Pathfinders: General Research

This pathfinder will help you use the Drew Library Media Center for general research. This includes using print and non print sources

Introductory Materials: You may want to begin by looking up your topic in one of the 4 sets of encyclopedias. This will help you to narrow your topic.

Using the online catalog to locate print sources: Use the search stations in the library or any computer in the school by using the url address10.1.9.75:8080 to access the library's catalog to find print materials in the library's collection.

 Keywords: Use subject headings/topics to search your topic. Think about all the subjects that are included in your topic. For example, if you are researching tournaments in the Middle Ages, you might want to conduct 6 separate searches using the key terms Middle Ages, Medieval, tournaments, jousts, games, and knights. Make sure that you use the "search all words" option. You may choose a more specific/advanced search by
selecting the "and" or "and not" option and by adding more key terms.
For example, if you were searching for women soldiers during the Civil War, you could choose "Civil War" AND "women" AND "Soldiers" for
your search options.

Dewey Numbers: KHS Drew Library Media Center uses the Dewey Decimal System to catalog and organize materials. Each n book has a call number on its spine label; for nonfiction books, this includes a number and the first 3 letters of the author, editor, or title of the book. Use the call numbers to locate the books in the library. Your search results will include the call number, the title of the source, and the author, and whether the book is available or already checked out. You may click in the box labeled "call #" in order to organize the results by call number. This way the results will be in numerical order and it's easier to find the sources on the shelves.

Types of Materials to Use: Call numbers that begin with numbers (362.98 ROS) are located in the general non fiction area of the library.. Call numbers which begin with FIC, CC, SS (FIC BRO, CC SEU, SS POE) are located in the fiction room Call numbers which begin with CAR (CAR 001 PET) are located in the career section of the library.

Using the sources you find: Reference books (those whose call numbers begin with REF) do not circulate, but you may use the copiers and make free copies. Most other books circulate for 21 days, and you may check out up to 10 items at a time.

Internet Resources: There are millions of websites on the internet.. A website should be reliable, authentic, and credible. In order to determine if a website should be used, refer to the following 4 criteria. 1. Accuracy and Authority - who is sponsoring the site? Is there bias because of the sponsor? The url provides clues. For example, .edu refers to academic institutions, .gov indicates a government agency, and .com is a commercial site. Determine whether the author/sponsor of the site has credentials, knowledge, or expertise on the subject. 2. Purpose and Content – Take the time to look at the site and determine the site's purpose. Is it to informt? To persuade? To sell? To share? 3. Currency – ensure that the site is current and up to date. How old is the website? Is it updated regularly? Do the links work? 4. Coverage – ensure that there is a balance of cpy and images. Is the stie easy to navigate? Are references provided? The library media center offers a brochure to help you evaluate and authenticate web sites. Feel free to ask for one.

The library subscribes to many databases that you can use from any electronic device that can access the Internet. You can access these databases on our website. Click on the link on the KHS homepage to access the library website, and then select databases in the left sidebar. If you need the log in name and password, email the librarian at kbudd@sau29.org and she will send you this information.