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Database Promotion

Research databases are one of the most effective tools for learning offered by the school library. However, these resources are often under-used because learners, educators, parents, and the school community are unaware of their existence, or are unfamiliar with how and when to use them. Therefore, school librarians need to promote the databases and provide proper instruction in how to effectively use them.

I plan to promote the use of databases by showing learners how to use them for research. Learners need to understand that databases are tools to aid them in performing research on various areas of interest. Furthermore, I will introduce students to databases that are developmentally appropriate for their age level.

Through my media class instruction, I plan on incorporating the National Standards for School Librarians by “implement[ing] and model[ing] an inquiry-based process by leading learners and staff through the research process” (AASL2018, School Librarian I.D.1).

Throughout the year, I will aim to show learners the variety of databases available to them, which databases are used for various research purposes, how to navigate the selected database, and special features that will help them in their research. The best way to get students to use the databases is to plan research projects which require students to use them during library time. The more often students use the databases in the library, the more comfortable they will be using

them independently for class or homework assignments. By the end of their elementary career, learners will have had ample experience using a variety of databases and will be able to take those research skills with them to their next level of education.

I also want to encourage staff members to use these resources. I plan on sharing my Gale In Context Opposing Viewpoints screencast with the fifth-grade teachers. Even though this database is geared toward high school students, I want younger students to know that it is available for their opinion writing unit. I also plan to create screencasts for each database offered on the media center's webpage. These screencasts will be posted to the media center's webpage for staff, parents, and learners to use. In these screencasts, I will introduce the database, demonstrate the special features, and share how these databases support curriculum goals and state standards. Periodically, I will send emails reminding educators of specific databases that could support classroom instruction.

I also want students to understand that databases are not only for school assignments. Additionally, the databases can be used as a way to generate knowledge on any topic of interest. My job as a school librarian is to “teach learners to display curiosity and initiative when seeking information by encouraging learners to formulate questions about a personal interest or curricular topic” (AASL2018, School Librarian I.A.1).

After students have gained a basic understanding of how to use the school library's databases, students will benefit from intermittent reminders to use them in a variety of ways. Fun trivia fact finds from the database can be featured during the morning announcements. The school's twitter account can be utilized to tweet a fact from the database. Other tweets might encourage students to answer a question using a database and to bring the answer to the library by the end of the week. By participating, students could earn a sticker or a Valley Viking ticket.

Students who participate will also have their names read aloud on the morning announcements, with the winner of the drawing receiving special recognition.

Each month the library will display a poster featuring the current database students are learning to explore. Students will be given a bookmark with the title of the database and a question which the student needs to answer by using the database. If students bring the bookmark back with it signed by the parent/guardian, they will be rewarded with a Valley Viking ticket.

Interactive bulletin boards on which students may post facts learned from using the databases will be a feature of my school library. I like the idea of having shelf-talker labels affixed to the bookshelves, to remind students to use specific databases to find more information related to the specific topics on the shelves. During Back-to-School-Night, I will introduce families to the databases provided, I will also show them where to find the screencasts on the media website. My goal—that databases will be accessed for research purposes--will be achieved by providing proper database instruction, posting visual reminders in the library, sending out screencasts for the school community to access, and by communicating with parents, students, and educators.

As users see the wide variety of information that can be accessed on databases, they will be more inclined to use these resources. Students' successfully addressing both academic and personal informational needs through databases, will be an indication that the value of these resources is fully understood. Most importantly, with proper promotion, users will develop the understanding that databases are tools that can help them become life-long learners.

Bibliography Part Two

Evaluation Criteria

Before choosing which databases to consider for my website, I first created criteria to aide me in my decision making. I consulted the *Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Instructional Materials* which Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) uses to guide their decisions in selecting quality resources. I specifically consulted the *Criteria for Digital Resources*. After looking over all the recommended criteria, I narrowed it down to five criteria guidelines which are most useful in selecting databases.

Selection Criteria for Databases based on FCPS Guidelines
A. Appropriate – Database supports curriculum standards for the intended audience (1 point)
B. Accessibility- Database base supports a variety of learners (1 point)
C. Navigation- Database is user friendly and easy to explore (1 point)
D. Accuracy- Content is accurate and reliable (1 point)
E. Inquiry-Website encourages curiosity and supports student interest (1 point)

Rating System

The databases were evaluated according to the above criteria (A-E) and were awarded a point value for each of the criterion it satisfied. Within the annotated bibliographic citation, is a numerical rating out of five with the specific criteria (A-E) that were met. An explanation is provided for any database which did not meet all A-E criteria and therefore did not receive a 5/5 rating. The following thirteen recommended databases are in the annotations below.

The Top 13 Databases

Britannica ImageQuest

<http://quest.eb.com>

Citation: *Britannica ImageQuest*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020. Accessed 6 June 2020.

Created By: Encyclopedia Britannica

Grade Levels: K-12

Curriculum Connections: Art, Music, Social Studies, Science, World History, U.S. History.

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Feb. 2015, p. 55

Rating: 4/5 A, C, D, E This database does not meet criterion B (accessibility) because it has neither a read-aloud nor a translation feature to support a variety of learners.

Britannica ImageQuest provides “millions of rights-cleared images from one trusted site.” This database contains over 3.25 million images that are cleared for educational use and which can be downloaded for lessons, assignments, projects, and presentations. Users can choose curriculum-relevant photographs, drawings, maps, flags, symbols, and infographics. All artifacts have been carefully curated and are safe for students to browse. Students can easily search for an image in the large search box. At the bottom of the homepage, students can select *Get a Jump Start* and then *Browse Our Albums* which consist of thematic images to explore. *Learn with Projects* provides ways to use this database at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. *See What’s New* gives a quick tutorial on the database. *Our Collection* allows the user to browse images from 62 image collections including the Chicago History Museum, Getty Images, National Portrait Gallery, and Natural History Museum. Once an image is selected, the user can cite, add to My Images, download, email, print, or share to Google Classroom.

Britannica School

<https://school.eb.com/levels/elementary>

Citation: *Britannica School*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020. Accessed 6 June 2020.

Created By: Encyclopedia Britannica, Britannica Digital Learning

Grade Levels: PK-12

Curriculum Connections: Animals, plants, habitats, biomes of the world, biographies, history, maps, geography, physical science, space, chemistry, biological sciences.

Professional Review: *Booklist*, Oct. 2012

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Britannica School is a general reference encyclopedia using articles and multimedia to provide information on a variety of topics. The site is divided into elementary, middle, and high school sections. The elementary homepage features: Did you Know?, What Does it Mean?, Name the Image, and Explore the Animal Kingdom. Students may explore Articles, Media, World Atlas, Biographies, Animal Kingdom, Tour the U.S.A., Geography Explorer, Compare Countries, and Fundamentals for PreK-2 students. The Middle School level features: Can you Guess?, Did you Know?, At a Glance, and Daily Buzzword. The Explore Britannica sidebar hosts similar research headings to the elementary version with an additional Compare Countries, Tour the U.S.A., and My Content sections. Users are also able to explore: Recommended U.S. Primary Sources and New & Revised Articles. The High School format features Fast Facts, In Their Words, and Science in Pictures. The High School version features are On This Day and News from *The New York Times*. A read-aloud feature and Spanish translation is available for each level.

CultureGrams Online

<http://online.culturegrams.com/>

Citation: *CultureGrams Online*. ProQuest, 2020. Accessed 7 June 2020.

Created By: ProQuest LLC and Brigham Young University

Curriculum Connections: Geography, culture, maps, flags, U.S. States, Maryland

Grade Levels: K-12

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Oct. 2018

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

CultureGrams is a primary source for cultural and statistical country reports. This database includes *World Edition*, *Kids Edition*, *States Edition*, and *Provinces Edition*. The top menu bar of *World Edition* and *Kids Edition* includes Photos, Slideshows, Videos, Interviews, Famous People, Recipes, Flags, and Graphs and Tables. The *World Edition* includes links to all seven continents. After selecting a continent, the user is directed to a list of countries. Each country will provide information on Background, People, Customs & Courtesies, Lifestyle, and Society, and At A Glance. *Kids Edition* is the student-friendly version of *World Edition*. The sidebar provides information on People & Places, History, Lifestyle, Society, Culture Facts & Contacts. The page includes Did You Know facts, Quick Facts, and a link to download an MP3 of the country's anthem. The *States Edition* and *Provinces Edition* each provides Recipes, Graphs and Tables, and a Flag Gallery. The sidebars each feature information on Place, History, People, Cultural Notes, and Fun Facts. Users can enjoy the read-aloud feature and print articles.

FactCite 123

<https://www.factcite.com/factcite123/index.html>

Citation: *FactCite123*. Lincoln Library Press, Inc, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Lincoln Library Online

Grade Levels: K-2

Professional Review: LMC/ARBA* Best Overall Reference K-12, 2013

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

FactCite 123 is a research database that may either be purchased individually or be bundled with other *FactCite* database subscriptions. This particular database contains thirteen modules including Biography, Mythology, The Elements, The Planets, Earth Science, Landforms, Biomes, Animals, Countries, States, Landmarks, Health, and Machines. After the user selects a module, more specific topics are provided. Once a specific topic is selected, the user is directed to an article. For instance, after selecting The Planets the user can choose from a list. After selecting Venus, the user is provided an article on that specific planet. A read-aloud feature and a proper MLA 8 citation are available. The user may choose whether they want to read the article on a single continuous page, or if he or she would prefer to use the arrow to scroll through multiple pages. The article may be shared with Google Classroom. Lots of white space with big pictures and easy-to-read headings make this database visually simple and user-friendly for primary students, for English Language Learners, and for students reading below grade level.

Gale In Context: Biography

<https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=BIC&u=fcpsbhs>

Citation: *Gale In Context Biography*. Gale Centage, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Gale Centage

Grade Levels: 9-12

Curriculum Connections: U.S. History, World History, science, medicine, health, technology, current events, art, music

Professional Review: *Booklist*, June 1, 2012

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Gale In Context: Biography is a database providing information on influential people past and present. The homepage provides four ways to locate a person. The user can type the name of the person into the search bar, browse the *People Of Interest*, *Browse People* by categories and popular examples, or *Browse All 5,020* alphabetically. The search bar also has multiple search options including advanced search, person search, publication search, and topic finder. Once a person is selected, extensive information is provided through Quick Facts, Featured Content, Bibliographies, Audio, Websites, Reference, Magazines, Images, Videos, News, and Academic Journals providing a multi-dimensional perspective of the person's life. Sources include *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Economist*, *The Washington Post*, and many others. Findings may be shared to Google Classroom. Users can sign in with Google or Microsoft, utilize the read-aloud feature, change font size, translate into multiple languages, download or email the document, and use the proper citation tools.

Gale In Context: Elementary

<https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=ITKE&u=fcpsves>

Citation: *Gale In Context Elementary*. Gale Cengage, 2020. Accessed 6 June 2020.

Created By: Gale Centage

Grade Levels: K-5

Curriculum Connections: Animals, plants, U.S. States, maps and globes, geography, food and nutrition, the human body, geography, historical figures, U.S. presidents, art, music, weather, climate, space, physical science, government and civics, sports, and technology

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, June 2004, p92-92

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Formally known as *Gale Kids InfoBits*, *Gale In Context: Elementary* is a reference database for younger learners. There are four sections of the website: *Topics*, *News*, *Pictures*, and *Videos*. The homepage displays a search box with an advanced search feature, an “I wonder” question with a “find out” button to display the answer, and eleven topics with labels and pictures for students to explore. After selecting a *Topic*, sub-topics are available with pictures and labels. When the user chooses a sub-topic, more sub-topics may appear until the topic is narrowed to a specific article. Typically, the article is found within three clicks. The *News* section includes *Youngzine* and *Kidspost* articles and also posts Fun Facts for the month. The *Pictures* and *Videos* sections cover a variety of topics and include proper citations. Students can use the read-aloud feature, change the size of the font, translate the article into many languages, download, print, get a citation, or send the information through email or Google Drive. The student can change the difficulty of the reading level.

Gale In Context: Middle School

<https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=MSIC&u=fcpsbms>

Citation: *Gale In Context Middle School*. Gale Cengage, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Gale Centage

Grades: 6th-8th

Curriculum Connections: U.S. History, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Current Events, World Cultures

Professional Review: *Booklist*, September 2018, p. 24

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Gale In Context: Middle School is a reference database for middle school learners. The homepage includes a search box with an advanced search option. The *Topics Of Interest* section currently provides a photograph, brief description, and an “Explore this topic” button to learn more about Lebron James, Oceans, and the poem *Jabberwocky*. The *Browse Topics* button currently leads to nine photographs with headings. The headings include cultures, geography, government, literature, people, science, social issues, U.S. History, and World History. Once a heading is selected, a list of specific topics is populated. After one of those topics is chosen, an article is provided, as well as sections including Reference, Biographies, Magazines, Images, News, Videos, Audio, Primary Sources, Creative Works, and other Related Topics. There is a *Browse All 472 Topics* section which contains all topics available for students to research. Special features include translation of the text, listening to a read-aloud feature, changing the font size, and accessing a proper citation. Information may be shared with Google Classroom and Google Drive and can be downloaded and printed.

Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints

<https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=OVIC&u=fcpsbhs>

Citation: *Gale In Context Opposing Viewpoints*. Gale Cengage, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Gale Centage

Grade Levels: 9-12

Curriculum Connections: Current events, U.S. History, World History, society, culture, science, technology, health, medicine, Science, Social Studies, Current Events, Language Arts

Professional Review: *Booklist*, May 1, 2012, p. 90

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints is an online database that covers today's controversial issues from differing perspectives. Users can access three featured *Issues of Interests*, select *Browse Issues* that cover eight topic areas or *Browse All 478 Issues*. Issues cover a range of controversial topics including Abortion, Animal Rights, Assisted Suicide, Divorce, Human Rights, Sentencing and Prison Reform, LGBTQ Rights, and many more. Once an issue is selected, one can navigate the multiple resources included in Featured Viewpoints, Viewpoints, Reference, Bibliographies, Infographics, Statistics, Images, Videos, Primary Sources, Audio, Magazines, News, Academic Journals, Websites, and Related Topics. Special features include translation, text size, and text-to-speech. Users can rely on Lexile and Content levels to choose the appropriate text difficulty. Information can be downloaded, emailed, printed, and shared to Google Classroom.

PebbleGo

<https://site.pebblego.com/modules>

Citation: *PebbleGo*. Capstone, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Capstone

Grade Levels: K-3

Curriculum Connections: U.S. Symbols, maps, long ago and today, citizenship, countries, continents, jobs in the community, forces and motion, light, matter, sound, earth, space, weather, shapes, primary and secondary colors, math, plants, animals, adaptations, food chains.

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Jan. 29, 2020

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

PebbleGo is an early elementary encyclopedia database. On the homepage are five modules: Animals, Science, Biographies, Social Studies, and Dinosaurs. Selecting a module reveals tiles with more categories from which students may make further selections. The user continues to select labeled picture tiles until reaching information on a specific topic. For example, if the user clicks on Animals, then Birds, then Birds of Prey, the user can learn about Eagles. The user will learn through a series of tabs marked Body, Habitat, Food, Life Cycle, Fun Facts, and Read More. There is a print section where students can print a citation, print an article version of the information, or print-out classwork activities. There is also a media section with audio or visual resources. Games and a Question-Of-The-Day is found in the module. One strength is that the read-aloud feature uses a human voice. One weakness is that the Dinosaur module is not available in Spanish.

PebbleGo Next

<https://www.pebblegonext.com/modules>

Citation: *PebbleGo Next*. Capstone, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Capstone

Grades: 3-5

Curriculum Connections: Native American culture in Maryland, Maryland past and present, geography, economics, U.S. Symbols, U.S. History, U.S. Government, science, social studies, ecosystem, plants animals, earth science, physical science.

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Mar. 2015.

Rating: 5/5

PebbleGo Next is an upper-elementary encyclopedia database. On the homepage are five modules: States, Science, American Indian History, Social Studies, and Biographies. Users navigate through the module to reach the desired article by selecting multiple subject tiles that lead to more specific areas of interest. The number of clicks from the homepage to the article depend on the module and topic. The user can look at the top of the page to see the steps taken to get to the article. Games and a Question-of-the-Day is available for each module. The Science module also provides experiments. Other helpful features that are available include a dictionary, citation tool, and other related articles are also available. One strength is that the read-aloud feature uses a human voice.

Scholastic FreedomFlix

<https://sdm-fflix.digital.scholastic.com/home?authCtx=U.600060720>

Citation: *FreedomFlix*. Scholastic Inc., 2020. Accessed 10 June 2002.

Created By: Scholastic Inc.

Curriculum Connections: British colonies, Jamestown colony, Boston Massacre, Boston Tea Party, American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, American Government, slavery, Underground Railroad

Grade Levels: 3-5

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Nov. 2012, p. 68-68

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

FreedomFlix database seeks to “Bring History to Life” through short videos and ebooks. On the menu bar, students can choose to learn about the Ancient World, Colonial Era, Our Democracy, Westward Expansion, Immigration, Slavery, and the Civil War, Economy, the 20th century, Today’s History, and War. Each time-period includes resources through tabs labeled: Watch It, Read It, Explore More, Related Web Sites, Project Idea, What Do You Think?, And Show What You Know. Explore More provides *Scholastic Go* articles on the topic. Lessons plans, quizzes, whiteboard activities, and writing prompts can be found by clicking on the Resources and Tools tab. For example, under the Colonial Era tab, the student has multiple sub-topics from which to choose including The Boston Massacre. Students can then watch a short video and read an ebook on the topic as well as enjoy the other resources provided. Ebooks included a read-aloud feature. This database does not provide a search bar to search for topics by keyword.

Scholastic ScienceFlix

<https://sdm-sfx.digital.scholastic.com/?authCtx=U.600060720#>

Citation: ScienceFlix. Scholastic Inc, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Scholastic Inc.

Curriculum Connections: Oceans, rocks and minerals, landforms, weather, climate, earthquakes, volcanoes, planets, solar systems, earth, plants, animals, scientific method, biomes, life cycles, animal behavior, human body, nutrition, senses, disease, states of matter, atoms and molecules, gravity, magnets and magnetism, water, sound, light, chemical reactions, coding, simple machines, inventions.

Grade Levels: Grades 4 and up

Professional Review: *School Library Journal*, Feb 2015, p. 28-29

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

Scholastic ScienceFlix is a multi-media research database. On the homepage, the user can click on four major headings including Browse All Topics, Experiments, Careers in Science, and Science News. The *Browse All Topics* section includes the following units listed in columns: Earth Science, Space Science, Life Science, Health & Human Body, Physical Science, and Tech, Math, & Engineering. Under each field of interest is a list of scientific interests. For instance, the user can look under Earth Science and select Oceans of the World leading to videos, articles, and more resources about that topic. Under the *Experiments* heading, students find directions to science experiments and also to a video. Students set the reading level at a 1, 2, or 3, a read-aloud feature, look up a word, send email, or print out the resource. Under *Resources and Tools*, Teacher Resources are provided. Educators can access lesson plans, quizzes, and other resources. Materials are also aligned to state standards.

Scholastic TrueFlix

<https://sdm-tfx.digital.scholastic.com/?authCtx=U.600060720>

Citation: *TrueFlix*. Scholastic Inc, 2020. Accessed 10 June 2020.

Created By: Scholastic Inc.

Grade Levels: Grades 3 and up

Curriculum Connections: Native American Culture, Colonial America, Maryland, slavery, U.S. Government, continents, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, animals, plants, magnets, rocks and minerals, states of matter, the human body, earth, sun, moon, and planets.

Professional Review: *Library Media Connection*, Oct. 2011, p96-96.

Rating: 5/5 A, B, C, D, E

TrueFlix is a reference database that brings together non-fiction ebooks with videos. On the homepage, the user can explore the People, Places, and History column or the Science and Nature column. The topics cover multiple curricular areas. The first column covers American Indians, Ancient Civilizations, Biographies. The Civil War, Continents. Information Literacy, My United States, The Thirteen Colonies, U.S. Government, U.S. Regions, and Westward Expansion. The later column covers the Animal Kingdom, Disasters, Earth Science, Ecosystems, Experiments, Extreme nature, Extreme science, Farm-to-Table, Great Discoveries, Health, Human Body, Outer Space, Physical Science, and The Solar System. When a topic is selected, multiple non-fiction books that fit in the specific category are revealed. Once the user clicks on the photo of a book, he or she can watch a short video and read the chosen book. A read-to-me feature is provided. On the left side of the page, students can choose Start, Watch the Video, Read the Book, Explore More, Project Idea, Activity Center, Explore the Web, and More. Lesson plans are also provided.

Works Cited

AASL. *National School Library Standards Crosswalk*, 2018, standards.aasl.org

Frederick County Public Schools. "Criteria for Digital Resources." *Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Instructional Materials*, 2017. Accessed 28 May 2020.

Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints Screencast

The following link may be used to find a video explaining how to use this database for research projects.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBWT_DN7AMY