for your specific research question. If you have time you can explore both of them.

List ALL the steps you take as you search for articles on your topic. What are the terms you entered into the search form? Did you use the Basic Search or the Advanced Search form? Did you limit your search in any way? Does this database have a similar interface to *ProQuest*? How is it different?

2. Describe the results of your search. How many results did you retrieve? Are your results relevant to your focused research question? What kinds of sources did you retrieve (e.g. newspaper articles, magazine articles, etc.)? How do your results compare with your results in *ProQuest*?

3. Which of the databases was a better resource of information for your specific topic? Why?
