

English Graduate Proseminar  
Library Research Skills Worksheet

*(This type of skills exercise was created with assistance from your instructor and may be used as a take-home assignment or an assignment to begin prior to the library session. It attempts to show how questions may be answered using a variety of resources.)*

1. In a class on American Poetry, you are asked to assemble a list of five to ten key resources for a study of Elizabeth Bishop and her poetry. These resources must be readily available to your classmates at SUNY New Paltz. They may be in any format. What resources do you propose and how did you arrive at your list?
2. What was the original publication date of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*? Find the New York Times review from that year and cite the source you used. Was this review typical of the novel's reception at the time?
3. According to the biographical entry in *Contemporary Authors* (online via Gale Literature Resource Center), the poet Denise Levertov is often associated with what movement or group of poets?
4. What conclusions do you draw about the level and type of scholarly interest shown in Charlotte Perkins Gilman over the last 50 years? How did you decide?
5. Describe the political identification or affiliations of Bertolt Brecht. Which of his works are most often cited as representative of his political outlook?
6. Someone quotes the opening line of a famous poem, and you want to find out who wrote it and gather some details about the poem and its author. The line is: "The boy stood on the burning deck." How did you find your answers?
7. What three full-length books would you consult to get a sense of the life and work of Anne Sexton?

8. You strongly relate to the Beat writers and consult *The Beats Generation: a Gale Critical Companion* [Ref PS228.B6 Z68] to learn more about Allen Ginsberg. Three writers who influenced his work are mentioned in the first paragraph. What were their names?
  
9. For the paper you are writing on Elizabeth Bishop, you search the MLA International Bibliography online database. Using the terms, "Bishop, Elizabeth," and "memory," how many results do you get? How many of these are from journals?
  
10. You need to find critical information about the poet Gwendolyn Brooks, so you consult JSTOR and find the perfect article. Cite according to MLA style.
  
11. Use Webfeat to search multiple sources at the same time for your Elizabeth Bishop project. What do you like about this tool? Can you think of any limitations or disadvantages in using Webfeat for your research?
  
12. Using the online catalog, locate a book of criticism about Philip Larkin's work that was published after 1990. Please cite according to MLA style.