

HOW TO FIND INFORMATION USING

ERIC



Information Gateway

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This guide is intended to offer a brief introduction to the ERIC research database. Further questions or assistance related to ERIC resources should be directed to the library's **Help Desk**.

What is ERIC?

ERIC, the Educational Resource Information Center, is a national information system supported by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Library of Education, and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. It provides access to information from journals included in the Current Index of Journals in Education and Resources in Education Index. ERIC provides full text of more than 2,200 digests along with references for additional information and citations and abstracts from over 1000 educational and education-related journals.

How do I gain access to ERIC?

ERIC is accessible by clicking on the "Databases" link at the library homepage (lib.trinity.edu). Patrons can search ERIC using three different search interfaces (CSA, EBSCO, and FirstSearch).

In October 2004, ERIC introduced free full-text non-journal ERIC resources. These materials include more than 105,000 full-text documents authorized for electronic ERIC distribution during 1993 - July 2004.

How do I conduct a search in ERIC?

The process for using ERIC is similar to the process you might use in searching other databases:

1. **List** terms, ideas, and concepts that describe your search topic.
2. **Conduct searches using these terms, ideas, and concepts.** You may limit your search based on a specific piece of information. For example, you can look for the word "psychology" in the title (TI) field. You can look for the term "Lunsford" in the author (AU) field. To limit searches by field, click on the drop down menu next to the "Default Fields" box.
3. **Use the ERIC Thesaurus** to find the specific language used to describe certain topics. Click on the "Thesaurus" button at the top of the search screen and browse or search for specific terms. For example, if you use the term "aboriginal people" as a search term you may not find any results. This is because the ERIC database uses the term "indigenous populations" to define this topic.
4. **Use Boolean operators** such as "and," "or," and "not" to make your search more specific.
5. **Include phrases within quotation marks.** Using the keyword "Department of Education" in quotation will offer results that include these three words as a phrase. Without the quotation marks, you will retrieve all results that include the word "Department" and all results that include the word "Education."
6. **Limit your searches by year** to receive more time-specific results.

When you find an article or document that will apply to your research plan, make note of the ERIC number. These numbers are used to organize the ERIC collection. They differ from Library of Congress call numbers such as those used to organize books and periodicals at the Coates Library. Each ERIC number will begin with either the letters ED or EJ.

What is an ED number?

ED (ERIC Document) numbers are used to organize documents. Documents include reports and other publications from the Department of Education, and may also include conference proceedings, conference presentations, reports from national organizations, etc.

Documents acquired by ERIC since 1993 are available in full-text from the EBSCO, First Search, or CSA databases. After you have retrieved a list of results, you can access the full text of a document by clicking on the FULL TEXT FROM ERIC link.

Documents acquired by ERIC before 1993 are available on microfiche. ERIC microfiche and the equipment necessary for their use are available on the library's 1st floor in the Microforms Collection.

What is an EJ number?

EJ (ERIC Journals) numbers are used to organize journal citations. ERIC does not offer full text of journals; therefore, ERIC acts as a citation index for journals related to the study and practice of education. You should treat a citation with an EJ number the same way that you would treat a citation from any other index.

A number of journals listed in ERIC are available in full-text online from the Coates Library. To find out if a journal is available from the Coates Library, you may use TDNet or the library's online catalog Quest:

Finding Journal Titles in TDNet

1. Go to the library homepage (lib.trinity.edu).
2. Click on the "Journals" link at the top of the page.
3. You may search for a journal in two ways. You may search for a specific journal by using the full title, or a word/phrase included in the title. You may also browse a listing of journals according to the first letter in the journal title (example: you find *The Journal of School Psychology* by browsing the titles listed under "J").
4. When you find the title of a specific journal, you will be able to determine if the library has electronic or print access to the journal. You can click on the checkmark under "Full Text Access" to go to an online index for the electronic version of the journal. Or you may click on "Print Holdings" to determine the call number for the print version of the journal.

Finding Journal Titles in Quest, the library's online catalog

1. Go to the library homepage (lib.trinity.edu).
2. Click on the "Quest" link at the top of the page.
3. Include the title of the journal in the "Basic Search" box. Click on "Journal Title" in the "Finds Results In:" box.
4. Click "Search."
5. When you receive the results of your search, locate the journal for which you are searching. If you click on the title of the journal, you will find a brief description of the journal (including the call number for the journal in print or a link for electronic access to the journal).

Why are some items not available online or on microfiche?

A small number of items listed in ERIC are not available in print or electronic form and are not available on microfiche. Copyright laws and restrictions are often the primary reason for this lack of availability. It is possible that another library may have this item in its original form. For help with borrowing an item from another library, please visit the library homepage (lib.trinity.edu) or ask for assistance at the library's **Help Desk**.

