Using ERIC

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Last Updated: July 2010
What is ERIC?
ERIC - the Education Resources Information Center - is an online digital library of education research and information. ERIC is sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education. ERIC provides ready access to education literature to support the use of educational research and information to improve practice in learning, teaching, educational decision-making, and research.

ERIC provides unlimited access to more than 1.2 million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials, with hundreds of new records added twice weekly. If available, links to full text are included.

Within the ERIC Collection, you will find records for:

- journal articles
- books
- research syntheses
- conference papers
- technical reports
- policy papers
- other education-related materials

How do I access ERIC?
Go to the homepage of the WSC Library at [http://academic.wsc.edu/conn_library/](http://academic.wsc.edu/conn_library/). You have two options from there:

1. Click on the Education tab underneath “Find Scholarly Journal Articles” to access a quick search box for ERIC.
2. Click on “See full electronic database list” under the search boxes and scroll for the direct link to ERIC.

ERIC is also available for free from [www.eric.gov](http://www.eric.gov).
How do I perform a basic search?

1. From the basic search screen, enter the terms you want and select **Search**. You can leave it as a general keyword search or select to search by title, author, descriptor, or ERIC number if you like.

2. Take a look at the number of results. If you have a larger number, you may want to try narrowing your topic. Try using the Narrow Your Search features on the left:
   - Author
   - Thesaurus Descriptor (i.e. Major Topic)
   - Dates
   - Audience
   - Source
   - Education Level
   - Publication Type

3. Use the Search Criteria box to add additional keywords or to reduce your results to:
   - Full Text
   - Peer Reviewed Items
   - EJ Articles
   - ED Documents

Using **ERIC**
4. Each time you either select a link from a suggested list (#2) or use a keyword or limiter (#2), you will get new suggestions to follow.

5. Keep in mind that many of your instructors will want you to have academic or peer-reviewed articles. To do this, select the **Peer Reviewed** from the Search Criteria box.

6. You can remove any of the terms from the suggested list by selecting the “x” next to it in the Search Criteria box.
How do I perform more advanced searches?

1. To access more features, select **Advanced Search**.

2. You’ll have multiple search boxes and the ability to limit keywords you enter by various fields such as Author, Title, etc.

3. Here you can also limit your results by:
   - Full-text availability
   - ED/EJ Documents
   - Peer Reviewed Items
   - Publication Date
   - Publication Type
   - Education Level
How can I get better results right away?

You can use AND, OR, and NOT (also known as Boolean operators) in your search to achieve different results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Narrows the search (gives fewer results)</td>
<td>distance AND education finds only those records containing both words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Broadens the search (gives more results)</td>
<td>theses OR dissertations locates records containing either term, as well as records containing both terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT</td>
<td>Restricts the search</td>
<td>surfing NOT Internet finds all instances of surfing, as long as Internet is not in the record</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Entering search criteria without Boolean operators uses AND logic by default. For example, a keyword search for math algebra is the same as searching for math AND algebra.

- Operators included in quotes are processed as part of the search term, rather than as operators. For example, if you search “Washington and Lee”, your results will include only those records containing the complete phrase, not the individual words Washington and Lee.

You can also use some of these search methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quotation Marks</td>
<td>To search for an exact string or phrase.</td>
<td>Searching educational technology (without quotes) locates all records containing the words technology and educational.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Keywords (“ ”)</td>
<td>Without quotation marks, ERIC performs an AND search for any terms you enter.</td>
<td>Searching &quot;educational technology&quot; narrows a search to only those records containing the exact phrase &quot;educational technology&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotation Marks</td>
<td>To search for an exact match.</td>
<td>Searching for &quot;Smith, Robert&quot; locates records authored by Robert Smith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Authors (“ ”)</td>
<td>Use the format last name first name within the quotation</td>
<td>Searching for &quot;Robert Smith&quot; locates no records authored by Robert Smith, but if you specified a keyword search, ERIC returns records with</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
marks. A comma that is not enclosed in quotes becomes the Boolean OR.

Searching for *Smith, Robert* without quotes locates records with the names Robert OR Smith.

**Quotation Marks**

*Descriptor longer than one word, including any text in parentheses, must always be surrounded by quotation marks.*

Searching in Descriptors for "Higher Education" locates records relevant to higher education. Searching in Descriptors for *Higher Education* (without quotes) yields no results.

**asterisk (*)**

To use truncation, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with an *.

Searching for laugh* retrieves laugh, laughs, laughter, etc.

The asterisk (*) wildcard cannot be used within quotes, such as a phrase search. "col*r perception" provides no results.

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**What are ERIC Descriptors?**

The *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors (Thesaurus)* is a controlled vocabulary - a carefully selected list of education-related words and phrases assigned to ERIC records to organize them by subject and make them easier to retrieve through a search. Searching by Descriptors involves selecting relevant terms from this controlled vocabulary to locate information on your topic.

While you can also search ERIC using keywords of your choosing, you will get more precise search results if you use Thesaurus terms. That's because searching by keywords requires matching the exact words found in a record, while searching by Descriptors allows you to locate records indexed by subject, regardless of the terminology the author may have used. The ERIC Thesaurus will allow you to conduct systemic searches and save time by reducing guesswork and trial-and-error methods.

Descriptors are not the same as keywords. Keywords match words found in a bibliographic record and may or may not fully represent the subject of an article or document. Descriptors, also known as indexing terms or subject headings, help you locate subject-related materials that may not contain the keyword in the indexed record.
Descriptors allow you to:

1. Locate highly relevant records. Descriptors “locate materials relevant to a topic or concept, not just those that include the keyword or its synonyms.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search String</th>
<th>Number of Results*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keyword: pupil</td>
<td>~20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptor: students</td>
<td>~282,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Results reflect database content as of September 2005.

2. Bypass irrelevant records. Descriptors “focus the search on your primary subject, not the mere appearance of a word in the bibliographic record.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search String</th>
<th>Number of Results*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keyword: students + Descriptor: “science tests”</td>
<td>~750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptor: students + Descriptor: “science tests”</td>
<td>~325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Results reflect database content as of September 2005.

3. Exclude ERIC records in which the keyword has a different meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search String</th>
<th>Number of Results*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keyword: Printing</td>
<td>~10,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptor: Printing (occupation)</td>
<td>~700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptor: Handwriting</td>
<td>~900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Results reflect database content as of September 2005.

To plan your search using ERIC Descriptors, we recommend that you follow these steps:

1. Describe the topic in your own words.
2. Divide the topic into major concepts.
3. Use the Thesaurus to locate the appropriate Descriptors for each concept of the topic.
4. Add the Descriptor(s) to your search.

If you'd like to take a shortcut, you might try simply doing a keyword search, retrieving a record that looks relevant to your topic, and then examining the Descriptors. You can even click on one of the Descriptors to start a new search.
How do I locate a descriptor?
There are several ways to locate a descriptor. The two most common are:

1. Use the Thesaurus link to the right of the search box on the entry screen.
2. Choose Descriptor from the drop-down list on the Advanced Search screen. Then select the Thesaurus link.

How do I use the Thesaurus?
You have three choices:

1. Search by keyword
2. Browse alphabetically
3. Browse by category
To search by keyword:

1. Enter a term into the search box and select **Search**.
   - **Tip:** Use quotation marks around a phrase to find an exact match. Enter a complete word to retrieve a list of Descriptors containing the term.

2. A list of descriptors with that keyword will appear.

3. Click on a descriptor to learn about the scope of the descriptor, its category, broader terms associated with it, as well as narrower and related terms. You can also click on any of the term links to learn about those descriptors.

4. To choose a descriptor, either click **Start an ERIC Search** from the Descriptor Details page or click **Start an ERIC Search** after selecting the box next to the term on the Search Results screen.

5. The descriptor will now appear in the Advanced Search box within quotation marks.
To browse alphabetically:

1. Select a letter from the list.
2. Select Next to continue browsing through the list.
3. Click on a descriptor to view Descriptor Details such as the scope of the descriptor, its category, broader terms associated with it, as well as narrower and related terms. You may also see suggested terms.
4. To choose a descriptor, either click Start an ERIC Search from the Descriptor Details page or click Start an ERIC Search after selecting the box next to the term on the Search Results screen.
5. The descriptor will now appear within quotation marks in the Advanced Search box.
To browse by category:

1. Select a category from the list.
2. A list of descriptors in that category will appear.
3. Click on a descriptor to view Descriptor Details such as the scope of the descriptor, its category, broader terms associated with it, as well as narrower and related terms.
4. To choose a descriptor, either click Start an ERIC Search from the Descriptor Details page or click Start an ERIC Search after selecting the box next to the term on the Search Results screen.
5. The descriptor will now appear within quotation marks in the Advanced Search box.
How can I create a personalized account so I can save and organize my searches and research?

Select *My ERIC* from the blue menu bar at the top of the screen to create an account and login. When you are logged in, your username will appear on the menu bar.

**About My ERIC**

ERIC’s personalized Web resource, My ERIC, makes it easy to manage your ERIC searches, sources, and citations. My ERIC gives you the ability to save searches and interesting citations from your search results to access later from wherever you choose to do your online research. My ERIC participants also have the opportunity to submit their own works to be considered for the ERIC Collection through the Online Submission System.

**Features & Benefits**

- **Save Searches**
  My ERIC offers the ability to save simple or complex search strings. This feature makes it easy for you to continue ongoing research, check for new materials relevant to your work, or simply retrace your steps. Up to 10 searches can be stored and tagged with your choice of custom title for easy reference.

- **Manage Citations**
  Each My ERIC user can create and use up to 10 custom folders to store as many as 50 citations each from ERIC search results. Saved citations can be printed, emailed to yourself or a fellow researcher, or formatted for import into many popular citation management tools.

**Saving Results**

1. Select the *Add* clipboard icon next to the title of the resource you want to save. The icon will change and the total number of items in your clipboard will be shown above the results.
2. To view items in your clipboard, click on the link.

3. My Clipboard is a temporary work area only. To save Clipboard records permanently for future use, select the Save to My ERIC for future use link.

4. You can then put those resources into a previous folder or create a new one.
**Saving Searches**

If you want to save a search so that you can return to the results later or see additional material added since you last ran the search, select the *Save this Search* link above the search results. Then name the search and save it.

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1. **Becoming "Local" in ESL: Racism as Resource in a Hawai’i Public High School** (EJ879511)  
   *Share*  
   *Added*

---

**Save This Search**

**Search Criteria**

- *(Keywords: ESL) and Peer Reviewed*
- **Thesaurus Descriptor**: “Teaching Methods”
- **Thesaurus Descriptor**: “English (Second Language)”

Save this search as: **ESL Teaching Method**

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**My Saved Searches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Run Search</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Search Criteria</th>
<th>Rename</th>
<th>Delete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Run Search</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td><em>(Keywords: preschool)</em></td>
<td>Rename this search</td>
<td>Delete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run Search</td>
<td>ESL Teaching Methods (PR)</td>
<td><em>(Keywords: ESL) and Peer Reviewed</em></td>
<td>Rename this search</td>
<td>Delete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Thesaurus Descriptor</strong>: “Teaching Methods”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Thesaurus Descriptor</strong>: “English (Second Language)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do I view items in a particular publication?

1. If you want to search within a specific source, select **Journal List** or **Non-Journal Source List** under **Our Collection** from the menu bar at the top of the screen.

2. Journals and are listed alphabetically with the years of coverage listed afterwards. Any journal that is currently indexed in ERIC will be marked with an orange diamond. When you click on a title, you will be given more details about it.

3. Non-Journal sources from research foundations, federal and state agencies, policy organizations, university affiliates, and commercial publishers are listed alphabetically with a link to their website listed afterwards.

4. To search for items in a journal or non-journal source, just enter the name of the source into the Advanced Search box, selecting **Source** from the drop-down menu. You can also choose to limit by year at this point.

5. Your results will display the most recent issue first in no particular page order.
What special collections does ERIC offer?

**Regional Educational Laboratories**

The ten Regional Educational Laboratories (RELS) produce two ongoing web-based series of reports called *Issues & Answers* and *REL Technical Briefs*, both of which are designed to provide educators and policymakers with credible scientifically based research on a regular basis. All *Issues & Answers* and *REL Technical Briefs* are required to undergo external peer review to ensure that these reports meet the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) standards for scientifically valid research before being published online.

**What Works Clearinghouse**

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), publishes *Intervention Reports*, high-quality reviews of research on the effectiveness of replicable educational interventions. *WWC Topic Reports* synthesize findings across individual intervention reports on a topic area, such as beginning reading, early childhood education, and middle school math. *Quick Review Reports* assess the quality of research evidence from recently released research papers and reports. *Practice Guides*, developed by a panel of nationally recognized experts, provide actionable recommendations for educators to help them address the everyday challenges they face in their classrooms.

**How to access these collections:**

1. Click on **Featured Publications** from the entry page of ERIC.
2. Choose the collection you want.
3. Click **Search**.

Using ERIC
What is important about the results citation?

1. Title, ERIC Number, & Link to the Full Citation
2. Author
3. Source – such as a Journal publication or Online Submission (be sure to copy this down for later)
4. Publication Date
5. Publication Type
6. Peer Reviewed Indicator
7. Descriptors – You can click on these to find other items with those descriptors.
8. Abstract – This tells you about the item. Select “Show Full Abstract” to see more detail.
9. Full-Text Availability Options (Always check Journal Finder for other options if no full-text is listed here.)

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**Author(s):** del Carmen Salazar, Maria

**Source:** Equity & Excellence in Education, v41 n3 p341-356 Jul 2008

**Pub Date:** 2008-07-00

**Pub Type(s):** Journal Articles; Reports - Research

**Peer-Reviewed:** Yes

**Descriptors:** Qualitative Research; Case Studies; Hispanic American Students; School Districts; Language Arts; Educational Policy; English (Second Language); Disadvantaged; Power Structure; Low Achievement

**Abstract:**
This article discusses the results of a qualitative case study that examined how school district language policies impact humanizing practices in a high school ESL program. The theoretical framework builds on Paulo Freire’s concept of humanizing pedagogy to explore policy and instruction in a secondary ESL program. Participants Show Full Abstract

**Full-Text Availability Options:**
Help Finding Full Text | Find in a Library | Publisher’s Web Site
What is important about the full citation?
In addition to the links provided in the results citation, the full citation also provides:

1. Links to related items
2. Publisher Information
3. Page Number Count
4. Count of References
5. Add record to My Clipboard where you can save to My ERIC, email, print, or export to a citation manager.
How do I access a resource listed in ERIC?

Some ERIC resources will have a PDF link at the bottom of the citation. Just select the link and the item will open on your screen for you to either print or save to your computer.

Otherwise try one of these methods:

- **Journal Articles** - check Journal Finder to see if the article is available in another WSC database or in our print holdings.

- **Books** - check the library catalog to see if it is available in print from WSC.

- **ERIC Document (ED)** - write down the number to access it from the ERIC Microfiche in the basement of Conn Library. Conn Library has ERIC Documents between 1966 and 2004 (ED001000 - ED441946).

- If none of these methods work, use Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery to request a copy from another library.

How to locate a journal article:

1. Go to the homepage of the library at [http://academic.wsc.edu/conn_library/](http://academic.wsc.edu/conn_library/) and type in the name of the journal into the search blank under “Search for Journals and Other Periodicals” and select **Search**.
If it says, “0 records,” Wayne State does not have an electronic copy or a print copy of the journal. Use Interlibrary Loan to request a copy.

2. However, the Journal finder may return several results. If it lists, “Wayne State College Print Holdings,” at least part of the journal is in print at WSC. On-campus students should check the link to see which volumes are available before going to the shelf in the Periodicals Room. If there are no other options, off-campus students can request a photocopy of the article through Document Delivery.

All other listings are online databases. If you see a EBSCOhost database such as Academic Search Premier or SOCIndex or Wilson’s OmniFile FullText Select, select one of those first since they are the easiest to navigate.

In this example, we will select Wilson OmniFile for this Summer 2007 article.

3. Wilson Omnifile will open, listing the journal selected. Just scroll to the year and select the Volume and Issue Number.

4. Then just scroll to the article you want and select either a HTML or a PDF link to view it.
**How to locate a book:**
You can select **Find in Library** and **Continue** to access World Cat and a listing of libraries that own the item.

However, the quickest way to see if WSC owns the book is to type the title into the library catalog search box so that you can search both our print holdings AND our electronic book collection that won’t be listed in the World Cat interface.

**How to locate other ERIC documents:**
There are several documents in ERIC that are not available in books or journals. Most ERIC documents (EDs) that were issued on microfiche between 1966 and 2004 (ED001000 - ED441946) can be found in the basement of Conn Library. On-campus students can request the more recent documents through Interlibrary Loan. Off-campus students can request all of these documents through Document Delivery. Please include the **ERIC DOCUMENT NUMBER** on the form!
How do I cite resources from *ERIC*?

**APA**
You can find the APA ERIC citation format on page 212 of the *APA Publication Manual*, 6th Edition. Generally, the citation form is the same as for a printed source, but with a note about its retrieval and the ERIC document number in parentheses at the end. No URL is necessary.

Examples:


**MLA**
Generally, the citation form is the same as for a work cited only on the web with ERIC indicated, or a periodical publication in an online database. See the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition on pages 184 and 192.

Examples:


How do I export citations to Endnote Web?

1. From the result list, click on the Add clipboard icon next to the title of the resources you want.
2. Choose the clipboard link above the search results.
3. Choose the resources you want to export.
4. Then select the Export citations link.
5. Select Citation Manager File and click Download.
6. A pop-up will appear. Save the .ris file to your desktop.
   a. File: Browse and select the file you saved.
   b. Filter: Chose ERIC RIS
   c. To: Either select a group for your citations, create a new group for your citations, or place in Unfile.

Using ERIC