How to develop an IL assignment:

- Test the assignment beforehand to make sure it makes sense
- Make sure the library has the resources needed to complete the assignment
- Make sure the assignment is focused and precise instead of saying “electronic sources” say “library databases” or “websites”

Sample assignments:

Jan Downey, ASB102

This project is used in ASB 102 in the second half of the semester. It is broken down into four main activities that are linear in nature. The project calls for students to role play anthropologists heading a task force to evaluate the living conditions of a hunting and gathering society called ! Kung living in the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. The time frame is 1967.

The 1st activity calls for students to read a two page ethnography of the !Kung; describing their lives in the 1960’s. Without gathering any other outside information, the students must write a paper making recommendations to the Botswana government on five specific actions the government is seeks to implement. The length requirement for the paper is simply to have 7 paragraphs, an introduction paragraph, a conclusion paragraph, and 5 substance paragraphs. The five recommendations the Botswana government is seeking would have varying outcomes on the lives of the !Kung:

1. Settle the !Kung in permanent villages
2. Dig wells to ensure a steady water supply
3. Distribute domesticated animals to ensure a ready food supply
4. Introduce modern health services
5. Find jobs for the !Kung

The 2nd activity calls for the students to have a debate on each of the five actions. On the day the papers are due, students separate themselves on “Implement” sides of the classroom. They then defend their stand on each action using anthropologically appropriate arguments. Each action is addressed individually and students are encouraged, if persuaded by some one else’s arguments, to change their position and side of the room. At the conclusion of the debates on each action students write for 20 minutes on their post debate thoughts, discussing what new evidence they heard, whether or not they change their minds, and why.

The 3rd activity requires the students to attend an instructional session at the library where they are taught searching techniques particular to the !Kung. Here they are encouraged to read about and find updated and current information on the !Kung.

Then, for the final activity, the students write a 1-2 page addendum to their original paper based on the updated information they found from reputable sources discovered during their library visit.

Rick Vaughn, MAT 157

You are a student in MAT157. Your teacher has asked you to research curriculum and design a lesson plan. You completed your research, but, unfortunately, your computer crashed. You are using a friend’s laptop to send an e-mail to your instructor about the keywords and search strategy you utilized, the databases and websites you decided to use, and if they provided the kind of information you needed to write the article. Using the form below, draft the e-mail to your teacher.

Dear Dr. Vaughn,

As you know, I am writing a lesson plan for our Geometry class, MAT157. Unfortunately, my computer crashed. I wanted to fill you in on where I am thus far in doing the research.

After thinking about this topic, I've compiled the following list of issues and concepts, as well as the people, places and other sources for finding useful information.

Part I

Concepts & Issues:
Possible Sources: (For examples: person's name; an agency or department; books, current articles, encyclopedias, etc.)

To find the geometry standards for my chosen grade level I utilized _____
_____
_____*(name of web site(s), books, etc.)*

Two standards and/or expectations I found were:

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____

Part II

Using the PVCC library's online catalog and/or Education internet links, I found the following two resources that will be helpful in designing a lesson plan are: *(books and/or web sites).*

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____

I think these will be useful sources because _____
_____
_____
_____*(explain why these are good sources*),

Part III I also used the _____ library database. *(name of database)*

When I searched this database, I used these keywords:_____
_____.
I combined these keywords in the following manner;_____
_____.
To see an example of one of the useful articles I found, see the attached "Finding an Article" template.

I think this is a good article the because _____
_____
_____
_____*(explain how you determined the credibility and usefulness of the article).*

Part IV I also searched in the Internet using the _____ search engine.

When I searched this search engine, I used these keywords:_____
_____.

I combined these keywords in the following manner:_____
_____.

To see an example of one of the web sites I found using the search engine, see the attached "Finding a Web Site" template.

I think this is a good web site because _____
_____
_____
_____*(explain how you determined the credibility and usefulness of this web site).*

As you can see, I have been successful gathering material and information which will contribute to my assignment, but I will need a short extension to retrace my steps. Thank you.

_____
Your signature

How to apply the IL rubric:

PVCC General Education Information Literacy Rubric

Dimension	Score = 2: meets or exceeds standards for competency	Score = 1: needs improvement	Score = 0: does not meet minimum standards for competence
Determine the extent of the information needed	Student is able to formulate a clear and focused thesis, topic or research question that leads to relevant information Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student is able to compile a sufficient list of concepts and information, including, when appropriate, divergent sources	Student's thesis, topic or research question is on topic, but is too broad and lacks focus to lead to relevant information Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student is able to identify some concepts, information or sources	Student is unable to effectively formulate a thesis, topic or research question based on an information need Given a thesis, topic or research question, the student has not identified any concepts, information or sources
Access needed information efficiently (emphasis is on the search process)	Student is able to identify appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms and/or subject headings for the information need Student's search strategy is focused and clear and relates directly to the research question	Student identifies some appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms or subject headings, but misses some of the key terms Student's search strategy is somewhat focuses, but returns an overabundance of results	Student is unable to identify appropriate keywords, synonyms, related terms, subject headings or other methods for the information need Student's search strategy is unfocused and unclear
Evaluate information and its sources critically	Student uses appropriate sources for the information need Student examines information and uses criteria such as authority, credibility, relevance, timeliness, and accuracy to make judgments about what sources to utilize for the information need Student identifies or excludes biased, untimely, non-authoritative or inaccurate information	Student uses sources that provide information, but not information of the appropriate caliber for the information need Student uses a vague set of criteria to decide what to use or applies the criteria inconsistently The student includes some biased information without comment	Student uses inappropriate sources for the information need Student is unaware of criteria that might be used to judge information quality and credibility Little or no effort is made to examine information once it is located Student uses obviously biased information and accepts information at face-value

The definitions for the 2, 1, 0 scale are as follows:

2 = Meets or exceeds standards for competence

1 = Needs improvement

0 = Does not meet minimum standards for competence

Meets or exceeds standards for competence: The student did what you asked him or her to do and at the level of competence or above that you set for him or her.

Needs improvement: The student did what you asked him or her to do with some exceptions and at the level of competence that you set for him or her with some exceptions.

Does not meet minimum standards for competence: The student did not do what you asked him or her to do or did not perform at the minimum level of competence that you set for him or her.

Sample Student Responses:

These responses were taken from a research journal students had filled in at the end of the Spring ’07 semester. Questions 1-4 correspond to the first outcome, 5-8 to the second and 9-10 to the third.

1. On what aspect of your topic did you decide to focus? Why?

Student 1: I focused on a lot of things, mainly the severity of human impact on global warming what we are doing to contribute, how it affects the earth, ways to reduce it and ways to remedy past damage

Student 2: Consumerism/over consumption and spending

2. Describe the ways in which your topic evolved or changed as you worked on your paper. Be specific!

Student 1: Some of the ways that my topic evolved include: learning how serious the effects are it made me shift to what people can do or are doing to help

Student 2: In my mini-papers I thought the causes were impossible to find/know, but I found a lot more than I though

3. What (additional) kinds of information might you need to include? Why?

Student 1: I included the history, government help, corporations’ help as well as the proposed solution of my own. Because without knowing what can be done, there’s no point in talking about such a serious problem

Student 2: World statistics to show gravity and size of the issue

4. Based on what you learned during the research session, what kinds of information will you be researching that you didn’t think about? Why?

Student 1: I did research people that had knowledge or expertise not just magazine articles, I need scientific proof

Student 2: Branches of my topic, because I will be able to find specific information to contribute to my essay as a whole

5. What resources/tools (i.e. databases library catalog, etc.) will you use to find this information? Why?

Student 1: Newsbank, Opposing Viewpoints, Academic Search Premier because they are accredited

Student 2: Ebrary/Ebscohost-good factual info

6. What search terms are you planning to use and how did you combine them-what was your search strategy?

Student 1: My plan was to look at newspapers at home, check out books and compile the most thorough and non-biased research I could find

Student 2: Consumerism, global consumption, advertising, over consumption

7. Did your search strategy work-did you find what you were looking for? Why or why not?

Student 1: Yes I believe I found great info

Student 2: I did find what I was looking for

8. Did you modify your search strategy at any point? (That is, did you identify more or different resources, more or different search terms, etc?) If so, why and how? If not, why not?

Student 1: No, I knew from last semester how to work the database

Student 2: Yes, I used UN census information and UN Wealth Inequality spreadsheets which I couldn't find through the library, I Googled that info

9. Which specific articles, books, web resources did you decide to use? Why? (That is, explain why you chose each source: what makes this an appropriate source to consult at this time and in this situation?)

Student 1: NY Times, Environment, Lancet, Christian Science Monitor, Kenneth Green Book

Student 2: Consumerism in World History-very relevant

The World of Consumption-very good info good author

10. How did you evaluate the resources you found-what criteria did you use to make sure each resource was credible and useful?

Student 1: CARBS

Student 2: When I did the computer work, I made sure it only received scholarly journals and what not

How to Score:

1. The first student tried to articulate the information he/she was seeking whereas the second student merely listed some issues regarding the topic. The first student would get a 2, the second a 1
2. Again, the first student lists specific ways in which the topic has evolved, whereas the second student mentions something, but not in enough detail-scores would be 2 and 1
3. This one is a bit more difficult. Both students seem to know that they need additional information, but one provides slightly more detail than the other, so it would be 2, 1
4. This question would get 1's for both students-they have an idea as to what other areas they need to explore but they are not clearly stated enough to determine if the students really understand what it is they are still missing
5. Neither one of the students answered the why portion of the question, so that would get 1's for both
6. This was an issue that the question was not well worded, however the second student did not take the next step and show how the keywords could be connected in a search, so that would earn a 1. The first answer though good, still did not get at how the student ended up searching for information, so this earns a 1 as well
7. These responses also earn a 1. Both students indicated the found information, but not what kind and how it would contribute to their overall research
8. This would honestly be somewhere between a 1 and a 2. It would be a judgment call to determine how much the students revised their research strategy and plan once they actually started to search for information.
9. These answers would earn a 1-the students identified that the sources they found were good, but not in what way.
10. Also a 1. Mentioning CARBS and scholarly articles is only half the equation. Applying CARBS is the other-had the students talked about author credentials, currency of resources and bias they would have received a 2.