Literary Criticism

How and Where to Find
High-Quality Information
in Databases and at the Library!

What is an electronic database?

Databases allow you to search the content of articles in scholarly journals*, magazines, and other materials.

*Scholarly journals are also called peer-reviewed, academic, or professional journals and are preferred for university-level research.

Internet

Some resources are free, but others require you to pay for them.

Information is not evaluated for accuracy and may be incorrect, misleading, or biased.

Websites come and go.

The Internet is a vast sea of information with no organization.

A search engine (like Google) often returns an overwhelming number of results with no quick way to narrow them down or ensure they relate to your topic.

Difficult to cite.

Electronic Databases

Paid for by the library so you have free access to scholarly information.

Content is evaluated for authority and accuracy.

Information is stable.

You can find databases relating specifically to your topic.

Library databases offer options to quickly limit or expand your search to find the articles you need.

Usually super easy to cite.

Search Terms

Before you begin…
- Think about your **search terms**… what words will you type in when searching?
    - Be open-minded and try various search terms.
    - Only use key words.
    - Watch your spelling, especially when using databases.
- If you **find too much** information, you might need to **narrow** your search terms - be more specific or add words.
- If you **don't find enough** information, you might need to **broaden** your search terms - be less specific or remove words.
- Example: Jane Eyre (title), Charlotte Brontë (author), religion, religious, Christianity, Christian, God, faith, theology, righteousness, etc.

How to Access Lake County Public Library's Electronic Databases

1. Go to [Edison Library website](.).

2. Click purple "LCPL Access Digital Resources" link.

3. Click "See All Databases" under "Pick a Topic."

4. Consider selecting the "A-Z tab" and select database.

5. Sign in using information on Digital Access Card.

Gale Literary Sources

"Search for academic articles, essays, and topics about literature.
Includes items from Literature Criticism Online, Literature Resource Center, Gale Virtual Reference Library, and more."

- Click "Gale Literary Sources." ([Edison Library Website](#))

- Enter your search terms in the search field at the top and click magnifying glass icon.

- Once your results appear, check "Full Text Documents" box and any other limiters. (Consider selecting "Critical Essay" under "Document Type")

- Click on an article's title (in blue) to open article

- Boolean Logic may be used when searching:

  - Use **AND** to find **all** of your search terms
  - Use **OR** to find **one, some, or all** of your search terms
  - Use **NOT** before a term that you want to **exclude**

- To cite article, click "Citation Tools" icon on right side of screen.

EBSCO Research Databases

"Choose multiple databases to search at once. Offers a variety of topics, including literature and newspapers."

- Click "Ebsco eBooks." ([Edison Library Website](#))

- Check "Select/Deselect All" box and click "Continue."

- Enter your search terms in the search field at the top and click "Search."

- Once your results appear, check "Full Text" box and any other limiters.

- Click on an article's title (in blue) and read the abstract (if there is one) to determine usefulness to your research.

- Consider clicking subject links to see similar articles.

- To cite, click "Cite" icon on right side of screen.

INSPIRE

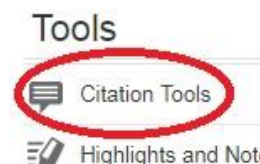"Free to Indiana residents: a searchable database of databases."

- Click "INSPIRE." (Edison Library Website)

- Enter your search terms in the search field at the top and click "Search."

- Once your results appear, check "Full Text" box and any other limiters.

- Click on an article's title (in bold) and read the abstract (if there is one) to determine usefulness to your research.

- Consider clicking on subject links to see similar articles.

- To cite, click "Cite" icon on right side of screen.

Biography in Context

"Comprehensive information on just about any famous person,
including inventors, politicians, **authors**, celebrities, and many others."

- Click "Biography in Context." (Edison Library Website)

- Click "Advanced" magnifying glass icon next to search field.

- Check "Full Text Documents" box.

- Type your search terms (probably a person's name) in "Search for" field at top and click "Search" button.

- Consider limiting your results on the top right under "Search Within Results" - for example, you could select "Critical Essay" under "Document Type."

- Length, type of document, and content level symbols are all indicated under article titles.

- To cite, click "Citation Tools" icon on right side of screen.

LCPL OPAC

Lake County Public Library - Online Public Access Catalog

- Go to Edison Library website.
- Click on blue "Lake County Public Library" link.
- In blank "Start your search here!" field, type your *broad/general* search terms and click blue arrow.
- Consider entering adding the words "criticism" or "critical" or "interpretation" or "analysis" or "Bloom's" to your book title and/or author.
- Consider limiting by format.
- Click on blue "Availability" button to see an item's location and status.
- Explore item records - consider clicking on subject links.
- If you have a library card, you can request items, and they'll arrive at the branch of your choice in a couple of days!
- If you don't have a library card (get one!), you can go to the branch that owns the item and use it in-house.

Check your citations here:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html

See "An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)" in the MLA Handbook 8th edition Formatting and Style Guide (in the Electronic Sources tab on the left)

Or use the links from the Edison Library website…