Class Outline: English 205: Intermediate Composition  
For Kathleen Carmichael, by Jeannette Moss and Lauren McKeen

Winter Quarter 2014 (Feb. 18th)  
http://libguides.northwestern.edu/eng205

Class Background  
Prof. Carmichael regularly schedules library instruction for her courses and she had noted where students, even after library sessions, might still revert to using Google more often than starting with a library resource. She wanted for them to see the immediate value of using research databases during the session and hoped that, should they use class time to find good articles, they would be “hooked” and not be tempted to default to Google. There were 13 students in this 80-minute class, each with a different topic, ranging from humanities, social sciences, sciences and even pop culture.

The session was planned so that students would view 3 of the library’s instructional videos before the session. These videos were linked into their Blackboard site:  
Subject Databases http://www.library.northwestern.edu/node/6178  
Research 101: Using Keywords http://www.library.northwestern.edu/node/6176  
Research 102: Keywords and Library Databases http://www.library.northwestern.edu/node/6177

There was a 3 question clicker poll at the beginning of class. Questions were:
1. You’re using library databases to research why Breaking Bad is so addictive. What would you type into the search box?
   a. Why is breaking bad so addictive
   b. breaking bad
   c. breaking bad addictive
   d. “breaking bad” and addictive

2. What link from the NU Library homepage, besides "Find Databases", ultimately leads to library databases?
   a. NUcat
   b. Subject Specialists
   c. Recommended Resources by Subject
   d. UBorrow

3. In library databases, browsable or searchable vocabulary terms used to represent concepts, topics, or keywords might be called:
   a. subject terms
   b. abstracts
   c. full text
   d. citations
Students did very well on the polling questions. Only a few missed answers—For #2, there was 1 answer for a. but the rest of the class answered c. For #3, one answer for b. but the rest for a. Librarian revisited this during session to clarify misunderstandings.

Class Outline:

Class started 5 min late...

Welcome and introduction, asked for show of hands: who has used databases before, who has had library instruction before. (5 min.)

Clickers exercise (5 min.)

Go over research guide quickly and how to find it (5 min.)

NUcat Search (prof wanted this to be covered during session, since videos did not address book searches fully). (10 min.)

Search: autism and (vaccines or mmr or wakefield) also demonstrate ? for truncation
Show types of results, call numbers, related subject headings
Indicate Guided Search as another way to build this search in NUcat

Break students into 4 groups, 3 groups of 3, 1 group of 4. Assigned a different database to each group. Asked each group to work together to fill in the worksheet (see on next page) as they ran through a search on autism and vaccines, or a topic of their choice. (10 min.)

Group 1 ERIC
Group 2 PsycINFO
Group 3 Worldwide Pol Sci Abs
Group 4 Academic Onefile
--wanted students to see more than one platform: Ebsco, ProQuest and Gale were represented.

Observed some groups using vaccine topic and others using their own research topics. Answered questions about keyword searching, finding the full text of articles, and truncation in databases.

Group Presentations: each group came to front of class and walked us through their searches, what results they found, kinds of sources, etc. Asked that each group present, but actually each student presented, which was even better. They noted helpful subject terms and search limits. Librarian was able to jump in on occasion to suggest alternative keyword searches, point out additional features of the databases, etc. Students had great questions, such as, how to use the connector: NOT (5 to 8 min. per group, depending)

Allowed time at the end for students to further search and explore their topics in the various databases (10 min.)
Exercises for Database Searching

Search the database to find scholarly articles. Then, run through your search with the class, noting the following for discussion / sharing with the class:

--What was your initial keyword search?

--What sources and publications come up in the search?

--Besides scholarly articles, what else does the database include? books, book chapters, dissertations, multimedia, full text, images, subject terms, cited references, other items?

--Did you identify any descriptors or subject terms related to your topic? If so, what were they and did they help you to find any further articles or documents?

--What kinds of search features (i.e. advanced search or search limits) did you come across?

--Were you able to find full text of articles if there wasn’t full text available in the database?