

## What is ERIC?

**ERIC** (Educational Resources Information Center) is the most important database for locating education journal articles. The Library provides access to ERIC on two different software platforms:

**ERIC (Online: EBSCO)** is recommended for students enrolled in Bachelor of Teaching and Learning.

**ERIC (Online:CSA)** uses the same software as PsycINFO. PsycINFO is the main database for psychology and is useful for child development and child psychology.

**Date Coverage:** 1966 – current

There are two types of records on ERIC:

**ERIC Journals.** These records are references to articles published in journals.

**ERIC Documents.** These are unpublished resources and include digests (short overviews of current education topics), conference papers, teacher guides and curriculum handbooks.

## How to access ERIC

From the Library's home-page:

- Click Databases
- Select the link to E
- Click on the link to ERIC (CSA)

From the Education Portal:

- Select ERIC via CSA from the list of databases.

## Search Steps

### 1. Brainstorm your topic

Write down the key concepts in your topic and list any synonyms, e.g. methods to improve attitude toward maths.

maths – math, mathematics  
attitude – interest, behaviour, opinion

Use U.S. terminology (behavior)  
Use the **truncation symbol (\*)** to pick up variant endings to a word, e.g. math\* will find math, maths, mathematics etc.

### 2. Combine your concepts

If you have more than one concept, use Boolean Operators (And, OR, Not) to join terms, e.g.

math\* and attitude\* – both terms must occur in the record.  
attitude\* or opinion – either term must occur in the record.

If you use AND and OR in the same search, you must put brackets around the OR part of the search, e.g. math\* and (attitude\* or opinion)

### 3. Select a search

There are two main search options:

**Quick** – O.K. for a quick or simple search.

**Advanced** – default search. This is the recommended search option.

- Use the search form to input your search.
- Select the fields to search from the pull-down menu.
- The search can be limited to journal articles only and date.

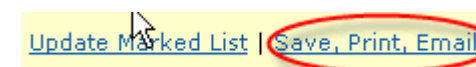
## 4. View results

The results page separates the results into publication types. They are listed in tabs across the top of the results. Click on one of the tabs to see the results, e.g. peer-reviewed journals for articles appearing in academic journals.



## 5. Save, print or email results

- Mark the required records by clicking in the checkbox next to the record.
- Click **Save/Print/Email Records**
- Click the drop down menu if you wish to change the output option. (NB: Short format includes the abstract).
- Click Email, Save or Print Preview.



## 6. Find the fulltext of the article

- Click Search for Fulltext.
- This will open up a new window. If the article is available electronically there will be a link to either the article or the journal.
- If the article is not available electronically, click on the link Search by ISSN to find out whether the journal is available in print on the Library shelves.



## Search Tips

### Limit to journal articles

Use the Advanced Search screen  
Click in the checkbox next to journal articles only

**Limited to:**  Latest Update  Journal Articles Only

### Limit to an education level

To limit your search to a **particular education level**, use the appropriate education level descriptor in your search, e.g (early childhood or preschool) (elementary education or primary education) – **most articles use elementary education** (secondary education or high schools) (post secondary education or higher education)

### Limit to research articles

You will need to specify the publication type as research:

- Select an **Advanced Search** and select field PT (Publication Type).
- Use research as the search term.

{ research | or | or | } Publication Type, PT=

## Thesaurus

The Thesaurus lists all of the subject terms (or descriptors) used by ERIC. These are terms assigned by the database producers to describe the subject of the article. The descriptors are displayed on the right hand side of each record. Use the descriptor terms to help you refine your search. To search the Thesaurus:

- Click Search Tools tab.
- Click Thesaurus
- Type a term into the box and click Go.

## Search History

- Click Search Tools tab.
- Click History

Searches can be edited, re-run, deleted or saved as alerts.

## Search Alerts

By setting up a search alert, any new records added to the database which match your search will be sent to you by email.

- Click Search Tools tab.
- Click Alerts
- Click New User – Create a Personal Password to register for alerts.
- Complete the online form.

## Refining your search

### Found too few records?

You need to broaden your search. Try these methods:

- Have you made a spelling mistake?
- Use North American spelling and terminology.
- Think of alternate terms or synonyms.
- Consult the thesaurus or descriptor terms.
- Truncate your search, e.g. cognit\* will find cognitive and cognition etc.
- Reduce the number of concepts you are using.

### Found too many records?

Your search is too general. Try these methods to make it more specific:

- Add another concept to your search and use the connector AND.
- Apply a limit to your search.
- Consult the thesaurus or the subject field of records to find more specific terms.
- If you know the preferred format for your term, you could remove truncation from your search.

## Further help ... ☺

Click Help & Support on the Database screen for online help. Ask at the Central Library Help Desk or contact the Education Information Librarian, Kerry Gilmour (ext.4986).

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