

Research Strategies

For the first time in my life, I wrote a paper that I am proud of. "My name is" is one of my best papers and I am very satisfied with it. This is because of the many hours I put into this paper, researching and reviewing and reflecting on it. My first draft was quite silly, entitled "Fifi's Top 5 Baby Names." But after incorporating research, my paper transformed into something worthy of consideration. I am quite amazed at how my paper turned out and I hope you enjoy my paper.

Prior to writing this paper, I was familiar with using books, encyclopedias, and websites for research, but not with online databases like Academic Search Premier or JSTOR. At first I had a hard time finding articles; it was just confusing. My searches were futile and the links led me nowhere. I remember I did find some articles but was unable to find any online links for it. It's a good thing I realized that I should ask a librarian for help.

At the reference desk I presented my dilemma to the librarian. First I told him how I was trying to research and he quickly pointed out that the database I was using was too narrow and I should try Academic Search Premier. Since then I have been very faithful to this database because it rarely fails me in my research endeavors. If you refer to my Works Cited, you will see that Academic Search Premier is my primary source of articles.

The really good thing about how our library works is that I can access the databases even if I'm not in the library. I do realize that other libraries probably offer the same service to their students, too, but because it has been a big help, I just wanted to mention that fact.

Some of the most important strategies I learned from this experience were to know what information I really wanted. But sometimes that could be too specific so I also learned to search broadly first and then narrow it down. Academic Search Premier makes it easy because it has a set of narrower topic on the left hand side that I can chose and it would filter the results for you.

In order to evaluate the articles, I looked at the information the database provided on the author and the journals the article came from. I also read the abstract first to see if the rest of the article was worth reading. That saved a lot of time on my part because I have difficulty in reading fast and when on a deadline, time is not to be wasted.

My final discovery in the library while researching was that the atmosphere of the library is not to be taken for granted. While I usually tend to let my mind wander in my room, I felt that in the library, I was able to focus more. Knowing this will definitely help me when there are times when I simply want to procrastinate.

Through this research paper, I learned a few valuable lessons that will help me in my lifelong journey of learning. I realized that I could take a seemingly random topic and find articles for evidence because there are so many articles and information available for me. I also learned that when in doubt, I could ask a librarian for help or take advantage of the quiet and engaging atmosphere of the library. Finally, I learned that I am quite skilled in finding adequate materials for my paper through the use of databases and the library.