

East Los Angeles College Library Online Library Catalogs—Outline

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Students will be able to develop and implement an effective search strategy for locating and retrieving library materials using the online library catalog

SLO 2: Students will be able to transfer previously learned research skills to new projects

East Los Angeles College Library Online Library Catalogs—Outline

Bring to class:

- Copies of the “Finding Books Using Online Library Catalogs” handout
- Roster
- Attendance verification forms
- Date stamp
- LCSH handouts/bookmarks/etc.

1. Introductions—**Give email address in case they have questions that come up later**
2. Tell students the objectives for this workshop: To show them time-saving ways to get started using library online catalogs so that they can locate materials in the ELAC library, or in any other library quickly and effectively. Tell them the types of materials they can find using the ELAC catalog: Books, eBooks, DVDs/Videos, maps, photographs
3. Tell students some facts:
 - a) Almost 50,000 new books are published just in the United States every year.
 - b) Library of Congress has over 130,000,000 volumes [counting books (29 million), recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts]
 - c) There are over 120,000 books in the ELAC library. Additionally, you have access to millions of books in the Los Angeles area.
 - d) Among so many books, how can you find even one book relevant to your research question?
 - e) Fortunately, there's more than one way to find the books you want!
 - ◆ You can use the Library of Congress (LC) Classification System to browse for books.
 - ◆ Or, you can **use the library's online catalog to find books.**
4. Show students how to get to the Library’s web site (probably a good idea to start from the ELAC homepage), and then how to get to the catalog
5. Tell students that the library’s catalog is a database. Ask if someone can define database (a bunch of information organized so that you can search them). Tell them that databases don’t have to be online, they can also be in print. For example, the phone book (white and yellow pages) is a database. We’re going to carry the phone book analogy throughout the workshop.

East Los Angeles College Library

Online Library Catalogs—Outline

6. Talk about different kinds of search: Author, Title (when you know the exact item/s you're looking for)
- a) Author**—You know an author named John Irving and you want to look up his phone number in the phone book. What do you look up? (Irving, John). So you look people up by their last names. Same in the library catalog. Last name comma first name (Irving, John). Show Availability, Location, Call # (Explain what a call number is: a location number. Explain that books are arranged on the shelves by topic, so it's always good to look next to where you find a useful book)
- b) Title**—You want to find the number for The Gap in the phone book. What do you look up? (Gap). So you drop the initial article. Same in the library catalog. Say you want to look up the book *The House on Mango Street*. Show search → Show Availability, Location, Call #
- c) Subject**—Your bathtub is backed up and you need to find someone to fix it. You don't know the names of anyone, so how do you find something in the yellow pages? You look up plumbers. You're searching by topic. You do the same thing in the library catalog when you do a "Subject" search. You're searching by topic.
- ◆ This is a great opportunity to talk a little bit about LCSH. Do this carefully, though. Sometime too much information will just end up confusing students. If you can, try and talk a little bit about controlled vocabulary. Tell students that because English is such a rich language and has so many words, when people think of topics, they have to choose one word that they think everyone will use. In the case of the Yellow Pages, use this example: say you're looking for a clothing store; how do you look it up in the phone book?)Students will say things like clothing, fabrics, etc. The correct answer is Apparel). So if they looked by topic under the wrong word, they wouldn't find anything. Same is true with library catalogs. Say you wanted to look up books on movies (show this example). Do a Subject search on Movies → 0 results. The standard term is Motion Pictures.
 - ◆ So, Subject Searching is a great way to find book that are on your topic. But sometimes you might not be able to think of what the subject is officially called, and then you get zero results. That's why it's great that we have another kind of search available.
- d) Words or Phrase**—This search will look anywhere in the catalog record to find the word or phrase you typed in (show what a catalog record is). So it's a broader search than Subject searching because you're not searching by topics, you're just looking for a word anywhere in the record. This will bring back more results, but sometimes some of the results will not be relevant, so you have to sift through the results.
- ◆ Use "Penguin" to show the difference between keyword and subject searching
 - ◆ Show students how to begin with a keyword search, then look up the LCSH, then narrow to that search

East Los Angeles College Library Online Library Catalogs—Outline

7. Ask students if there are any questions. If not, have them do Exercise 1. Walk around the room and help anyone who needs it. (10-12 minutes)
8. Discussion of Exercise 1: Ask students to explain how they did each of the three searches. If classroom control software is available, allow them to demonstrate a search. Let them explain what they did and what they found, but if they are missing key points, make sure to guide them that way so everything is covered. For example, in 3c, Words or Phrase finds 13 hits. Why are there so many weird results. A Subject search on the same points to Octopuses--Juvenile literature; there's one result here, but is it useful for a college biology class? (10-12 minutes)
9. Now have students work on Exercise 2. The purpose of this exercise is to allow students to become familiar with other library catalogs that they may need to use. By doing the same searches as in Exercise 1, students will build on previously learned knowledge (e.g., the type of search to do, which LCSH to use, etc.). Invite students to try both the other catalogs if they have time.
10. Discussion of Exercise 2: Ask students to demonstrate their search process and results. Allow them to drive the discussion, but make sure the following points are covered:
 - a) All online catalogs have the same basic functions
 - b) ELAC has a great library, but we don't have everything; sometimes they'll have to go to another library.
 - c) CSULA and LAPL have much bigger collections than we do
 - d) ELAC students have borrowing privileges at CSULA; and anyone can join LAPL for free.
11. Collect the exercises as you sign and stamp the verification forms for students to leave.