

Library Research Methods

1. Academic Search Premier

Topic: School Violence

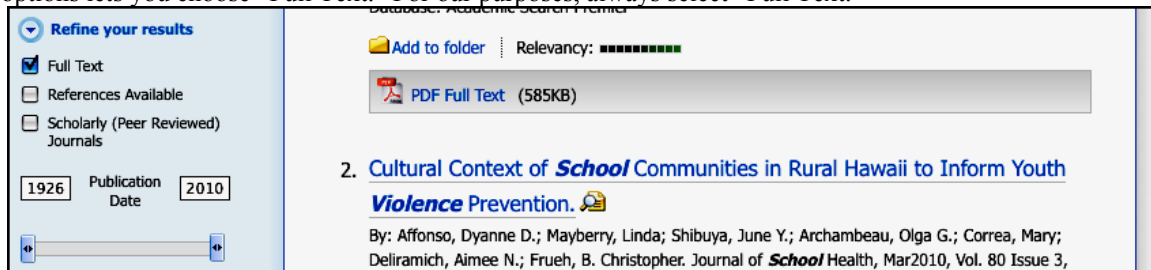
Concepts: Narrowing a Topic, Dealing with Results

Getting to Academic Search Premier: Library homepage >> Databases >> A >> Academic Search Premier

Doing a search for *school violence* (just those keywords, no limiters) in Academic Search Premier returns **14458** articles (as of 10/17/10).

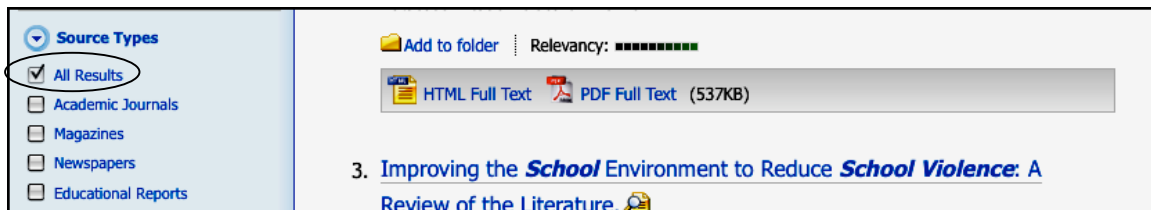
Ways to narrow a search

Refine your results: To the left of the results list are options for narrowing your results. The first set of options lets you choose “Full Text.” For our purposes, always select “Full Text.”

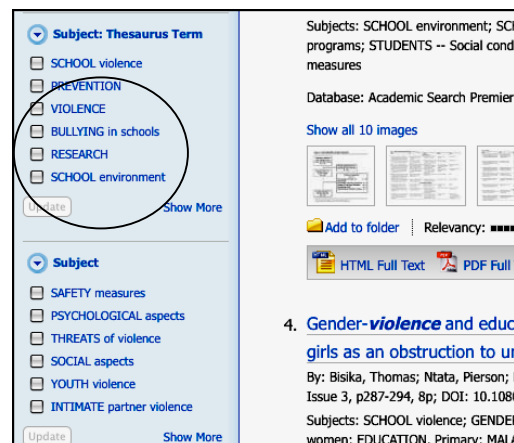


Refining by “Full Text” limited our search to **7182**, which we can narrow still further by limiting the range of “Publication Date.” Changing this to begin with documents published 1985 reduced our results just a bit, to **7070**, suggesting that attention to school violence is a fairly recent phenomenon.

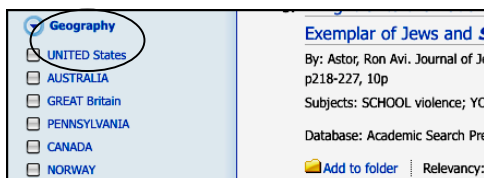
Source Types: Selecting particular source types limits a search further to **Academic Journals**, Magazines, Newspapers, or Educational Reports: Clicking “Academic Journals” narrows our result set down to **3924**.



Subject: Academic Search Premier automatically extracts the most commonly occurring subject headings from a result set and presents them in two categories -- **Thesaurus Terms** and related **Subject**). Clicking on one of these subjects is a good way to narrow a search topically. For example, we may want to focus either on violence prevention or on bullying. In this example, clicking “bullying” (in addition to keeping the Academic Journals limit we set above) narrows the result set down to **141** articles, a far more manageable number and, in fact, a better focused research topic.



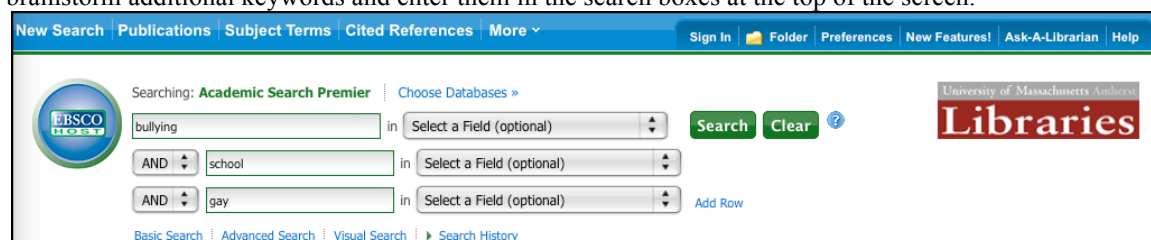
Geography: Scanning through our 141 results from the previous step, we may notice that some of them deal with bullying and school violence in other parts of the world. If we want to limit our results to only articles that focus on the United States, Academic Search Premier offers a way for us to do that.



In the left-hand “Narrow Results by” column, one option is Geography. Expanding this header will give us a list of countries to choose from.

If we follow these steps in addition to the other limiters we added before, we are down to a nice tidy list of 23 articles.

Summary: So, starting with a *very* broad concept—school violence—that yielded over 1400 results, we have used a number of techniques in Academic Search Premier to narrow our topic and our result list. With practice, instead of using just the automatic delimiters Academic Search Premier suggests, you can also brainstorm additional keywords and enter them in the search boxes at the top of the screen.



For example, if we had known from the beginning we wanted to research bullying in school of gay students, stipulating those three subject terms at the start would have limited search returns to 155. Then selecting the automatic delimiters of “Full Text” and “United States” would have quickly produced a manageable 21 articles to survey.

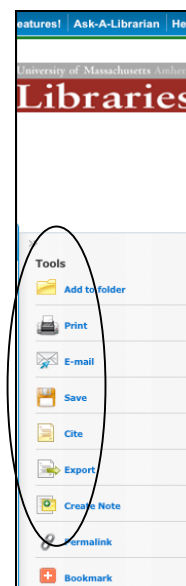
Managing results in Academic Search Premier

Academic Search Premier makes it easy to print, email, or save your results. It even lets you format them automatically in one of four citation styles (one of which is MLA!).

Dealing with single results: When you are viewing a single record, at the top of the screen you will see icons that let you print, email, save, cite, or export the record. When you keep a research log, clicking on “Cite” lets you copy and paste the citation.

Dealing with multiple results: As you work in Academic Search Premier, you can save results to the Folder for later use. Just click the Add to Folder icon next to results in the list, or at the top of the single result search screen. To email, print, save, or export a batch of results that you have added to your folder, open up your folder, select the boxes next to the items you want to act upon, and choose the appropriate action.

Formatting results in MLA Style: When you choose to Cite, Print, Email, or Save results, you’ll be given the option to format them in one of five citation styles: AMA, APA, Chicago/Turabian, MLA, or Vancouver. Here’s an example of an MLA citation generated by Academic Search Premier:



RICHARDSON, JOAN. "Safe at School." *Phi Delta Kappan* 91.5 (2010): 43-48. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 18 Oct. 2010.

NB: You still need to proofread the citation, fix capitalization (only EBSCO remains all caps), and format the paragraph as “hanging.”

Sample Searches for College Writing

2. Google Scholar

Topic: Ethics of Stem Cell Research

Concepts: Getting Access to Articles Without Paying, Basic Searching, Following a Conversation

Important note about Google Scholar: UMass Amherst and Google Scholar have partnered so that UMass students can search Google Scholar and be connected seamlessly to our libraries' thousands of e-journal subscriptions and other online content. **To take advantage of this, you must access Google Scholar through our class's Research Toolbox or the library website** (Library homepage > Databases > G > Google Scholar Beta). If you don't do this, you will often end up at publishers' websites where you are asked to pay for access to articles. **Never pay for articles!** Even if UMass Amherst doesn't own the article you need, we can get it for you via Interlibrary Loan—for free! Average turnaround time for article requests is down to 17 hours.

Google Scholar features the great, simple Google interface that we all know and love, while offering up quality, scholarly results from academic journals, books, and dissertations, instead of from the grab bag that is the World Wide Web.

Searching Google Scholar: Few people need to be taught how to search Google. Simply enter keywords that describe your search. You can also enter titles of articles, author names, names of publications, etc. Phrases can be placed in quotes—"stem cell research"—if you want words to appear next to each other in that order. There are advanced search options which can be accessed by clicking the link next to the search box.

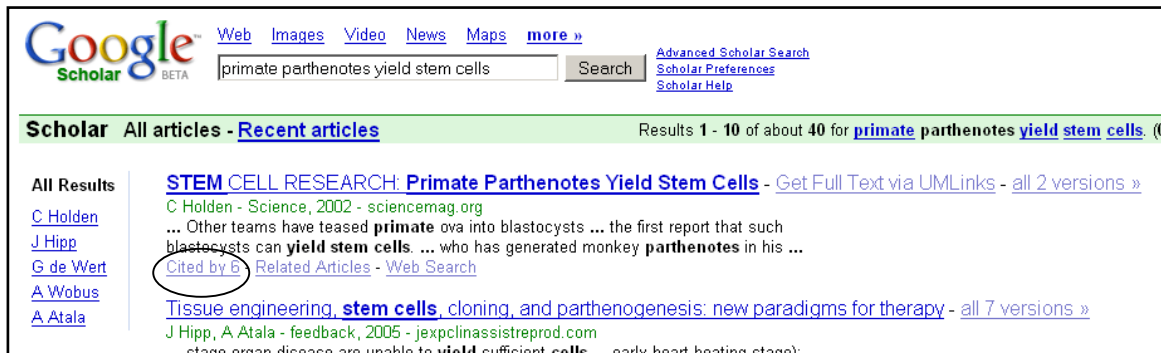
Entering the search *stem cell research ethics* brings back 71,800 results (as of 10/18/10). Results are ranked by relevance, so theoretically the "best" results float to the top. Note that a link to full text via UMLinks (when available) appears in a text link to the right of the article title.



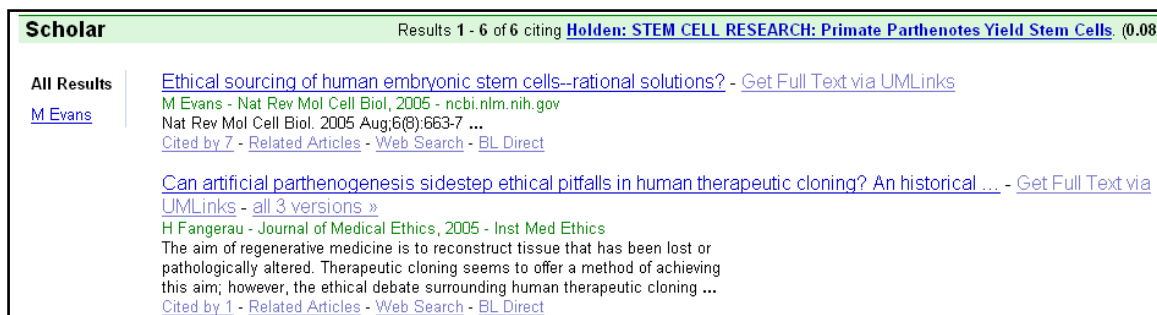
Google does not offer many of the helpful search-narrowing options that library databases like Academic Search Premier do. The most effective way to limit a Google Scholar search is to add keywords to your search. For example, *stem cell research ethics catholic* brings back "only" about 10,200 results.

Following a conversation: One very nice feature of Google Scholar is that it allows you to quickly view a list of articles that have cited a particular article. In this way, you can follow a conversation forward in time and see what subsequent authors have done with the original author's ideas.

For example, let's say you read an article in which the author cites an article from *Science* called "Primate parthenotes yield stem cells," by Constance Holden. You can pull this article out of Google Scholar by typing its title into the search box.



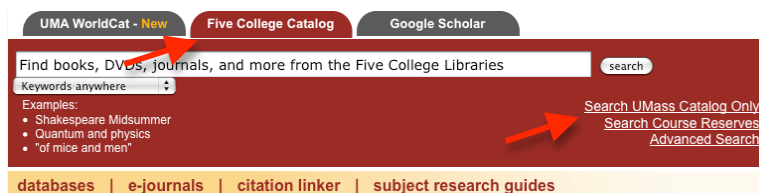
Below the article citation, note the link that says "Cited by 6." Clicking this link brings up a list of the 6 other articles in the Google Scholar database that reference Holden's article:



From here, it is easy to access the articles that cite your original, and trace the conversation forward in time.

Tracing a conversation backward in time is also quite easy. By looking at the bibliography of an article, you can see which authors your researcher has cited, and track the ideas from your original article back to their sources. You should be advised to consult a librarian if you have questions about finding a particular article in the libraries' holdings. This can sometimes be tricky, but is nearly always possible.

3. Finding a Book or Periodical



UMass's Du Bois Library has an online catalog that can be accessed anywhere there is an internet connection. You can access it from the Research Toolbox or directly at <http://www.library.umass.edu/>.

To access the library catalog, click on the "Five College Catalog" tab on the library homepage and then on the "Search UMass Catalog Only" link.

Basic Search of UMass Amherst

For more options, use [Advanced Search](#)

Search for:

- Keywords anywhere
- Title begins with
- Journal title begins with
- Journal title keywords
- Author (last name first)
- Author keywords
- Subject begins with
- Subject keywords

Examples:

- Shakespeare Midsummer
- Quantum and physics
- "Of mice and men"

The resulting page will allow you to search for books by using many different methods – all of which are listed in the menu on the left.

The results of the search appear in chronological order with the most recent publication on top. This is useful because often the most recent studies are the most relevant to the conversation at hand.

You searched UMass Amherst for: **stem cell research religio***

Items 1 - 13 of 13

Mark	Sort	Author	Title	Format	Year	Location & Call Number	GoogleBooks Info
<input type="checkbox"/>	1		Controversies in science & technology. Volume 2. From climate to chromosomes / edited by Daniel	Book	2008	UM Science / QH442 .C662 2008 / Regular	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2		Fundamentals of the stem cell debate : the scientific, religious, ethical, and political issues	Book	2008	UM Science / QH586 .S63 F36 2008 / Regular	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2		A matter of faith [electronic resource] : religion in the 2004 presidential election / David L. Cantelmo, editor.	E-Book	2007	UM Internet / Internet	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4		A matter of faith : religion in the 2004 presidential election / David L. Cantelmo, editor.	Book	2007	UM W.E.B. Du Bois / J6328 2004 .M37 2007 / Regular	

You'll find in the **"Format"** column whether the book is hard copy or an online "E-Book," and in the **"Location & Call Number"** column, you'll see where to find the book.

To see a **summary of the book, click on the cover image**. To learn whether the book is in the library or checked out, click on the location and call number. If the book is checked out, you may Request Item be returned.

I was lucky with this search – I only got 13 results. You may have to try different keywords in order to limit your search.

4. Locating Books in the Library

Mark	Sort	Author	Title	Format	Year	Location & Call Number	GoogleBooks Info
<input type="checkbox"/>	1		Controversies in science & technology. Volume 2. From climate to chromosomes / edited by Daniel	Book	2008	UM Science / QH442 .C662 2008 / Regular	

The "location & call number" information is the key to locating any book. First, determine whether the book is located in the Du Bois (tower) Library or the Integrated Science & Engineering Library. Then, write down the class number and refer to the "Floor Directory" located in both libraries. (For the Du Bois library, you'll find this information online at <http://www.library.umass.edu/about-the-libraries/floor-directories/> as well as posted all over the library, near and in the elevators, and at the reference desk). The letters will tell you what floor the book is located on; when you are on the right floor, you will see call numbers posted at the end of each row of stacks – these will help you to figure out where your book is located. It's totally intuitive – you'll be able to figure it out. When you've found the book, check it out at the Circulation and Reserves desk (in the lower level of the Du Bois Library).