

Video Transcript

Psychology: Introduction to Locating Information from the Library Databases library.html (14 minutes)

Hi! I'm Linda Baker, one of the librarians at the El Centro College Library. I'm Melissa Weston, the Coordinator of Psychology at El Centro College.

You are going to need to do some research for your Psychology class. This research is different than what you would do for a Speech or English class, when you are informing the general population.

We are going to teach you how to access what is referred to as the "professional literature" in professional psychological journals.

Where do we start? At the **El Centro College Library** website: <http://www.elcentrocollege.edu/library/>.

From this page, we're going to look at the middle pull-down menu: SEARCH DATABASES, ARTICLES, WEBSITES BY TOPIC. Scroll down the list and then click on PSYCHOLOGY. This will take us to the **Guide to Psychology**. Scroll down the page to Databases. There are several databases listed. We prefer that you restrict your searching to one particular database - *Academic Search Complete*. While the other databases listed here are certainly viable, they are going to get into material that is probably too advanced for you to deal with at this point. *Academic Search Complete* will let you access that you could possibly need at this point in time.

When you click on the link at home, you will see a screen asking you two questions: your name and your student ID number. Fill in the blanks and you will be taken into the database, with the search box displayed. The first thing you want to do is click on ADVANCED SEARCH. Once you are at ADVANCED SEARCH, you will click a few of the SEARCH OPTIONS:

- Find all my search terms
- Full text
- References available
- Scholarly (Peer-Reviewed) Journals

Below this you see a box for Published Date from ____ to _____. I don't want you using articles that are more than 5 years old. That means you'll use materials that were published between **January 2004 and December 2009**. That might sound strange, but many of the journals published later in the year during the time that you are in this class. In the Publication box, type in one word: psychological. We'll explain more about this later.

If you are searching for information about depression, there are several ways to search. We recommend that you type in: depress*. This gives you more options. Not every author will use the word "depression" spelled out. They may use "depress", "depressed", "depressive" "depressing" – all variations on the word depression – sharing the same beginning but having different ending letters. Since these words all share the same beginning letters – depress – we can use those letters and add an *. * represents a wild card, allowing the computer to look for any letter combinations in place of the *.

This is a pretty broad search. We may want to narrow this down. We do that will AND. If we narrow our search down to depression in women, we would type WOMEN in the second search box. However, there are other words or synonyms that signify women. We connect these synonyms with OR: women or female or girl*. Always put your synonyms inside parenthesis: (women or female or girl*). This lets the computer know that they are synonyms that belong together.

Let's see what we find. We found only one article. Perhaps we've narrowed our search too much. We may have found only one article because we narrowed our search to only those publications that contain the word psychological in the title. This limits most of our results to publications put out by the American

Psychological Society, which publishes only three publications. There are two major organizations in the field of Psychology: the American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Psychological Society (APS). APS was founded approximately 20 years ago with the specific intention of publishing articles that are directed at a population of undergraduate students, such as you. We can open our search by returning to our ADVANCED SEARCH page. On this page, let's change the PUBLICATION to psych* to allow us to find APA publications also. We recommend that you always start with psychological and see if you find enough articles from APS publications first. Many of the APA articles are written at a higher level and are more difficult to understand. They may require you to use a psychological dictionary, which you most likely don't have. Many of the APA articles are 25-50 pages long. The APS articles are generally under 10 pages in length.

We have several important pieces of information displayed on the screen: the title of the article appears in blue and is underlined. Next, we'll see the author's names. It is not unusual to have 3-4 articles listed. Next is the title of the publication (journal title), the date, volume, issue number, pages, and how long the article is. This is followed by an abstract or summary of the article. Read the abstract. If you don't understand the abstract, more than likely you will have a difficult time understanding the article.

Let's change our search to depress* so we have a few more articles to look at. Remember, we *limited* our search to professional scholarly articles, written by experts in the field of Psychology, appearing in publications using the word psychological in their titles. We shouldn't see Newsweek, Jet, or Glamour articles appearing in our results. In fact, if you see over 40 articles in your results, you should double-check your search options. Professional journals do not publish every month – sometimes only 2-3 times issues per year and a limited number of articles in each issue. You won't find hundreds of articles on any topic! You are not permitted to use the non-professional publications or from professional publications outside the field of psychology.

When you find an article that you wish to read, click the link to PDF FULL TEXT that appears below the abstract. A PDF article is a photocopy of the article – looking exactly as it does in the print copy of the journal. It includes all of the graphs, charts, and any other information that will facilitate your understanding of the article. At the beginning of the article, you'll see the author(s) names, with additional information about the author(s). You will often see contact information so that you can contact the author(s) for additional information. Do not be surprised if you get a response rather quickly. Most authors are more than happy to discuss their work and will inquiries.

As you read through the article, you will notice, in parenthesis, references to different sources. In fact, you'll notice these references in numerous places within the article. Anytime you write about knowledge that you didn't have before reading this article or before beginning our research, we must cite the original source. It must be cited in two places. First, it must be cited within the body of the article. Second, it must be cited in the References. Failure to cite correctly in either location constitutes plagiarism. That is a crime.

Notice how the References are listed. These citations look different than how you may have created citations for a Speech or English paper, which uses the MLA citation style. APA arranges the information differently than MLA.

At the top of the PDF reader, are icons for you to print or download the article. Do not use the email icon. It's better to use the Email link that appears in the upper right corner.

If you are writing a critique, or critical analysis, of this article, you would have one reference. That would be this article only. You would not list any of the sources listed in the article References simply because you have not read those articles. You have read this article and this article alone.

Let's email this article. Email the article not only to yourself, but also to your instructor to insure that it is an appropriate article for you to use.

Once you are at the Email Manager, the right side of the screen allows you to select the citation format you need. Click the pull-down menu and then click on APA. When you receive the article in your email box, the database will supply you with a correctly formatted APA citation for the article. All you will need to do is copy this to the References page of your paper.

Linda is emailing this article to herself but let's assume that she is my student. She is adding a semi-colon so that she can also send a copy of the article to me: mweston@dccd.edu. Anytime you email an article to an instructor, you need to fill out the SUBJECT line as follows: Article for Review or Article for Term Paper. In the COMMENTS box, add the following: put your name – your personal email address – class and section number in which you are registered. Why? All of your instructors have many students from many different sections or classes. This helps us know which section and class you are in so I can determine if the article is appropriate for your level. We need your email address so we can reply back to you. The article is being sent by the Library – not by you – so unless you put your email address in the COMMENTS box, I won't know who sent the article to me and won't be able to tell you if the article is acceptable. Once you've added the information, click SEND.

You'll receive an email confirmation.

Return to the Results List if you wish to search for more articles.

Be aware that the citation format that appears in your email box will appear slightly different in the indenting than the References in the Sample Paper and in the APA Styles & Format folder in eCampus.

Please feel free to ask questions of any of our Librarians or feel free to ask for help in searching for your topic. We are available in person, over the phone from the number listed at our website, and from the Ask a Librarian link at our website.

Please feel free to ask your instructor for help also.

We look forward to working with you this semester!