**Examples of Information Literacy Assignments for Students**

**8/28/09, J. Charles**

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) defines **Information literacy** as the set of thinking and reasoning skills required to identify, locate, understand, evaluate, and use information. According to ACRL, there are five major information literacy competency standards in higher education:

1. **Standard One:** The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.
2. **Standard Two:** The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.
3. **Standard Three:** The information literate student critically evaluates information and its sources, and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
4. **Standard Four:** The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.
5. **Standard Five:** The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and ethically and legally accesses and uses information.

The assignments listed below reflect the ACRL information literacy competency standards. Any Edison State College professor can use these assignments, either individually or collectively, to assess whether students have developed the set of thinking and reasoning skills required to identify, locate, understand, evaluate, and use information.

**Determining Information Needs**

1. Determine the amount of information needed for a particular assignment.
2. Select six different types of sources: a monograph, scholarly journal article, newspaper, popular magazine, free website, and diary. Have the students determine the following about each source: currency of information, type of publication, type of information source, information format, and point of view.

**Searching for Information**

1. Practice various search methods, e.g., keyword searching, phrase searching, truncation, Boolean operators, wildcards, etc., using various search tools, e.g., the Internet, subscription databases, the online catalog, etc., to find information.
2. Retrieve full text articles from the Internet and Libraries’ databases.
3. Retrieve peer reviewed articles from the Internet and the Libraries’ databases.
4. Discuss the differences between searching for information on the free Web and using the Libraries’ subscription databases.

**Evaluating Information**

1. Explain the difference between a popular and scholarly resource.
2. Explain the difference between a primary and secondary source.
3. Evaluate the authoritativeness of specific books, monographs, articles, and websites.
4. Discuss the pros and cons of using a specific resource, like a photo or newspaper, in print vs. electronic formats.

**Using Information: Research Paper Assignment** [**in stages]**

1. Select a research paper topic.
2. Write a thesis statement for the research paper.
3. Construct a bibliography for the research paper.
4. Create an annotated bibliography for the research paper.
5. Draft an outline of the research paper.
6. Write a rough draft of the research paper.
7. Write the research paper; include a list of works cited or references.

**Using Information: Other Research-Based Assignments**

1. Write a literature review in which students critically interpret resources and determine the relationship between concepts, fitting together various ideas to build a comprehensive view of the topic under study.
2. Stage a debate in class with pro and con panels for which students must obtain relevant information.
3. Construct a timeline that illustrates the influence of a particular piece of published research, and summarize the relationship of the original research with what followed.
4. Compare and cite a fictional work with social commentary or accounts written about people during the time that the fictional work takes place.

**Legal & Social Uses of Information**

1. Examine the role of information in a democratic society, enumerating the major issues, and discussing why and how information is both relevant and important.
2. Define the concepts of plagiarism and intellectual property, and explain why plagiarizing is prohibitive.
3. Maintain a reflective journal or log on research-driven assignments in which students evaluate the research process.

**GOOD SOURCE:**

<http://www.lib.unca.edu/library/infolit/il_assign.html>