Article Databases

Instructors: This assignment can be used as an in-class activity or as a take-home assignment. Please feel free to modify this assignment as you need to. The assignment objectives are to...

   a. Locate article databases through the Western Libraries homepage.

   b. Identify search limiters within, and sometimes unique to, specific databases.

   c. Demonstrate understanding for differences across database interfaces.

Questions

Let's start with the preliminaries: Please provide the URL for the webpage that hosts the Article Databases available at Western Libraries.

True or False (*Circle One*): You can search for article databases at Western Libraries by title or by subject.

Let's visit the database entitled Biological Sciences.
Answer the following questions:

What topics does this database cover? Please provide a description in your own words:

Look at the dropdown menu next to the top search bar, and provide a list of five options to search by.

True or False (*Circle One*): Within the Document Type limiters, you can search for patents.

Remember the research guides? Determine if Biological Sciences has an internal proximity search command by going to the 'Search Tips' section, then 'Search Syntax Conversion Guide'. If there is a proximity search command, provide an example below:

Use the database Thesaurus, select the **Pollution Controlled Vocabulary Thesaurus**, and search for Gallium. Then employ the search with the following limiters: Check "Scholarly Journals" in Source Type, and Check "Articles" in Document Type.

How many results did you retrieve?

How many results are peer reviewed articles?

Let's visit the database entitled PsycINFO.

Answer the following questions:

What topics does this database cover? Please provide a description in your own words:

Look at the dropdown menu next to the top search bar, and provide a list of five options to search by.

True or False (*Circle One*): You cannot search by Methodology type when using search limiters.

Go to the database thesaurus, and look up the term 'Ability Grouping. Provide the given definition, and the related terms.

Conduct a search with the phrase 'Ability Grouping.' Limit results to 'Books.' Provide the title and author (s) of the second result.

Final Questions

Would you use either database again?

For *each* database, what was the most useful feature for you?

Which database do you think is more user-friendly? Why? Be sure to reference the material we covered in lectures when explaining your rationale.