How Do College Freshmen Conduct Research?

High School vs. Academic Libraries

The average college library has...

19X as many online library databases & 9X as many books and journals

...than the average high school library

Exposure to New Tools

51% of freshmen said they had a hard time learning to navigate new tools

...and once sources were found,

43% had trouble making sense of the information.

Sometimes You Just Need Help Getting Started

The most helpful individuals on campus guiding freshmen through college-level research are:

Campus Librarians 29%

English Comp. Instructors 29%

Other Professors 20%

17% of students said they had trouble asking for help

Top Resources That Freshmen Use

- Google: 88%
- Library Databases: 82%
- Course Readings: 80%
- Government Sites: 77%
- Instructors: 72%
- Encyclopedias: 63%
- Classmates: 63%
- Google Scholar: 61%

What are the Most Difficult Steps?

- Coping up with keywords: 75%
- Navigating through search results: 57%
- Identifying and analyzing fonts: 51%
- Integrating or using data from different sources: 45%
- Navigating a data base: 37%

*Additional data was provided to 28 U.S. high school, college and university libraries and 26 first-time college freshmen from 12 U.S. colleges and universities.