Step 4: Find other resources

**Theses & dissertations**
Go [http://www.libraries.psu.edu](http://www.libraries.psu.edu), click on “Databases,” then choose:
- Dissertations & Theses

Also try:
- NTLTD, [http://search.ndltd.org/](http://search.ndltd.org/)

**Beyond Penn State**
Go [http://www.libraries.psu.edu](http://www.libraries.psu.edu), click on “Databases,” then choose:
- WorldCat and/or
- ACCESS PA
Order items through ILLiad, Penn State’s Interlibrary Loan System, [https://ill.libraries.psu.edu](https://ill.libraries.psu.edu)

**Why search outside Penn State?**
If your professor expects you to find “all” the information on your topic, you need to search many libraries. WorldCat is a database of more than 10,000 college libraries. ACCESS PA includes all types of libraries in Pennsylvania.

**Citation help**
Many databases can create citations in APA, MLA, or other formats. Ask a librarian to show you how.

Also see the library’s site on citation styles: [http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/citationstyles.html](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/citationstyles.html)

Step 5: Evaluate your sources

**Currency?**
- When was this published or posted?
- When was it last updated?
- Is this up-to-date enough for your topic?

**Relevance?**
- Does this answer your question or relate to your topic?
- Was it written for college students or professionals? (or for other people with needs like yours)?
- Can you understand what you are reading? Is the reading level too easy or too hard?

**Authority?**
- Who is the writer, publisher, and sponsor?
- Does the URL tell you anything about who created or supports it?
- What is the writer’s education and profession? Where does (s)he work? Does this make her/him an expert on your topic?
- Can you contact the writer and/or publisher to learn more about this?

**Accuracy?**
- Is this “peer-reviewed,” “refereed,” or edited for quality? By whom?
- Is it backed up with evidence — citations to other books, articles, data, interviews, etc.?
- Can you find the same information in other sources? How does the information relate to your own experiences?
- Does this have any obvious grammar, spelling, or factual mistakes?

**Purpose?**
- Is this fact or opinion?
- Why are the writer and publisher providing this information? To entertain, inform, teach, or sell to you?
- Are there biases — cultural, political, religious, or other points of view that cause the writer to emphasize some issues or ignore others?

*The “CRAAP Test” was created by California State University—Chico

To see my personal web site, go to [http://www.personal.psu.edu/bal19](http://www.personal.psu.edu/bal19) or scan this QR code with your smartphone:
**Step 1:**
Find basic facts, encyclopedias & handbooks
(some online; some on 1st floor of Harrisburg Library)

**Step 2:**
Find books
(some online; some on 2nd & 3rd floors of Harrisburg Library)

**Step 3:**
Find magazines & journals
(most online)

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**Why use encyclopedias and handbooks?**
They help you:
— Focus on important ideas & people
— Explore related topics
— Find more keywords to use further searches
— Identify best sources for researching your topic
— Put together a "bibliography"

With this background information, it's much easier to decide which books & journal articles are going to be helpful & understand how they all fit together in your project.

**Why use books?**
Books add to basic information that you learned from encyclopedias & handbooks. They bridge between beginner's information & scholarly articles. Books may discuss:
— History or theories
— An overview: the "big picture" and related parts
— Best practices or recommendations
— Recent research

Look for a "Table of Contents" or a list of chapters in each book. Read the parts that most interest you.

**Why use databases?**
Databases empower you to search thousands of journals at one time. They also allow you to limit results by date, type of article, & other criteria. Use the "Get It" button to see Penn State's online copy of a journal (if it exists), check if Harrisburg Library owns a paper copy, or order a free copy through ILLiad (interlibrary loan).

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**Start with**

- http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on “Databases,” then choose:
  - Sage Reference Online
  - Gale Virtual Reference Library

**Next, try “Reference” on 1st floor:**
—Children's literature author & title lists: REF PN451 & REF PN1009
—Education: REF L’
—Multicultural & special education: REF LC1099-REF LC5160
—Scholarships & grants: REF AS & REF LB2336
—Other areas recommended by the librarian

**Start with**

- The CAT, http://cat.libraries.psu.edu/
  Use the CAT's "Advanced Search" to look for books from certain dates, or to choose audio, video, or other formats.

**Where to find them in Harrisburg**
Most books:
—3rd floor: “L” section
—3rd floor: Juvenile Literature Collection
—3rd floor: Curriculum Materials Collection
—2nd floor: “BF” section (psychology)
—Other areas recommended by the librarian

**If you need to focus, or need better search abilities**
Go to http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on "Databases,” then choose:
— ERIC
— ProQuest Education Journals
— PsycINFO
— CLCD (children’s literature)
— Other databases recommended by the librarian

**Articles beyond Penn State**
— Google Scholar, http://scholar.google.com

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**If you need help at any time, just ask:**
Bernadette Lear, BAL19@psu.edu, (717) 948-6360, Room LIB 102G

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**Some search tips**

- teach* = finds any word that begins with a root
- teach* OR instruct* = finds either word (good for synonyms)
- teach* AND math* = finds both words (good for linking two different ideas together)
- sort by relevance = puts “best” items at the top of your results list