MLA International Bibliography (EBSCO) Tutorial

Database Description
MLA International Bibliography is an online database produced by the Modern Language Association. The database offers over 1.8 million citations of journal articles, books, and dissertations. Subjects covered include literature, language and linguistics, folklore, literary theory and criticism, and dramatic arts. Citations in the database are from more than 1,000 book publishers and 4,400 journals and series. Links to some full-text is available. Date coverage is from 1926 to the present.

I. How to Access

To access the MLA International Bibliography:

1. Go to the Leatherby Libraries home page located at http://www1.chapman.edu/library (see image to the left)
2. Click on Find Articles (see arrow to the left).

The Find Articles page provides a section titled Databases by Subject. This section allows students to locate online databases within all majors at Chapman University. To access MLA from here:

1. Click on English/Literature to access a list of databases for literature research (see arrow to the left).
2. Click on MLA International Bibliography from the list to open the database.
II. Searching in the MLA International Bibliography

A. Keyword Searching

The database opens to the Advanced Search screen (see below). From this screen, you can enter your search terms in the search boxes to perform a keyword search. (A keyword search will search for your terms in the following fields: title, author, abstract, subject, and html text.) If you cannot find what you are looking for, you may decide to move to more refined searching as discussed later.

The Advanced Search screen below shows a keyword search for “sylvia plath” and “imagery.” These search terms are combined with “and” to ensure results will include both “sylvia plath” and “imagery.”

Above: Advanced Search Screen (search box area)

B. Limiting a Search

Before clicking on Search, it may be necessary to refine or limit. Since the database scope is international, you may want to limit your results to English or another language. Other helpful limiters include Publication Type and Peer Reviewed.

Publication Type: This limiter allows you to restrict results to books, journal articles, or other types.

Peer Reviewed: This limiter will restrict results to only peer-reviewed publications that have gone through an evaluation by scholars and researchers in the field prior to being accepted for publication.

Above: Limiters in MLA (lower section of Advanced Search Screen)
C. Searching from the Thesaurus (Subject Headings)

Keyword searching will retrieve results that contain your search terms, although the results may not be about your search terms. Searching from the thesaurus may provide you with more relevant results that are on target with your search terms. The thesaurus can also be helpful for finding broader, related, or narrower terms.

To access the thesaurus, click on the link under the Advanced Search tab near the top of the screen.

Type your search term in the Browse for box and click Browse.

A list of terms will appear below.

For the sample search at the left, the word “imagery” was entered. “Imagery” is the first word in the list that appears.

To search for a term from the thesaurus, follow these steps:

1. Check the box next to the term.
2. Click on Add. You should see your term appear in the Find field with the code DE in front of it. DE stands for descriptor, a term you may encounter in other databases.
3. Click on Search.

Searching from the Thesaurus: Combining Terms

Searching from the thesaurus, especially when combining terms, can be a bit confusing until you do it a few times. You can practice learning the techniques with the steps below from a sample search. For this search, we are looking for criticism on female characters created by women novelists.

1. Click on the Thesaurus link under the Advanced Search tab.
2. In the “Browse for” box type female characters and click on Browse.
3. Place a check in the box next to female characters and click Add.
4. In the “Browse for” box type women novelists and click Browse.
5. Place a check in the box next to women novelists.
6. Before clicking Add, change the “or” to “and” and then click Add.
7. Click on Search to retrieve the list of results.
D. Other Uses of the Thesaurus

As mentioned above, the thesaurus can also help you find related, narrower, and broader terms. This can be especially helpful if you are receiving too few or too many results.

Many, but not all, terms in the thesaurus will be linked to records like the one to the left for imagery.

After clicking on the link for the term, you will find a listing of Broader, Narrower, and Related Terms.

For imagery, we can see that figures of speech is considered a Broader Term and alchemical imagery is a narrower term.

E. Using Names as Subjects

Another way to search in MLA is by using the Names as Subjects index. Searching this way will retrieve results of criticism about a particular author.

To access Names as Subjects, click on the link near the top of the screen.

Type your search term in the Browse for box and click on Browse.

In the example to the left, note that the author Albert Camus was searched for using the format of “last name, first name” or Camus, Albert.

Similar to the thesaurus, you click on Search to retrieve your results.
III. Working with Results Lists and Records in MLA

A. Locating the Full-text of Articles

Now that we have covered some search techniques, we will look at how to access the electronic or print copy of an article.

After entering your search terms and clicking on Search, you will retrieve a results list that will look similar to the one to the left, if results are available for your search terms.

Some results for articles may have the full-text available within the database (as in #1 and #3) to the left. Simply click on the HTML or PDF link to view the article.

Other results may show the Chapman University icon. Clicking on this icon will show you if the item is available elsewhere in the library, either online or in print.

To the left is the pop-up window that will appear after you click on the link to find the full text.

In this example, we can see the citation information from MLA appearing first. Near the bottom, we can then see the availability of the article. For this article, there are two online database options. Other times, you may find that only a print copy is available in the library.

In this example to the left of another pop-up, we can see that this journal is not available in print or electronically at Chapman University.

If Chapman University does not have a journal or book that you need, you can still obtain the resource through Interlibrary Loan.
B. Locating Books

Step One

Above: Detail of book results list

Step Two

After locating the title of the book(s) you want, you need to return to the Library Home Page (http://www1.chapman.edu/library) and click on Find Books. It is recommended you do not close MLA, but open another window to access the Library Home Page.

Step Three

After clicking on Find Books, you will view a page with different options. Be sure to click on the first link for the Leatherby Libraries Catalog.

Above: Detail of Find Books page. Click on Leatherby Libraries Catalog to search for books.

Step Four

Once the Leatherby Libraries Catalog opens, click on the link for Title (Book, Journal, Video or CD).

Step Five

Above: Detail of Title Search page

There is currently no direct linking feature to determine if a book found in MLA is available at the Leatherby Libraries. To determine if a book is available, you will want to first note the title. In this example, the arrow is pointing to the title: *Bitter Fame: A Life of Sylvia Plath*. You can highlight the title and do a right click to copy it.

After clicking on the link for Title, the Title Search page will open. At this point, simply type in the book title or paste it in if you highlighted and copied the title from within MLA. To the left, the title *Bitter Fame: A Life of Sylvia Plath* has been entered. After entering the title, click Submit.
Step Six

If the book is available, you will receive a page like the one below. In this case, we can see that two copies of the book are available in the 2nd Floor Humanities Books.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Call #</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd Fl. Humanities Books</td>
<td>PS3566.L27 29434.1989</td>
<td>AVAILABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Fl. Humanities Books</td>
<td>PS3566.L27 29434.1989</td>
<td>c-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above: Detail of library catalog book record

Step Seven

If you discover the book is not available at Chapman, you have the following options:

1. Search other library catalogs to see if the book is available locally. To do this, return to the Find Books page. If you scroll down, you will notice links to various libraries, including Cal State University, Fullerton (CSUF). As a Chapman University student, you may check out books from CSUF. There are a few steps you must take before checking a book out from CSUF. For more information on this, please go to http://www1.chapman.edu/library/info/rules/CSUFborrowstu.html.

2. Request the book through Interlibrary Loan. To do this:
   a. Begin at the Library Home Page http://www1.chapman.edu/library
   b. Click on Interlibrary Loan
   c. Click on the Book Request Form
   d. Fill out the form and click on Send Now
   e. You will be notified once your item is available for pick-up

C. Detail of a Record in MLA

Each citation on an MLA results list will have a hyperlinked title. Clicking on the title will open a detailed record of the citation, as below.

The detailed record of a citation provides a wealth of information.

In addition to the standard parts of a citation (title, author, source, etc.), the record provides a list of subject terms being discussed in the article (see arrow). Note that the subject terms are hyperlinked. Clicking on any of the subject terms will provide a list of citations about the subject.

Above are options to print, email, and save the report.
IV. Saving, Printing, and Emailing Citations

While searching in MLA, you may want to routinely save your citations into a folder to view, print, or e-mail later.

Once you have citations in a folder, an icon stating “Folder has items” will appear.

To add citations into a folder, click on the Add icons to the right of the citations. In the example to the left, records 1, 3, & 4 have been added to the folder.

To view citations you have added to the folder, just click on the Folder has items link.

Important: Citations placed in the folder will be deleted once you exit MLA, unless you are logged in to your own EBSCOhost account. It is recommend that you sign up for a free EBSCOhost account, if you are going to frequently use MLA or other EBSCO databases (Academic Search Elite, PsycINFO, ERIC, etc.).

V. My EBSCOhost

When you first open MLA, a link that reads “Sign in to My EBSCOhost” will appear in the top left corner (see arrow at left). Creating your personal account will allow you to save citations for future use.

For additional assistance please visit or call the Reference Desk at (714) 532-7714. For an individual research conference, fill out the form available at: http://www1.chapman.edu/library/instruction/ircform.html