

Emily Lyon

Week 9 Reading Response

Honors First Year Experience

Introduction to Research

Research has recently taken on a new definition with the advancements in modern technology. Research used to involve many tedious hours spent combing through books and other texts looking for information. Today, “research” can be as simple as typing a question into Google. What are the consequences of this? According to Breivik, undergraduate students are generally less prepared to do research than earlier generations. In my experience, this holds true. I am guilty of basing my research off of a Google search, and I know I’m not the first one to do this, and certainly not the last. According to the rubric we should have an ability to access information, know the ethical use of it, and incorporate it into our knowledge base. We need to teach the future generations of students how to test the reliability, currency, and relevance of the information they find. One way to do this is by improving their information literacy skills.

According to Breivik, people who are information literate are good at finding, organizing, evaluating, and using information. This generation of students would benefit greatly from these skills, because they go far beyond a simple Google search. While Google searches are convenient and may provide immediate information, it is natural to question the source of that information. Anyone can post anything on the internet, so you never really know what’s true and what’s not. A good example of this is Wikipedia. Everything on Wikipedia has been written and re-written thousands of times. Students are aware of this, yet some continue to cite Wikipedia in

their research papers. Wikipedia is a good example of bad research. According to the library site, good information literacy skills can be defined as the ability to define and modify topics, seek information and differentiate it, and consider multiple sources, among other things. If this generation of students had those research skills, they could write better papers and have a more solid foundation of knowledge upon which they can build their research skills more.

Before the age of Google and other go-to websites for the quickest answers, previous generations had access to more reliable information. This is proving to be more of an issue as students are not checking their sources for reliability and relevance. If we can somehow teach the future generations how to do research, we will have a better knowledge base for the future.

References

Breivik, P. S. (2005). 21st century learning and information literacy. *Change* 37(2), 20-27. Taylor & Francis.

Minnesota State University, Mankato. (2016). Information literacy toolkit. Retrieved from <http://libguides.mnsu.edu/c.php?g=76825&p=838891>.

