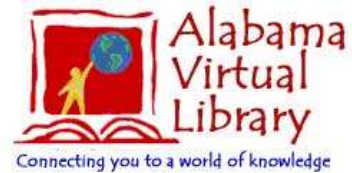


JCLC Database Training



A *database* is any collection of information that is organized according to some principle or rule. A telephone book is a database. It is organized alphabetically.

What is the **AVL**? The Alabama Virtual Library provides all students, teachers, and residents of the State of Alabama with online access to essential library and information resources. It is primarily a group of online databases that have magazine, journal, and newspaper articles for research.

There are several databases available for library patrons in Jefferson County. The AVL is available statewide for all citizens of Alabama. JCLC and APLS also subscribe to various databases as does the Birmingham Public Library. Most databases are accessible from any computer online with an active library card or AVL card. Some databases may only be accessed from within the library or organization that subscribes to them.

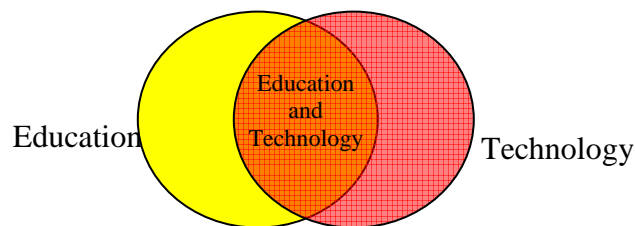
Before we begin touring some databases let's look at search tips. All databases are a little different however; the following tips are a general guide for building a successful search.

Boolean Searching and other search strategies

Boolean searching is a way of building logical relationships between search terms. Boolean has three main search operators: **AND**, **OR** and **NOT**.

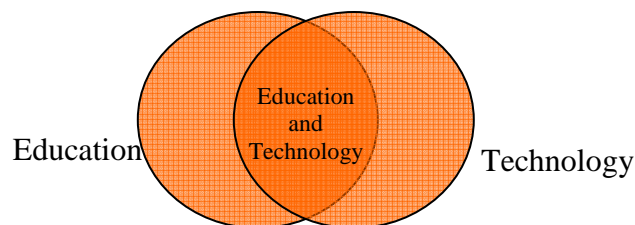
Here is how Boolean works:

The **AND** operator combines search terms so that each search result contains all the terms.



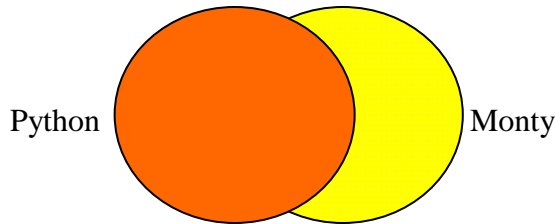
In this example the search is “Education **AND** Technology”. With this search you will get results that have both of the search terms. The results are represented by the orange area.

The **OR** operator combines search terms so that each search result contains at least one of the search terms.



In this example the search is “Education **OR** Technology”. With this search you will get results that have “education,” “technology” and both “education and technology” in the results. The results are represented by the orange area.

The **NOT** operator will allow you to limit your search.



In this example the search is “Python **NOT** Monty.” With this search you will get results that have the term “Python” but do not have the term “Monty.” The results are represented by the orange area.

Wildcard and Truncation

Use the wildcard and truncation symbols to create searches where there are unknown characters, multiple spellings or various endings. Neither the wildcard nor the truncation symbol can be used as the first character in a search term.

- The *wildcard* is represented by a question mark (?). To use the wildcard, enter your search terms and replace each unknown character with a ?. EBSCO*host* finds all citations of that word with the ? replaced by a letter.

For example, type **ne?t** to find all citations containing **neat**, **nest** or **next**. EBSCO*host* does not find net because the wildcard replaces a single character.

- *Truncation* is represented by an asterisk (*). To use truncation, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with an *. EBSCO*host* finds all forms of that word.

For example, type **comput*** to find the words **computer** or **computing**.

Stop Words

Stop words are commonly used words such as articles, prepositions and pronouns. They are words that are used so frequently in text that they will be thrown out by most databases if used with search terms. Examples of stop words are: a, an, are, be, it, the, and to. To avoid using stop words you may enclose phrases with stop words in quotation marks or eliminate the stop words from the phrase. Example: To search for *looking to the future*, either use “*looking to the future*” or *looking future*.

Federated Search Engine

A federated search engine is available when you access databases through BPL or JCLC. This allows you search many resources at the same time. It is a useful starting point to look for information.



One-Stop Search: Search Many Databases at Once

[About One-Stop Search](#)

Click this hyperlink to access the search interface.

Click this hyperlink to learn more about how this feature works.

One-Stop Search includes 33 of JCLC's 54 databases. Not all databases subscribed to by JCLC are included.

The search interface can be customized. You have the option of searching all available resources, specific categories and disciplines, or individual resources listed on the search interface.

At the top of the search results page will be a list of the checked resources i.e. "Search Progress." This list will include the number of results that were found.

Below that is a list of links from the available resources generated by your search. Results are presented in the order they are returned from the resources.

NOTE: One Stop Search will not work when all resources are searched at once.

The screenshot shows the One-Stop Search interface. At the top, there are navigation links: JCLC Home, Help, Catalog, View Your Record, and Learning Express Library. Below these are icons for New Search, Advanced Search, and Back to Catalog. The main section is titled "Search Progress" and contains a table with the following data:

Sources	Hits	Retrieved	Status
5 Started	48	15	Completed
Gale Infotrac Junior Edition	0	0	Failed
Gale Infotrac Kids Edition	0	0	Failed
Merriam Webster Online	0	0	Not Started
STRS Discoverer	0	0	Not Started
Encyclopaedia Britannica	0	0	Not Started
Oxford English Dictionary	0	0	Done
Kids InfoBits	43	10	Done
Oxford Reference Online	5	5	Done

Below the table is a section titled "Simple Search Results for :SUBJECT 'Lewis, Meriwether'". It lists three records:

- Record 1: Resource: Kids InfoBits. Title: Born in Virginia. URL: http://0-galenet.galegroup.com/vulcan.bham.lib.st...
- Record 2: Resource: Kids InfoBits. Title: Meriwether Lewis. URL: http://0-galenet.galegroup.com/vulcan.bham.lib.st...
- Record 3: Resource: Kids InfoBits. Title: The Louisiana Purchase: America Doubles Its Size. URL: http://0-galenet.galegroup.com/vulcan.bham.lib.st...

Online Help and Instruction

BPL and JCLC have instructions available for some of the databases. Scroll down the list of databases on the JCLC site. A "Help" column is on the right. If instructions exist, a hyperlink will be present. On BPL, you must choose between an alphabetical or subject list of databases. On this same page, scroll down to find a list of available database instructions.

All databases have their own help feature. This may usually be found near the top of the page and is often represented by some type of icon. Examples of help icons include a question mark or light bulb. When no icon is present look for hyperlink words like "Help" or "Tutorial."