# ENGL 1001: Algorithmic literacy & web searching  Fall 2025

• One laptop/computer per student • Mechanism to share out: whiteboard and markers, Google doc, or similar

Teaching note: You may not be able to demonstrate some aspects of search if you have turned off personalized ads or turned on ad/AI blockers. Consider using a browser you don't usually use.

| Learning outcome (use Bloom's, Krathwohl's, or Fink's taxonomies) | Activity (estimate time) | Assessment criteria: How will you know students have met the objective? | Threshold concept(s) (or knowledge practices or dispositions from the *Framework*) |
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| Describe how browsing behavior influences web search results. | Poll students on which search tools they use: Google, Bing, Duck Duck Go, or they don't care. (5 min)<br><br>Signed in to your account, visit Google Ad Center, then select Manage Privacy to see what data Google has profiled about you. (10 min) | Students explain that their prior web browsing behavior has created a descriptive advertising marketing profile of them. | Information Has Value<br>• understand how the commodification of their personal information and online interactions affects the information they receive and the information they produce or disseminate online<br>• make informed choices regarding their online actions in full awareness of issues related to privacy and the commodification of personal information |
| *Talking points:* | *How are your search results ranked? What makes something the "top result"?* | *Search engines make money from advertising and use your personal data to sell targeted advertising. They aren't designed to surface the* | |

| | | "best" information, just the ads you're most likely to buy from | |
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| Articulate the different purposes and audiences for web search engines and the library search tool. | Half the class searches in a commercial search engine (Google, Bing, or Duck Duck Go) and the other half searches in library search. Share out answers to questions. (10 min) | Students explain that commercial search engines are designed to sell you products, get you to do something, or get you to go somewhere. Library search is designed to help academics find scholarly research. | Authority Is Constructed and Contextual<br>• use research tools and indicators of authority to determine the credibility of sources, understanding the elements that might temper this credibility |
| *Talking points:* | *Let's pretend we're researching sports gambling. Let's all search for "sports gambling."*<br>*Without clicking on any results, describe the author, audience, and purpose of the tool.*<br>*What assumptions does the tool make about who you are and what you want to do?*<br>*What does the tool want you to do?*<br>*Assess the value of your top 5 search results. What would you use each one for? Could you use each in a college research project? How?* | | |

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| Choose sources of information from multiple perspectives, contexts, and/or genres | Use what we know about rhetoric and genre to add keywords to our search. (20 min)<br>*see table below*<br><br>If you have 75 minutes, have students explore using library search filters rather than keywords to indicate genre. | | Authority Is Constructed and Contextual<br>• define different types of authority, such as subject expertise (e.g., scholarship), societal position (e.g., public office or title), or special experience (e.g., participating in a historic event)<br>Searching as Strategic Exploration<br>• identify interested parties, such as scholars, organizations, governments, and industries, who might produce information about a topic and then determine how to access that information |
| *What can we do about search engine desire to sell us things, especially if our goal is to learn, not to buy?* | *Find the website of an organization or government agency that produces information about your topic or a related issue. Share out the name of the organization and title of the page you found*<br>*Find a genre/source type about your topic, based on what you're missing* | | |

| Information producers | Genres/source types |
| --- | --- |
| Department | Repository |
| Agency | Collection |
| Services | Archive |
| Organization | Oral history |
| Association | Podcast |
| Council | Blog |