WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen

Instructional Unit Proposal for USC Libraries

Inna Gogina

INFO 250. Design and Implementation of Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals

San José State University

May 19, 2016
## Table of Contents

Unit of Instruction ........................................................................................................................................ 3

Needs Assessment ....................................................................................................................................... 3
  - Background .......................................................................................................................................... 3
  - Learner characteristics ...................................................................................................................... 4
  - Entry behaviors .................................................................................................................................. 5
  - Teacher, class size, and time requirement .......................................................................................... 5

Instructional Goals .................................................................................................................................. 6

Learning Outcomes .................................................................................................................................. 6

Instructional Strategy ................................................................................................................................ 6
  - Motivation ........................................................................................................................................... 6
  - Information presentation .................................................................................................................... 7
  - Format and mode of delivery .............................................................................................................. 8
  - Instructional tools and materials .......................................................................................................... 9
  - Practice .............................................................................................................................................. 10

Testing .................................................................................................................................................... 10

Implementation ........................................................................................................................................ 10

Summative Assessment and Formative Evaluation .................................................................................... 11
  - Summative assessment ....................................................................................................................... 11
  - Formative evaluation .......................................................................................................................... 12

Marketing ................................................................................................................................................... 13

References ................................................................................................................................................ 14
WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen
Instructional Unit Proposal for USC Libraries

Unit of Instruction

This instructional unit proposal is addressed to University of Southern California Libraries’ administration. The purpose of this unit is to train first-year undergraduate students at University of Southern California on how to use WorldCat\(^1\)—the world’s largest catalog of library collections that enables users to search for information resources in various formats, languages, and media.

Needs Assessment

Background

University of Southern California is a private university enrolling 19,000 undergraduate students. It ranks in the top ten among private research universities in the United States. USC has 23 libraries and information centers and the USC Digital Library. The libraries house a total of 5,874,665 volumes, 4,235,760 titles, and 1,340,086 electronic books, among other holdings (USC Libraries., n.d.).

Information literacy instruction is a key component of USC Libraries’ mission: “The USC Libraries actively support the discovery, creation, and preservation of knowledge. We develop collections and services that support and encourage the academic endeavors of faculty, students, and staff; build a community of critical consumers of information; and help develop engaged world citizens. Through these means, we contribute to the continued success of the University of Southern California\(^2\)”.

The USC Libraries OPAC includes the WorldCat feature on the item-level page:

---

1. [https://www.worldcat.org/](https://www.worldcat.org/)
2. [https://libraries.usc.edu/about/office-dean/essential-library-vision-mission-values](https://libraries.usc.edu/about/office-dean/essential-library-vision-mission-values)
At the present moment, the library does not offer a WorldCat tutorial to its users. The students who need additional guidance resort to WorldCat Help, offered by OCLC on the catalog’s website. The resources provided in the online help, however, while comprehensive, do not lend easily into the specifics of the USC Libraries’ information literacy instruction, such as curriculum requirements, time limitations, and diversity of student learning styles.

This instructional unit will help the USC Libraries to develop a WorldCat tutorial that best meets the USC-specific user needs. Based on the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2000), this instructional unit takes into consideration the WorldCat tutorials’ best practices in academia, as well as the best practices of online video tutorials in academic libraries (Bowles-Terry, Hensley, & Hinchliffe, 2010).

**Learner characteristics**

Upon entering college, USC students are expected to have received necessary information literacy skills through K-12 education system. These skills are outlined in *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (American Association of School Librarians, 2009). The information literacy competencies students have achieved by Grade 12 “represent the important lifelong-learning skills that students will need to succeed at higher levels of education, in the workplace, and as productive members of society,” the AASL maintains (ibid., p. 37).

Information literacy survey results, however, prove otherwise. The 2013 *Project Information Literacy Research Report* found that majority of freshmen lack academic research skills nationwide: “Many freshmen, who assumed everything they needed to know was just a Google search away, soon discovered they were unprepared to deal with the enormous amount of information they were expected to find and process for college research assignments. This transition from completing high school assignments to doing college-level research is one of the most formidable challenges that incoming freshmen face” (Head, 2013, p. 2).

---

3 [http://www.oclc.org/support/help/worldcat.org/ApplicationHelp.htm](http://www.oclc.org/support/help/worldcat.org/ApplicationHelp.htm)
These findings illustrate the need for additional information literacy training for freshmen at USC Libraries—the need that is critical not only to their successful transition from high school to college, but also throughout entire academic training and life-long learning. Instruction presented in this unit, teaching USC freshmen how to use WorldCat, will help address this need, providing the information literacy skills that will support the students’ continued academic success. Knowing how to use the world’s largest library catalog will help students locate information resources in their local library and beyond.

**Entry behaviors**

The first-year USC undergraduates’ entry behaviors stem from the information literacy skills they have received before entering college, while in the K-12 education system. In particular, Grade 12 information literacy benchmarks include students’ ability to independently and systematically use an inquiry-based process to deepen content knowledge; connect academic learning with the real world; identify the value of and differences among potential resources in a variety of formats; use various search systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats; seek and use a variety of specialized resources available from libraries, the Web, and the community; and describe criteria used to make resource decisions and choices (American Association of School Librarians, 2009, pp. 38-43).

In addition, the entry behaviors required for this instruction include basic digital skills, such as the ability to use computer keyboard, web browser, e-mail, online video players, and basic online surveys and quizzes.

**Teacher, class size, and time requirement**

This unit is best taught by a USC academic librarian in charge of library instructional services. As this instruction can be delivered both in face-to-face mode and asynchronously, the class size is virtually unlimited. Whereas the asynchronous instruction’s time may vary based on the individual student’s learning pace, the face-to-face training can be completed in three (3) hours of academic instruction, including all learning activities, assessment, and evaluation.
Instructional Goals

Teaching first-year undergraduate USC students how to use WorldCat, this instructional unit will help learners improve their information literacy and research skills. By the same token, incorporating this unit into instructional services will support USC Libraries in pursuit of their information literacy-driven mission. These goals are grounded in the following guiding documents:

- The Essential Library, the USC Libraries’ Strategic Plan\(^4\) (including Mission, Vision, and Values statements\(^5\))

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit of instruction, students will be able to learn and practice finding, evaluating, and using information in WorldCat. In particular, they will be able to:

- create an account;
- use basic search to search WorldCat for items in different formats and media;
- use Subjects and Similar Items to expand and to focus the basic search results;
- perform advanced search;
- use citations, create and save lists, bibliographies, and reviews—in user account;
- locate the found items at USC Libraries and other libraries;
- use “Ask a Librarian” feature.

Instructional Strategy

Motivation

This instructional unit utilizes both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors.

**Intrinsic motivation.** Participants—USC freshmen—will be self-motivated to utilize the tutorial in order to learn how to do better research for their college work. They will learn about it from USC librarians and the library website, on which the unit will be featured.

\(^5\) [https://libraries.usc.edu/about/office-dean/essential-library-vision-mission-values](https://libraries.usc.edu/about/office-dean/essential-library-vision-mission-values)
Extrinsic motivation. Should the USC Libraries choose to integrate this unit in the formal, face-to-face or e-learning, information literacy instruction, students will be motivated to use it in order to complete the course assignments and receive good grades.

Information presentation

The WorldCat research and information literacy skills will be taught using the video tutorial mode of instruction, in the following order:

**Introduction**: Course overview, entry skills requirements, learning outcomes  
**Time**: 10 minutes (approximate)  
**Content**:  
- Instructor provides an overview of Worldcat and its usefulness to first-year undergraduate students.  
- Instructor explains how to access Worldcat from the USC Libraries OPAC.  
**Activity**: Following Instructor’s overview, students practice accessing the Worldcat website from the USC Libraries OPAC and familiarize themselves with the WorldCat homepage and its contents.

**Learning Objective 1**: Creating an account and setting up a user profile  
**Time**: 15 minutes  
**Content**: Instructor demonstrates how to create a WorldCat account and set up a user profile.  
**Activity**: Students create a WorldCat account and set up their user profile. Students explore the WorldCat features available in their account, such as adding favorites, bookmarks, notes, and tags.

**Learning Objective 2**: Using Basic Search  
**Time**: 15 minutes  
**Content**: Instructor explains methods of WorldCat Basic Search, including:  
- searching WorldCat for items in different formats and media, using basic search;  
- using main WorldCat filters, such as Format, Author, Year, and Topic—to refine basic search results  
- using item-level Subjects and Similar Items to expand and to focus the basic search results.  
**Activity**: Students learn how to use Basic Search and main filters to locate a peer-reviewed article. Students practice using Subjects and Similar Items to expand and to focus the basic search results.

**Learning Objective 3**: Using Advanced Search  
**Time**: 20 minutes  
**Content**: Instructor demonstrates and explains methods of WorldCat advanced search, using keyword, title, author, and advanced search filters: year, audience, content, format, and language.  
**Activity**: Students conduct advanced search, using keyword, title, author, and advanced search filters: year, audience, content, format, and language.

**Learning Objective 4**: Saving search results in the WorldCat account  
**Time**: 15 minutes  
**Content**: Instructor demonstrates how save search results in the WorldCat account.  
**Activity**: Students save the search results from the advanced search they conducted in the previous activity, in their user account.
Learning Objective 5: Using citations, creating and saving bibliography lists
Time: 20 minutes
Content:
- Instructor demonstrates how to use the Citations feature.
- Instructor demonstrates how to create and save bibliography lists in the WorldCat account.
Activity: Students practice using the Citations feature. Students practice creating and saving bibliography lists in their own accounts. Students practice exporting bibliography lists.

Learning Objective 6: Adding ratings and reviews of items
Time: 15 minutes
Content: Instructor demonstrates how to add ratings and reviews of items in the WorldCat account.
Activity: Students practice adding ratings and reviews of items in their own accounts.

Learning Objective 7: Locating WorldCat items at USC Libraries or in a local library
Time: 15 minutes
Content: Instructor demonstrates how to locate WorldCat items at USC Libraries or in a local library.
Activity: Students practice locating the items they found in WorldCat at USC Libraries and/or in a local library.

Learning Objective 8: Using “Ask a Librarian” feature
Time: 15 minutes
Content: Instructor demonstrates how to use “Ask a Librarian” feature.
Activity: Students practice using the “Ask a Librarian” feature in WorldCat.

Summative Assessment: Taking an online quiz to assess the information literacy skills gained in the course of instruction
Time: 20 minutes
Content: Instructor explains that students can self-assess the research skills they have acquired in the WorldCat tutorial—by taking the online quiz designed to accompany the course.
Activity: Students take the online quiz.

Formative evaluation: Participating in a web-based survey to provide feedback on the instruction
Time: 20 minutes
Content: Instructor explains that students can use a web-based survey provided in the instructional kit in order to evaluate quality and effectiveness of the instruction.
Activity: Students fill out the online survey provided in the instructional kit.

Format and mode of delivery

The WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen instructional unit includes the following web-based components: a closed-captioned audiovisual tutorial, a PDF companion, a quiz, and a survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Unit Component/Learning Object</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Format/mode of delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Audiovisual close-captioned tutorial</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Web-based/online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PDF companion</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Web-based/online and print</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The web-based **audiovisual tutorial** is delivered by the way of screencast. The **PDF companion** serves as a teacher-to-learner mode of text-based communication. Learners can work through the tutorial at their own pace, practicing all examples as demonstrated by the instructor, using the PDF companion during the synchronous learning process, or asynchronously—by printing the PDF and using it later, while conducting the WorldCat research in the future. In order to facilitate interactivity and afford assessment and evaluation, this unit of instruction includes a **quiz** and a **survey**. “The implementation of interactive online tutorials can provide flexible methods and options for students and can accommodate different learning styles,” according to Mestre (2012, p. 195). In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, to ensure the accessibility of **WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen**, **closed captioning** will be produced to accompany the entire video tutorial. Providing accessible tutorials benefits not only individuals with disabilities, but also ESL learners and mobile users.

**Instructional tools and materials**

Instructional unit components—the closed-captioned audiovisual tutorial, the print PDF companion, the quiz and the survey—are designed using the following tools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Component/Learning Object</th>
<th>Tools Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web-based audiovisual tutorial</td>
<td>• Open Broadcaster Software⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YouTube.com⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed captioning</td>
<td>• YouTube.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDF companion</td>
<td>• Microsoft Word⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adobe Acrobat¹⁰</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>• QuizWorks¹¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>• Qualtrics¹²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

⁶ [http://www.ala.org/support/style/accessibility](http://www.ala.org/support/style/accessibility)
⁷ [https://obsproject.com/](https://obsproject.com/)
⁸ [https://www.youtube.com/](https://www.youtube.com/)
¹⁰ [https://acrobat.adobe.com/](https://acrobat.adobe.com/)
¹¹ [https://www.onlinequizcreator.com/](https://www.onlinequizcreator.com/)
To accommodate the online mode of delivery, the USC Libraries’ website will be utilized as a centralized delivery tool for all learning objects comprising the unit.

**Practice**

With the individual, self-paced practice at its core, *WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen* provides an effective *learner-centered* instruction method. Grassian and Kaplowitz maintain that the individual practice method is “a bit more learner-centered than guided practice, as learners can be given more options about the topics, resources, or even approaches they wish to use during the practice period. Individual learners or groups of learners get the chance to apply what was just presented and to organize the material in a way that makes sense to them” (2009, p. 229).

The web-based, asynchronous mode of delivery and the self-paced practice model afford this instructional unit’s flexibility in the effort of accommodating a variety of the target audience’s learning styles, lending itself well to the self-directed, *active learning* approach. Alternatively, librarians can integrate this unit in the formal—face-to-face or e-learning—course of information literacy instruction.

**Testing**

Once all instructional unit components have been produced, USC Libraries will pilot the training with a first-year undergraduate student focus group. The pilot will generate feedback from the instructor and the students, as well as the evaluator observations. The feedback gathered from the pilot will be used to determine whether the design and content of the instruction accomplish the unit’s instructional goal and learning objectives and assess whether the unit needs additional improvements.

**Implementation**

All unit components—the closed-captioned screencast and the PDF companion, as well as the web-based quiz and the survey—are easily adapted within the USC Libraries’ online presence. Upon

12 [https://www.qualtrics.com/](https://www.qualtrics.com/)
13 [https://www.surveymonkey.com/](https://www.surveymonkey.com/)
completion of the pilot, once the entire instructional kit has been finalized based on the pilot participants’ feedback, it will be delivered online, in the *Tutorials and Instructional Videos*\(^{15}\) section of the library website.

**Summative Assessment and Formative Evaluation**

This instructional unit utilizes two assessment instruments: a quiz and a survey. Students will have an opportunity to take the quiz and the survey after they practice the instruction presented in the tutorial. These instruments are designed to accomplish the following evaluation objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>Summative assessment</td>
<td>Assess the rate at which the instruction helped students accomplish the unit’s learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Formative evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summative assessment**

The students’ ability to learn and practice finding, evaluating, and using information in WorldCat will be measured through summative assessment, delivered by means of the online quiz. In the quiz, students answer the questions that will measure the learning outcomes set forth in the instruction, e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutorial rubric</th>
<th>Quiz rubric</th>
<th>Sample question</th>
<th>Answer type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a WorldCat account</td>
<td>You can create a WorldCat account even if you are not a university student.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search WorldCat for items in different formats and media, using basic search</td>
<td>You can find scholarly articles on WorldCat using basic search.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Subjects and Similar Items to expand and to focus search results</td>
<td>Using the Subjects feature helps expand search results.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform advanced search on WorldCat</td>
<td>You can limit results to peer-reviewed articles in advanced search.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locate the found items in nearby libraries</td>
<td>You need to use your zip code in order to find items in libraries near you.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use citations, create and save lists, bibliographies, and reviews—in user account</td>
<td>You can save lists and searches if you set up a WorldCat account.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use “Ask a Librarian” feature</td>
<td>In order to use “Ask a Librarian” feature, you need to be logged in your WorldCat account.</td>
<td>True/False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{15}\) [http://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=235068&p=1560114](http://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=235068&p=1560114)
If the training is used as part of a library instruction course, teachers can use the quiz results in the course grading.

Formative evaluation

A web-based survey, included in the instructional kit, will help measure the students’ level of satisfaction and their opinion on the effectiveness of the unit’s design and content. Participants will rate the tutorial in terms of its quality and effectiveness; describe the problems and/or successes they encountered while practicing examples provided in the tutorial; and make recommendations on how the tutorial can be improved. In addition, students can assess how they compare their pre and post-training WorldCat research skills, using a Likert scale. The self-assessment mode, in particular, has been found useful to active learners, in the participatory learning process (Grassian & Kaplowitz, 2009, p. 103).

The figure below demonstrates the formative evaluation survey sample questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutorial rubric</th>
<th>Rate of completion (Y/N)</th>
<th>If not completed, why?</th>
<th>Improvement recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a WorldCat account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search WorldCat for items in different formats and media, using basic search</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Subjects and Similar Items to expand and to focus search results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform advanced search on WorldCat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locate the found items in nearby libraries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use citations, create and save lists, bibliographies, and reviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use “Ask a Librarian” feature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To conclude the formative evaluation, a question can be offered to learners, asking them whether they would recommend this tutorial to their colleagues or peers. The USC Libraries can use the survey results in order to improve this particular training, as well as plan for additional information literacy instruction programs. The online mode of delivery provides additional opportunity to assess the use of the tutorial—via the Google Analytics tool that allows tracking unique views, average time on page, bounce rate, % exit, referral pages, etc. As a follow-up, in order to gauge the long-term user satisfaction level as
well as verify that USC freshmen use the skills acquired in the *WorldCat Basics for College Freshmen* training in their subsequent coursework, the library can reach out to those participants who completed the survey, during their second, third, and fourth year of instruction—in order to learn whether they found this training useful and actually used the acquired skills after completing it. In order to facilitate the follow-up communication, the library will collect and preserve the survey respondents’ email addresses.

**Marketing**

Libraries have become active players and promoters of their instructional programs in the online learning environments. In 2013, “76% of all academic libraries reported using social media with Facebook, blogs, and Twitter being the three most frequently used resources. The chief three reasons for using social media include promotion of library services, marketing of events, and community building,” according to State of America’s Libraries Report 2014 (American Library Association, 2014). Today’s college undergraduates enjoy learning about available information literacy training from their native social network environments. The USC Libraries can market this unit of instruction within the scope of their social marketing strategy, aimed at promoting information literacy instruction through social media channels, e.g. the USC Libraries Facebook16.

---

16 [https://www.facebook.com/USCLibraries/](https://www.facebook.com/USCLibraries/)
References


