The library scavenger hunt reimagined: Incorporating the ACRL’s Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education into the library scavenger hunt

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Library scavenger hunts

Yea or nay?
The cons

McCain (2007) found that librarians dissuade faculty and instructors from assigning scavenger hunts because scavenger hunts:

- are the least effective way to introduce students to the library
- only work if carefully constructed
- do not encourage critical thinking
- ask students to locate random, obscure, or trivial information
- fail to teach anything about the research process
- have a negative impact on students’ confidence in using the library
- tend to promote learned helplessness
- lack a clear, stated purpose
- are quickly recognized by students as an exercise in futility
- often contain terminology the students do not understand
- have no lasting value
- send the wrong message about how to do library research
- are frustrating or overwhelming to students and library staff
- are viewed as busy work that wastes students’ time
- make librarians, not students, do most of the work
- assume that students know how to do library research
- cause students to resent having to do research in the library
- may encourage cheating
Scavenger hunts in the library can...

• be carefully constructed,
• encourage critical thinking,
• ask students to locate random, obscure, or trivial information,
• & can teach students about the research process by...

…transforming the scavenger hunt from a library orientation activity to a method of introducing first-year students to information literacy concepts.
So is it a scavenger hunt?

- Appropriated name as scavenger hunt evokes “fun”
- Might be more of a glorified worksheet using technology & requiring students to visit the library (optional)
- Rather than acquiring facts or bits of information, this reimagined scavenger hunt asks students to begin to acquire skills or adapt to a way of thinking
Background

- Received a request for a “fun” library workshop and created this rather quickly
- Piloted in Fall 2016 to two University 101 class
- Good instructor feedback and mixed student feedback
- Flexible
- Potential to do more
- Still a work in progress
Was the scavenger hunt fun?

Scale of 1 (boring) to 5 (super fun):

Student Feedback

First Class  Second Class
1  2  1
2  7  1
3  2  0
4  2  0
5  3  2
Did you learn anything?

* Other: “Easy bib is a good source”
Google Forms

- Free
- Easy to use and modify
- Records responses
  - Students don’t need to send/email/turn in work
- Quick assessment
The questions

- Mapped to the ACRL’s Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education
- Open-ended
- Mimics the research process
Optional Shelfie Opportunity: Post a shelfie by placing a magazine(s) in front of your face(s) and taking a selfie, to USCB Library's Facebook page with the hashtag #uscbshelfie16.
Access

- **Open access:**
  - Scavenger Hunt: [https://goo.gl/forms/sR8wkxagyuklFwax1](https://goo.gl/forms/sR8wkxagyuklFwax1)
  - Editable Scavenger Hunt: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P1KQWxh8UU8FTo_Z4eknrqcsFgkMPN-eQdP-2_SzZGs/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P1KQWxh8UU8FTo_Z4eknrqcsFgkMPN-eQdP-2_SzZGs/edit?usp=sharing)
Pros

- Adaptable
  - Format: in or out of class assignment
  - Questions
  - Device: smart phone, tablet, or desktop (depending on the assignment)
  - Individual or group work
Cons

● Might be more manageable in a smaller library
● If done as an out of class assignment, you would need to prep library staff
● Not really fun, after all
● Can be difficult to “boil down” certain aspects of the research question
  ○ Crafting a research question, for example
Lessons learned and next steps

- Reconsider use of iPads
- State objectives at the beginning
- Revise the “Crafting a research question” section
- Perhaps --
  - Include incentives
  - Consider gathering everyone together to “break down” what they learned
  - Share findings amongst the class via a Google Doc, Evernote, Padlet, etc.
Questions?
Thanks!

