NLA Instructor Primer

Lessons developed by NLA challenge students to critically engage with and create information. Use of the online lessons in courses and programs ensures that students have a baseline conceptual understanding of finding, evaluating, sharing, and creating information. These lessons invite reflection and application of learning at strategic points in a course. Faculty, instructors, and librarians can build on these interdisciplinary materials and invite students to engage further with discipline- and course-specific information literacy concepts.

Because NLA lessons are interdisciplinary, they are as relevant to students in humanities courses as those in engineering courses. Faculty, instructors, and librarians can build on these interdisciplinary materials and invite students to engage further with discipline- and course-specific information literacy concepts. Incorporating information literacy content throughout courses and programs can help students understand information practices within these specific contexts.

Logistics

When to Use NLA Lessons

Students connect to information literacy concepts best when they can relate them to an assignment or project. Therefore, as with all library instruction, we suggest that students complete the lessons *after* the associated research project has been explained, but before the project is due. When possible, we recommend that course faculty or instructors begin communicating with their librarian while drafting the syllabus.

How to Use NLA Lessons

Lessons are technology, vendor, and institution-agnostic, so they can be used on any campus. Each lesson takes 8-15 minutes to complete. The lessons can be:

- embedded into a Learning Management System (LMS) course,
- accessed through a link to our SoftChalk score center, or
- linked to from websites like LibGuides using an HTML link.

Each lesson includes questions to assess student learning. When embedded in an LMS, the assessment questions can be tied to your course gradebook. If you use the score center, NLA will provide you with the student scores. When you simply use an HTML link, no scores are recorded, although students will receive on-screen feedback.

When the librarian has access to the scores through SoftChalk or the LMS, they can see which students completed the lesson and how they scored. The librarian can determine what concepts need to be reinforced or if students can move on to more discipline- or assignment-specific concepts.

See our Quick Start page to access the lessons now. NLA can also provide links to lessons.

Ways to Use NLA Lessons

The NLA lessons can be used as stand-alone learning objects or can be packaged together. Common reasons for using lessons in individual classes include:

- establishing foundational concepts;
- reviewing concepts or information practices (e.g., developing a research question; evaluating source authority in various contexts);
- preparing for a class discussion or activity (led by either the instructor or a librarian); and
- offering self-paced online learning.

Because the lessons can be scored and/or readily integrated into most learning management systems, instructors often assign lessons as homework. Lessons can also be integrated and scaffolded into degree programs, as librarians collaborate with faculty who teach foundational, research, and capstone courses. Rather than relying on one course or instructor to introduce all concepts, educators can integrate lessons throughout a program. Students will have more opportunities to build on and apply their learning over time.

Identifying Relevant Lessons

Librarians work with course faculty or instructors to identify relevant lessons by reviewing a syllabus or assignment or through other conversation. Depending on the class, the librarian and/or instructor may assign more than one lesson.

Some common groupings of lessons include:

- **Research Foundations**
    - Ask the Right Questions
    - Types of Information
    - Search Strategies

- **Evaluating Information**
    - Types of Information
    - Question Authority

- **Information in Society**
    - Value of Information
    - Access Matters
    - Question Authority
    - Scholarly Conversations

- **Academic Research and Writing**
    - Question Authority
    - Scholarly Conversations
    - Citations

- **Evidence Based Practice**
    - Question Authority
    - Scholarly Conversations
    - Search Strategies
    - Evidence Based Practice (forthcoming)

Pedagogical Approach

The NLA lessons are inspired by the [ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#) (Framework). The Framework emphasizes inquiry and the social exchange and construction of knowledge. It also describes conceptual understandings as key to deep learning.

The ACRL Framework is structured by six "frames" that articulate intersecting information literacy concepts:

- Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Searching as Strategic Exploration

The Framework also gives attention to cognitive and affective learning, as is evident in its emphasis on metacognitive thinking and dispositions like curiosity and open-mindedness. This holistic perspective contrasts with more traditional representations of information literacy as a set of discrete, procedural skills. Additionally, the Framework focuses on practices and attitudes towards information that transcend specific disciplines.

NLA lessons reflect the Framework's pedagogical approaches and core concepts. Lessons include individual tutorials related to each of the six frames. NLA is continually creating new lessons that address various aspects of each frame and that help students develop from novices to experts in relation to various information practices.