Presenters: Jennifer Lau-Bond and Martinique Hallerduff

Title: Interrogating Sources with First Year Students

We have found that students are often charged with simply locating and using resources for research projects but rarely have the opportunity to discover or reflect on how information is created or shared. Instead of beginning with direct instruction, we employ a problem-based learning activity to allow students to explore the sources on their own initially. This activity prompts students to examine and evaluate a variety of information sources and record their findings in Google Forms. We project these findings in class and use the results to provide feedback and focus discussion.

The intended audience for this instruction activity is students in a First Year Seminar or similar course, though it would also work in any 100-level college course. It is easily adaptable for upper level students by modifying the resources explored and the question prompts to address the desired portions of the Framework. Moreover, Google Forms is a useful tool for librarians to capture student work in class or collect data about student in-class performance.

Time needed: 1 hour

Course Level and Discipline

First Year Seminar students or other first year students across disciplines

Topic
Evaluation of information in a variety of formats for first year students in a community college

Learning objectives
- Students will describe the qualities/features of different formats and categorize these resources by type in order to examine the idea that information is valued differently in different contexts
- Students will investigate an author's background and profession in order to define different types of authority

Materials
Google Drive
Computer with projection

Computer classroom (preferred) *or* all students with sufficient mobile devices

Activity overview
We have found that students are often charged with simply "locating" and "using" resources for research projects but rarely have the opportunity to discover or reflect on how information is created or shared. Instead of beginning with direct instruction, we employ a problem-based learning activity to allow students to explore the sources on their own initially.

- Working in pairs or small groups in a lab classroom, students begin at a Google Form, which includes a link to an assigned source and a series of questions about that source.
- Questions on the Google Form are the same for all the sources explored in class. Questions encourage students to describe and categorize the sources by type and research the authors to determine their professions and backgrounds.
- We emphasize that this is not a "test" and that student responses are anonymous to mitigate any sense that this is a punitive evaluation.
- We give half the groups one resource and half the groups a different type of resource (a popular magazine and an academic journal), and once all groups have completed the Form, we discuss the results as a class. Then, we repeat the process with two different types of sources (reference source and a trade journal) and another all-class discussion.
- During the all-class discussions, the librarian projects the summaries from the Forms in front of the class and uses those summaries to guide the conversation. This allows the librarian to focus on issues that seemed most challenging to the students, and it gives both the librarian and the students the chance to debate the "answers" and discuss the implications of authority and information creation.

Assessment of student learning
Google Forms instantly aggregates student responses into easily-digestible graphs which we project onto a screen as we discuss student findings. During class, this serves as a formative assessment benefitting both students and librarians. Seeing the responses on the screen along with discussing the findings as a group enhances social learning and encourages students to draw conclusions and apply their new knowledge in the second part of the activity. It also allows the librarian to gather student responses as the class is happening and focus discussion on the areas students were most challenged. After class, librarians can return to the data collected on the Google Forms and use it to begin to assess whether students met the learning outcomes for the course.

Handouts
https://goo.gl/forms/fucT3wUyneANGGNL2
https://goo.gl/forms/avnKP7lMGQIHNN6h1
https://goo.gl/forms/6RSaLsJSHJb2qB9w1
https://goo.gl/forms/Sl6cBU1kfiPPeO363

Applicable knowledge practices and/or dispositions from the Framework for Information Literacy
- Authority is Constructed and Contextual: Knowledge Practice 1
- Authority is Constructed and Contextual: Knowledge Practice 2
- Information Creation as a Process: Knowledge Practice 1
- Authority is Constructed and Contextual: Knowledge Practice 4