

Finding Diverse Books: Advanced Search Tools (Short Version)

Introduction

Hello! Welcome to the “Finding Diverse Books” course on ABookandaHug.com. In order to prepare K-12 students to flourish in our increasingly multicultural societies, educators can help students develop cultural competence by introducing them to books that depict various cultures. In this short version video, we will be covering the advanced search tools that K-12 educators can use on this website to discover diverse books to include in their curriculums and/or class libraries. Throughout the screencast video, I recommend that you pause the video at any time to emulate the demonstrations and to explore the search option on your own.

Definition

Advanced searching is a method of online database searching that allows users to run searches that exceed basic keyword searching. Greater control is possible with advanced searching because users can manipulate various elements before running their searches through the database. Advanced search interfaces can be found on many popular websites and academic databases.

Location

To locate the advanced search interface on ABookandaHug.com, first go to the website’s homepage. At the top, there is a section that reads “Find *your* favorite books.” If you look below the three search bars, you will be able to find a line that reads “Want even more options? Use Advanced Search.” Clicking on the second sentence will lead you to the advanced search interface.

How to Use the Advanced Search Interface

Once you are on the advanced search interface, you will notice a lot of tools that you can use to build the searches you want to find diverse books for your students. At the top of the interface, there is a “Keyword” bar. This is where you will type your search terms. Underneath it, you will see four different search scope options: “Listing Title,” “Listing Summary,” “Listing

Description,” and “Review Comments.” Depending on what you select, your search results will only retrieve records that contain your search terms in those areas. For example, “Listing Summary” will retrieve books that have your search terms in the books’ summaries, and “Listing Description” will find books that have your search terms in the descriptive text of the record—such as in the book recommendation sections.

Moving on to the query type, there are three available choices: All, Any, and Exact. For the “All” choice, all of your search terms must be included in the books’ records. However, the order in which the search terms are found in the books’ records does not matter. As this choice is a narrowing operator, you should be able to find more accurate results but expect to find a fewer number of results than the next option— “Any.” The “Any” choice is best understood to be a broadening operator. At least *one* of your search terms must be included in the books’ records. This means that if you have multiple search terms, the advanced search will retrieve results for each search term and will combine them together on the search results page. While the “Any” choice will allow you to find more results, the accuracy of your results may be lower. Finally, there is the “Exact” choice. As this choice allows you to conduct “phrase searches,” which is the most powerful query type among the three choices, you should expect to find more accurate results at the cost of being able to retrieve the least number of results. Conducting a phrase search means that your search results will only retrieve books that contain your search terms exactly as they are typed in the keyword bar and in that precise order.

The following advanced search tools on the interface are more self-explanatory, such as category, reading level, reader personality type, fiction/non-fiction, good for reluctant readers, part of a series, country, and curriculum. A tool that is very helpful but has a function that requires more explanation is the “Middle Reader—Careful Content” option. According to Barb Langridge, the founder of ABookandaHug.com, careful content is an option available to users who are searching for books on behalf of young children that read at higher levels and are concerned about books with serious content their young readers may not be ready for. It is up to the discretion of the reviewer as to whether certain books are careful content or not.

Tips

Depending on your unique situation, you will want to select the options that you need. Something that should be noted is that you do not have to fill out every tool available on the interface when submitting your search. Leaving some options blank is alright if you do not have a preference. The pitfall of advanced searching on ABookandaHug.com is that it can sometimes be too powerful. For example, if you select both “Character-Building Curriculum” and “Social Studies Curriculum,” you will retrieve no results. Despite there being books that fit under “Character-Building Curriculum” and books that fit under “Social Studies Curriculum,” there are no books on ABookandaHug.com that fulfill *both* tags. Another example is “North Korea” and “South Korea.” While there are books about “South Korea” on ABookandaHug.com, there are currently no books available about “North Korea.” Selecting both “North Korea” and “South Korea” under the “Country” option will retrieve no results because there are no books available that reflect *both* North and South Korea on the site.

To effectively use the advanced search tools, I recommend selecting only a single choice from the options you need. If you find yourself with no results, try going back to the advanced search interface and remove some of your choices or leave some more options blank. This should make your search less strict as the advanced search will be able to retrieve more items that fit your new search query.

Example Search

To demonstrate how to use the advance search tools to find diverse books for K-12 classrooms, let’s try an example search. For this example, let us say that I am a kindergarten teacher who wants to read more culturally-meaningful books to my students. A good number of my students are of Chinese-descent, but the picture books that I currently have available in my classroom library do not have many stories that revolve around Chinese characters or are set in China. Obviously, I need more books that reflect Chinese characters and settings for my classroom library and my storytime sessions! To do this, I will use ABookandaHug.com’s advance search tools. Starting on the advanced search interface, I cannot think of any picture books off the top of my head, so I will leave the keyword bar blank. I am okay with retrieving all

available book categories so I will leave this section blank as well. Ah, reading level! This is what I need. Since I am looking for picture books for my students who are between the ages of three and eight years old, I will select the “Ages 03 to 08 (Picture Books)” choice from this option. Scrolling down to the “Country” option, I see that “China” is a choice. I will select it. Do I need anything else? Oh, the “Curriculum” option looks nice. I like the “Character-Building Curriculum” choice as it will find books that impart meaningful life lessons to my students! And with that, I am going to click the “Search” button. My advanced search was able to retrieve five results!

Benefits

So why use the advanced search tools? The main benefit of the advanced search tools is that it gives users greater control over their searches. Unlike the diversity quick links and the Read Around the World map, users are allowed to control for search scope, query type, category, reading level, and more at the very beginning of their search processes. This greater control is great for K-12 educators who must take into consideration various factors and elements when they are searching for diverse books on ABookandaHug.com.

What Next?

Congratulations! We have reached the end of this short version screencast video! If you have not watched the other two short version videos for the diversity quick links and the Read Around the World map, I strongly recommend that you do. After viewing all three short version videos, there are only two things left for you to do to complete this course.

For the learners of this course, I have created a discussion forum activity on Padlet. This short activity will ask you to try searching for diverse books on ABookandaHug.com using any of the three search options taught in this course and to share your search experience. There is no limit on how many posts you can write, so you can post about as many search experiences as you wish. The discussion activity will give you additional opportunities to learn and be inspired by your peers. Leaving constructive feedback for your peers is welcomed and encouraged. To

participate in the discussion forum, please type “diversity” when you are prompted to enter a password.

After completing the discussion activity, I would like to ask you to complete a short learner survey on Google Forms. Your responses will help me determine how well the course was able to meet your learning needs as well as find out how to further improve the course for future learners.

Once again, thank you for participating in this short course, and I hope you have great fun using ABookandaHug.com to find meaningful diverse books for your classrooms!