

Library Research & Censorship

library.austincc.edu

I. Reference works – *Consult reference librarians.*

Encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, etc.

Online:

ARTstor

Bloom's Literature

Gale eBooks

Oxford Art Online (Grove Art Online)

II. Books, Videos, Etc. – *Search the Catalog at **austincc.sirsi.net** or **austincc.ent.sirsi.net***

Current Controversies

Opposing Viewpoints in Context (also online)

III. Periodicals

JSTOR

New York Times

Wall Street Journal

EBSCO databases:

Academic Search Complete

ERIC

Humanities Full Text

Legal Collection

Literary Reference Center

Professional Development Collection

IV. World Wide Web

www.usa.gov

ala.org/advocacy/bbooks

eff.org

fcc.gov/fcc-and-speech

Portal for the U.S. federal government

Banned & Challenged Books

Electronic Frontier Foundation

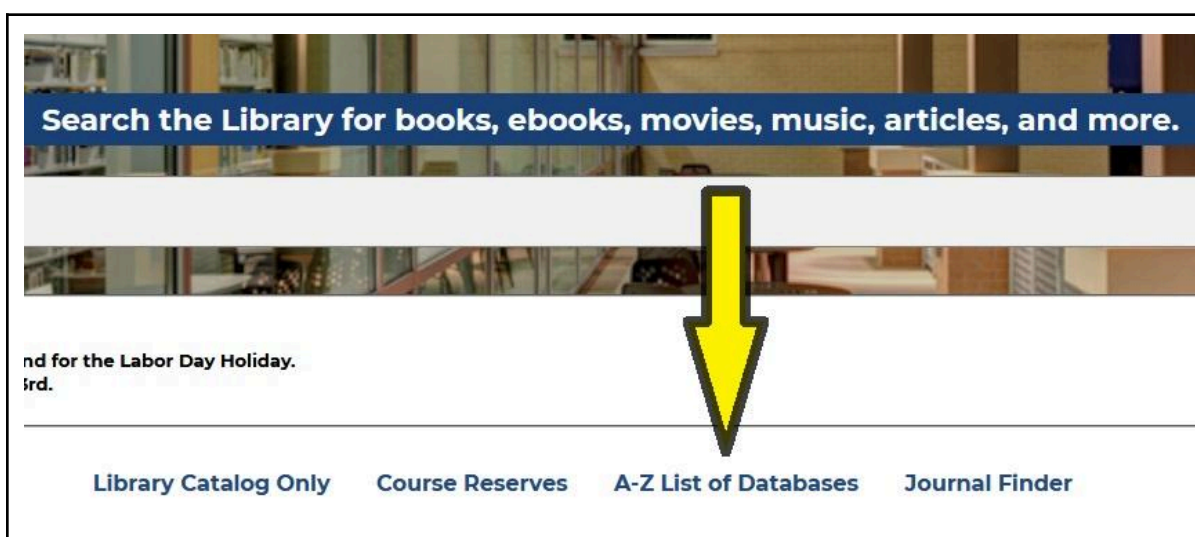
Federal Communications Commission

Gale eBooks

Gale eBooks consists of hundreds of easily searchable encyclopedias, handbooks, and dictionaries. A search for a particular topic may yield relevant articles from a variety of different sources. Gale eBooks provides convenient management of the information you find. You can print, e-mail, and download articles. Gale eBooks also provides citations for articles in the MLA, APA, and Chicago styles.

Searching Gale eBooks:

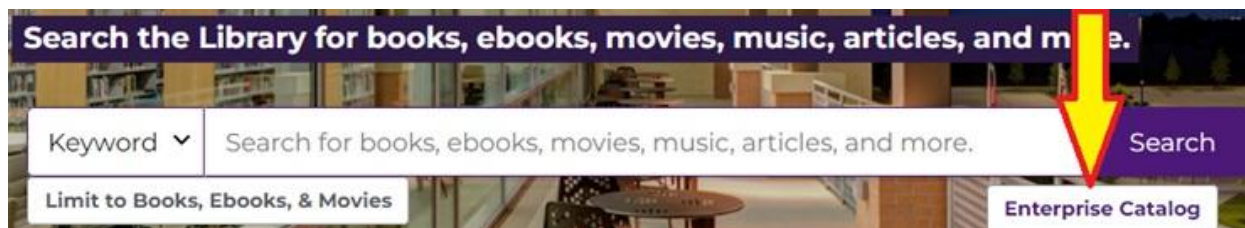
From the library home page at library.austincc.edu, click on the **A-Z List of Databases** link.



1. At the **Alphabetical list of database titles**, click on the **G**.
2. On the next page, click on **Gale eBooks**.
3. In the search box, type in either a keyword or phrase for your topic.
4. Hit the **Enter** key or click on the magnifying glass icon.
5. To see an article, click on its blue title.
6. Use the tools in the Tools menu to manage the article. You can print, e-mail, and download the article, as well as get a citation for it, for example.
7. To look at the article as it appears in print (in a physical book), click on the **BookView** link.
8. For advanced searching, click on the "Advanced Search" link to the right of the Basic Search box.
9. For more guidance, scroll to the bottom of the webpage and click on the **Help** link.

Finding Books with the Discovery Catalog Interface

Library patrons may use the Discovery interface to find books, DVDs, and other circulating materials. Near the top of the library home page at library.austincc.edu, find the long search box. Then click on the “Enterprise Catalog” tab below it.

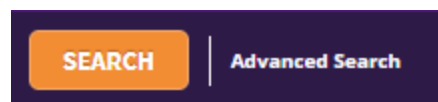


On the new webpage, type in a keyword or phrase for your subject in the search entry box that appears. Then click on the orange **SEARCH** tab to the right of the search entry box.



A page with search results will appear. A purple column on the left has filters for limiting to particular types of items. For example, you can use the **Format** limiter to limit your results to ebooks. Check the box for **Book (Ebook)**. Then click on the **Limit to** tab above.

If your results include a high percentage of items that are irrelevant to your subject, you may be able to increase the precision of your search. You can experiment with changing your search term or phrase to something better reflecting your particular subject.



You may also use the **Advanced Search** option. A link to the advanced search page is near the top of the search results page and to the right of the orange **SEARCH** tab.

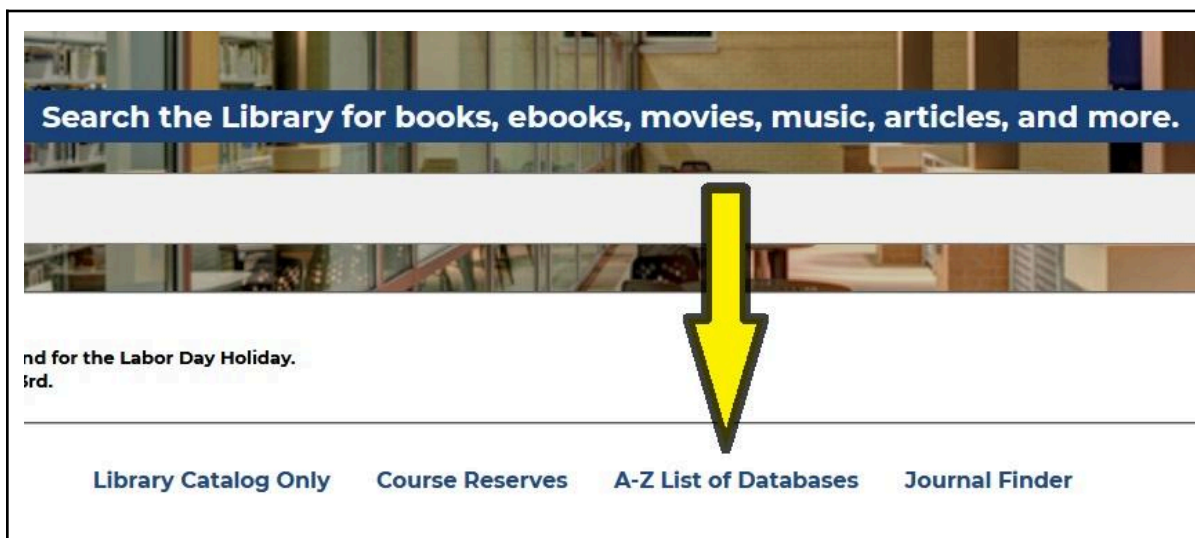


Yet another means to greater precision may be to filter your results by **Subject**. For example, suppose you search for ebooks on the mental health issue of depression using just the word *depression* for your search term. In this example, your search results will include items about economic depressions such as the Great Depression which began in 1929. We call such irrelevant items “false drops.”

Fortunately, the purple column for limiting search results includes a **Subject** filter. You can check subjects relevant to your subject, such as *Depression, Mental*, and then click on the **Limit to** tab above. This should eliminate false drops about economic depressions. However, leaving some subject terms about depression pertaining to mental health unchecked may also reduce your search’s recall of relevant items.

EBSCO Periodical Databases

From the library home page at library.austincc.edu, click on the **A-Z List of Databases** link.



1. At the **Alphabetical list of database titles**, click on the **A**.

Click on **Academic Search Complete**.

2. Above the search box, click on **Choose Databases**.
3. From the list, place a check next to the databases you wish to search simultaneously. Some of the most useful are listed on the next page. Then click on **OK**.
4. Back at the search page, below the search box, click on **Advanced Search**.
5. Under **Search Options**, choose the **Boolean/Phrase** search mode.
6. You can limit your results to Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals, date range, number of pages, etc. If you are searching more than one database at once, then for each database, you may have to repeat the steps it takes to limit your results. For example, you may have to check the box for Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals as it appears for each separate database.

Frequently Searched EBSCO Periodical Indexes (Databases)

Academic Search Complete
 Business Source Complete
 ERIC (Education)
 Health Source – Nursing/Academic Edition
 Humanities Full Text
 MasterFILE Complete
 Military & Government Collection
 Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection
 Religion & Philosophy Collection

Search techniques

For most databases...

- Put the word ***and*** between keywords to combine ideas.
 Example: autism ***and*** etiology
- Put the word ***or*** between keywords to search for synonyms, related ideas, or alternate spellings. The words sometimes have to be enclosed in parentheses.
 Example: (brothers ***or*** sisters ***or*** siblings)
- Words next to each other will be searched as phrases (but sometimes quotation marks are needed).
 Example: learning disability (but maybe “learning disability”)
- Truncation: Add a special character to the basic part of a word to search for variations. This is usually an asterisk * or a question mark ?
 Example: *famil** will search for family, families, familial, etc.

EBSCO indexes let you print, download, and e-mail articles. They also provide citations of articles the MLA, APA and Chicago styles. Check the citations supplied to make sure that they are correct.

Example of Incorrect MLA Citation Supplied by EBSCO:

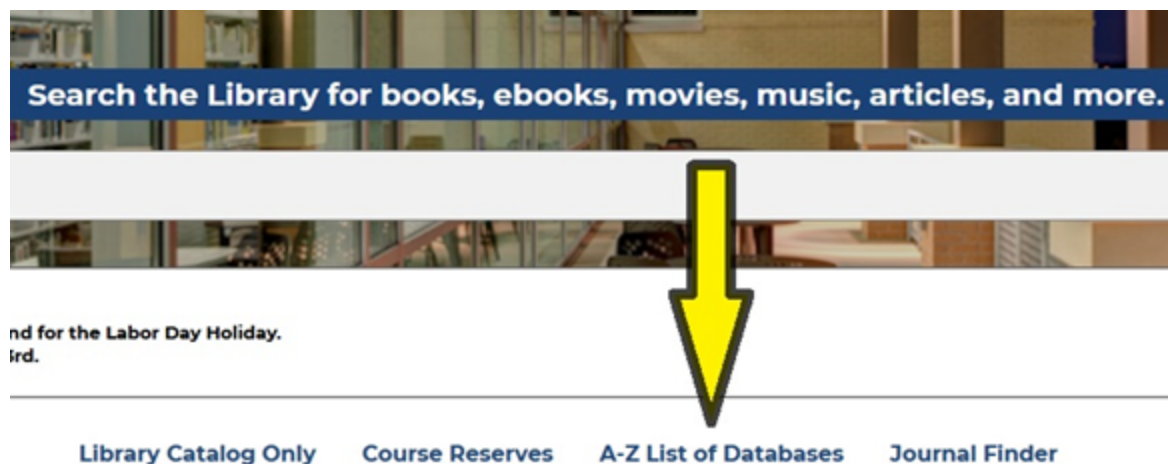
HASSELBACH, SARA. "Shakespeare's Technical Imagination." Papers on Language & Literature, vol. 53, no. 2, Spring2017, pp. 195-199. EBSCOhost, lproxy.austincc.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=123889700&site=ehostlive&scope=site.

This citation is not indented correctly. Furthermore, only the first letter of the author's first name and last name should be capitalized.

JSTOR

JSTOR indexes thousands of scholarly publications, especially in the humanities and social sciences. JSTOR also provides millions of pages of full-text.

Full-text coverage varies from publication to publication. For most periodicals, an embargo on the most recent five years of articles is in effect. That is, JSTOR often indexes a periodical up to the present without providing full-text to the periodical's most recent five years of articles.



Searching JSTOR:

From the library home page at library.austincc.edu, click on **A-Z List of Databases**.

1. At the **Alphabetical list of database titles**, click on the **J**.
2. Click on **JSTOR**.
3. Above the search box, click on the **Advanced Search** link.
4. Enter search terms in the search boxes that appear.
5. From the drop down menu to the right of each search box, select the field in which each search term will be searched. The default field, "Full-Text," often yields useful search results.
6. To add search boxes, click on the **ADD FIELD +** button below the last search box.
7. Narrow by item types, such as *Articles*, by clicking on the appropriate checkboxes. It's usually advisable to check all item types except *Reviews*.

Narrowing the search further by date, language, etc. is usually unnecessary. When you are ready to execute your search, click on the **Search** button.

Evaluating Information Sources

You want reliable sources of information for your academic research as well as for your personal use. Look for the following qualities in information you find:

Authority

Check to see if the author and publisher are reputable. For example, is there any indication that the author is an expert in the subject presented?

Ask:

What are the author's qualifications?

Is the organization publishing the information legitimate?

Accuracy

Look for some indication that care has been taken to get the facts right. Often neither editors nor fact checkers are mentioned in a source. If, however, the author or organization involved have a reputation to maintain, then it is likely that steps are being taken to insure accuracy.

Ask:

Is there a reputation for accuracy to uphold?

Is there an editor or fact checker?

Are sources of information cited for verification?

Are there signs of carelessness, such as poor grammar, misspelled words, and typographical errors?

Are facts well organized? For example, are lists, tables, or graphs used?

Is coverage of the material complete and comprehensive? Beware of excerpts that leave out important information.

Objectivity

Look for evidence of bias. Biased information can still be useful if presented responsibly. You may find useful information in well-reasoned arguments that you can use in formulating your own arguments. However, using information from relatively unbiased information sources will cast less suspicion on your own arguments. If, for example, you cite statistics from a government agency's website rather than from an advocacy group's web site, your arguments will have more credibility.

Ask:

Does the information presented favor a particular viewpoint? Is the content opinionated?

Are the organization's or author's biases or purposes clearly stated?

Is the information being used to sell something, as in an infomercial?
 Is advertising and promotional material clearly differentiated from information?

Currency

If up-to-date information is important in your research, look for indications that the information you are finding is indeed current enough for your purposes.

Ask:

Does the information source show when it was published or last updated?

For web pages, ask:

Does the information on the page have a date?

Are links still valid? Outdated links are a sign of neglect.

Reasonableness

After looking at the information, do a reality check. Your commonsense, and probably more importantly, the knowledge you gain from preliminary research, such as from reading reputable encyclopedia articles, will often tell you if you should question the truthfulness of the information.

Ask:

Is the information hard to believe?

Are extreme claims being made?

Is the truth being stretched?

Is any of the information presented contrary to what you know to be true?

Are there contradictions within the information presented?

For further reading:

"Evaluating resources" by the UC Berkeley Library
<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/evaluating-resources>

Being Logical: A Guide to Good Thinking by Dennis Q. McNerny
 Available through the Austin Community College Libraries

A Rulebook for Arguments by Anthony Weston
 Chapter 4 addresses informed and impartial sources of information

Fake News

Fake news has two problems: it's fake, and it's news. Much news is unimportant and irrelevant to you. It may be entertaining, but more enriching entertainment is usually available, not to mention even more worthwhile pursuits.

In his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, professor and media critic Neil Postman explained that most “news” is irrelevant to those consuming it. As an example, a storm may be a sensational event, but if it occurs a thousand miles away from you, it probably has no consequence to your life. And yet, many people will spend hours monitoring such a storm's progress on a TV or on the Web.

In addition to reducing your consumption of immaterial news, develop domain knowledge (or SME, “subject-matter expertise”) relevant to your research. A great place to start is the library's reference works, such as its encyclopedias and handbooks, e.g., *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. By learning about your area of research, you will be able to better recognize false claims some might make about that subject.

If your research does involve a subject with ongoing developments, you will need to consider news sources. Start with news sources that are reliable. Publishers that have been established for decades and that have or once had print editions of their publications, e.g., *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Austin American-Statesman*, *Scientific American*, are more likely to be respectable than newcomers.

Relevant books and web pages include:

Janke, Robert W. and Bruce S. Cooper. *News Literacy: Helping Students and Teachers Decode Fake News* (especially chapter 13)

Call number: HLC PN 4888 .F35 .J36 2017

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*.

At various campus libraries. Call number: P94 .p63

www.factcheck.org/2016/11/how-to-spot-fake-news

www.easybib.com/guides/10-ways-to-spot-a-fake-news-article

<https://www.livescience.com/57151-why-we-fall-for-fake-news.html>

Guidelines for Avoiding Written Plagiarism

1. If you are using your own words and they are expressing your own ideas or they are expressing knowledge that many people know (common knowledge), then you are not plagiarizing and you need not cite a source.
2. If you are using your own words, but they are expressing ideas or knowledge that came from someone else and that is not common knowledge, you need to cite the source.
3. If you are not using your own words, but instead you are using the words of someone else, then you must either put quotation marks around the words or use a block quote. Additionally, you will need to cite the source.

Cite your sources using a recognized citation style, such as MLA or APA. In addition to briefly referring to your sources within the text of your writing, you will need to describe your sources in greater detail elsewhere. Usually you will include a bibliography—that is, a list of works cited—at the end of the document that you write. This bibliography, or list of works cited, is usually listed on a separate page with a title such as “Bibliography” or “Works Cited.”