Using Google Scholar: Key Points

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## Difference between Google Scholar and regular Google searches

Regular Google searches are good for finding source material from popular sources like *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Slate*. You can also find forums, blogs, and other informal sources that, while not always very reliable, may point you toward other sources or give you a sense of what different people are saying about your topic. Most materials you find through a regular Google search will not be peer reviewed. Much of them are free to view.

Google Scholar, on the other hand, searches a wide variety of peer-reviewed journals, academic databases, and university libraries to find *scholarly* materials related to your search. Most Google Scholar search results require a university account or some kind of payment to access the full text of the materials. Results will primarily include articles in journals, dissertations, and books, all of which have typically gone through extensive expert reviews before publication; therefore, Google Scholar results are often more reliable. They hold more weight than a *Huffington Post* article.

That said, you may need to look extensively at popular sources if you are writing a paper about what society feels about a given topic. Scholarly articles will give you reliable, mostly objective information, but they may not capture the flavor of what is happening *now* in the world. Look for a balance of different materials to use in your writing for this class.

Linking your Google Scholar profile to the Texas Tech library

1. Go to https://scholar.google.com.
2. Click the three-line "hamburger" menu icon in the upper left corner.
3. Select "Settings" from the menu (last item).
4. In the next menu on the left, click "Library Links."
5. Enter "Texas Tech" in the search bar on the Library Links page, and a list of Texas Tech libraries will appear.
6. Check all the libraries you want Google Scholar to search and link you to.
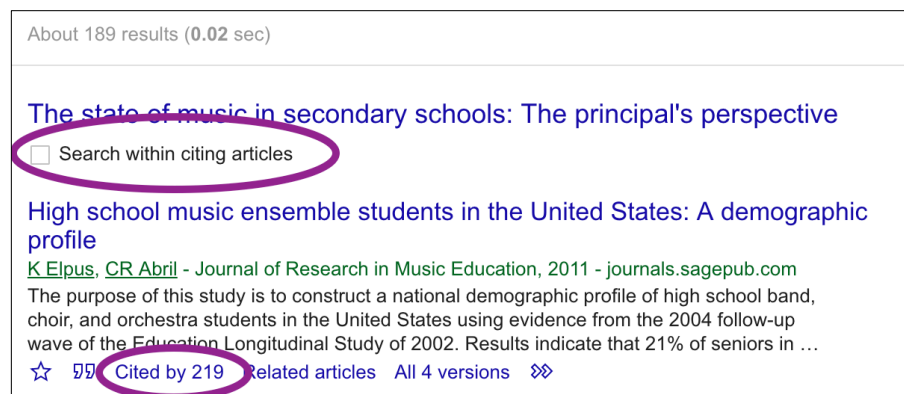7. Click the "Save" button on the bottom right of the page.
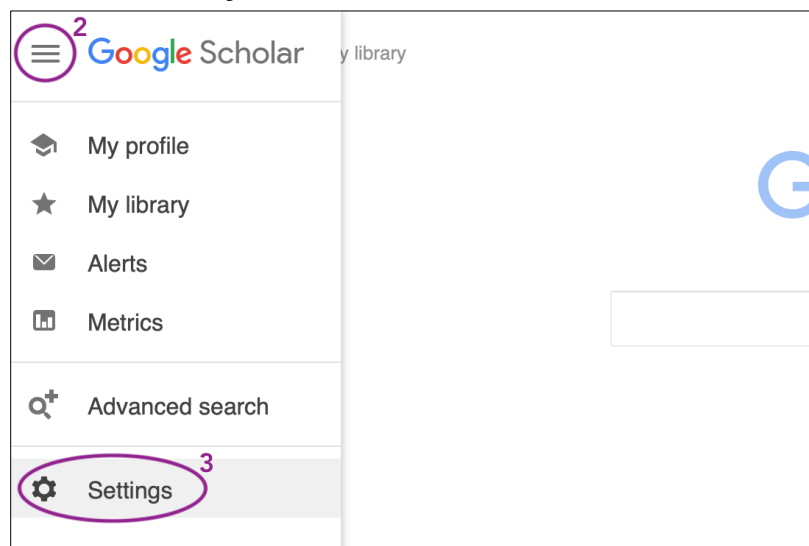
You should now be able to more immediately access material Texas Tech provides to you for free. If the steps above do not result in you getting more TTU links on the right in your Google Scholar search results, make sure you have cookies enabled and that you are logged into the Texas Tech library system at https://depts.ttu.edu/library/.
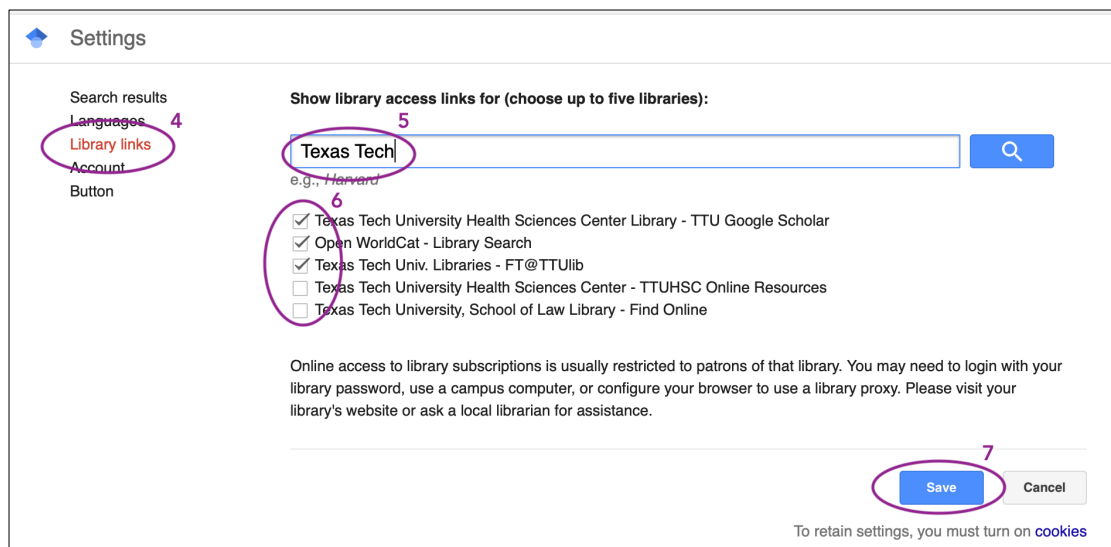
Use the "Cited by" feature

If you find an article you kind of like, you can find similar and *newer* articles by clicking "Cited by" under the search result information. You can then click "Search within citing articles" to search just within those articles that already cite the article you are interested in.

About 189 results (**0.02** sec)

The state of music in secondary schools: The principal's perspective

☐ Search within citing articles

High school music ensemble students in the United States: A demographic profile

K Elpus, CR Abril - Journal of Research in Music Education, 2011 - journals.sagepub.com

The purpose of this study is to construct a national demographic profile of high school band, choir, and orchestra students in the United States using evidence from the 2004 follow-up wave of the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002. Results indicate that 21% of seniors in …

☆ 〵〵 Cited by 219 Related articles All 4 versions ⨠

A database is not a journal

When you find an article through a database, remember that the database is not the journal. Double check all the information around the article title to see what the journal name, volume number, and issue number are.
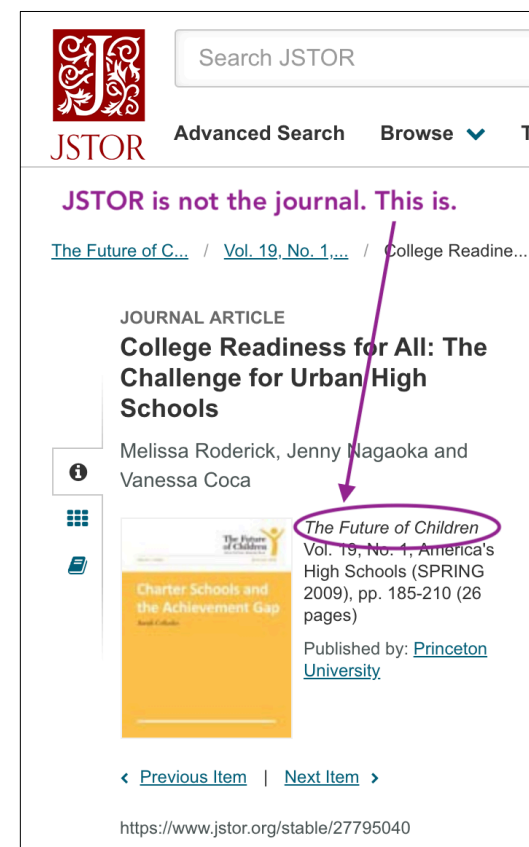
Double check automatic citation generators

If you use a tool to generate your citations for you, *always* double check that all the authors are there, that their last and first names are not transposed, that the title is only included once, and that the journal name (not the database) is included.

For citation formatting help, visit the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL).

Use reference lists

Most articles and books include lists of references the author used. These reference lists can be a treasure trove of new sources for you to explore. Simply search for the title of a referenced source to see if you have access to it through Google Scholar or the library.

Search JSTOR

JSTOR

Advanced Search   Browse ⌄   To

JSTOR is not the journal. This is.

The Future of C... / Vol. 19, No. 1,... / College Readine...

JOURNAL ARTICLE

College Readiness for All: The Challenge for Urban High Schools

Melissa Roderick, Jenny Nagaoka and Vanessa Coca

The Future of Children
Vol. 19, No. 1, America's High Schools (SPRING 2009), pp. 185-210 (26 pages)

Published by: Princeton University

‹ Previous Item | Next Item ›

https://www.jstor.org/stable/27795040

Scan search results for new search terms

Look for other common terms for items you are searching for in your search results. For instance, you might search for "secondary schools" instead of "high schools" to see if you get more results.

Save the sources you find

Do not trust your memory or a few hastily scratched notes to help you come back to good sources you find. Even if you think you just *might* use a source, save at least the author's name and the title somewhere. Here are some good options.

1. In your Internet browser, make a bookmark folder for this project and add bookmarks to that folder as you find articles you like.
2. Create a folder on your computer and download a PDF of each article to that folder.
3. Even if you do 1 and 2, another smart thing you can do is create a Word or Google document where you record the *full* citation information for each article as you go. Then, you aren't scrambling to find it right before your paper is due.
4. Use Google Scholar's "save" feature. To save an article you like, click the star underneath the article information in the search results list. Note: Every article you save goes into one big list of saved articles. To organize the list, you will need to "label" each article, which is like tagging on a Mac computer. There are no separate folders, so if you like organizing by folder, this may not be the most intuitive choice for you. If you understand tagging, you may love this feature.

5. There are also several open-source applications for saving and managing source materials. Zotero is a great one. Some people use Mendeley, EndNote, or other applications. However, there is a learning curve for more advanced source management applications.

Practice activities

1. Add Texas Tech libraries to your Google Scholar account.
2. Decide on a method for saving the sources you find.
3. Perform at least three different Google Scholar searches.
4. Use the "Cited By" feature at least twice.
5. Use the "Search within citing sources" feature at least twice.

If you have any difficulty with these exercises, email your instructor for help.