

# Digging Deeper: Designing an Interactive Research Adventure to Deepen Student Engagement

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## Context

- Students in general education geology courses complete a “self-guided field trip” assignment. It includes an annotated bibliography.
- Since 2020, I have provided in-person information literacy workshops to support this assignment.

“I notice that students in my face-to-face classes who get to hear from Amy make a final report that is much closer to meeting my expectations. My online class... has some of the old problems with finding quality sources and citing in APA.” – quote from Geology faculty member.

## “Choose Your Own Research Adventure”

This style of asynchronous tutorial is not new for library and research education. I developed the online geology tutorial during Summer 2024. I selected this user-centric approach to:

1. Order content based on individual student research needs
2. Provide choice to increase student autonomy
3. Create a learner-driven research experience
4. Foster engagement through built-in practice and reflection

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students use the asynchronous tutorial to:

1. Learn how to contact the SLCC Library
2. Identify places to find sources for their research projects
3. Recognize where to retrieve and check APA citations

These match the in-person workshop’s outcomes.

## Mapping Content Flow

The challenge: taking content presented in an in-person class and transforming it into an interactive, digital format.

The solution: thematic mapping by unearthing points of connection between content.

[Photograph of whiteboard with content mapping. Colored arrows show one-way or two-way connections between learning outcomes and content. Shows possible tutorial end points.]

## From Concept to Reality Using Qualtrics

- I created “choose your own adventure” choices through built-in skip logic tools.

- I added instructional content added in a variety of formats. Examples include: [demonstration video](#), screenshot from database, text with example.
- Qualtrics surveys are mobile-friendly and digitally accessible.
- I incorporated optional reflection and practice questions, allowing students additional opportunities to engage with concepts.
- The “Preview” option allowed for thorough troubleshooting of content paths.
- Faculty can embed the tutorial in the LMS.
- Survey results provide detailed reports on students’ content choices and engagement.

## Early Feedback

- I piloted the tutorial Fall 2024, and it is currently active.
- Tutorial allows students to provide a “star” rating (1 to 5).
- Initial faculty feedback has been positive, though limited.

“I think my students will really benefit from this [tutorial] and it will help them in their classes and help with general life information literacy!” – quote from Geology faculty member.

## Build Your Own Learner-Driven Tutorial

- Choose any accessible tool with skip logic capabilities.
- Use backwards design, starting with your learning outcomes to drive what content you include.
- Do extensive content mapping to discover logical connections.
- Test the tutorial’s logic rigorously to ensure all paths work.
- Have fun!

Explore the “Digging Deeper: Research for the Geology Field Trip Assignment” tutorial yourself!  
[tinyurl.com/DOLS25-DiggingDeeper](https://tinyurl.com/DOLS25-DiggingDeeper)

Unearth resources for further reading: [libguides.slcc.edu/DOLS25](https://libguides.slcc.edu/DOLS25)