I certify that:

This paper/project/exam is entirely my own work.

I have not quoted the words of any other person from a printed source or a website without indicating what has been quoted and providing an appropriate citation.

I have not submitted this paper/project/exam to satisfy the requirements of any other course

Signature: Leigh H. Swiger

Date: November 29, 2010
Deliverables

The following pages include an Internet Public Library (IPL) log along with specific details that apply to each set of questions and answers. These details contain the time I allotted to each question, resources used, research strategies implemented, personal critiques on the completion of each question, and possible reconfiguration of strategy for answering the questions. I conclude with an assessment on my experience with the IPL, the IPL’s contributions to my graduate studies and future library and information science (LIS) career, and the future of virtual reference services within the LIS field.

Question and Answer #1

Question:

I need to know how women in today's society are different than the women back then in Greek mythology.
area: Literature
reason: n Ere-AP English, we are studying the Odyssey by Homer and we have to do a research project. Thanks a bunches:)
school: Yes
sources_consulted: none

Answer:

Greetings from the ipl2!

Thank you for your question about how women in today’s society are different from ancient Greek goddesses. I am fascinated by Greek mythology and am very happy to help you find what you are looking for in order to complete your research. I have also included information about how women in today’s society are different from ancient Greek goddesses. In order to help you find your answer, I have provided information on mortal Greek women present in the Odyssey, immortal Greek goddesses present in the Odyssey, Greek women of Athens, and information on women in today’s society. I have done some research, and I believe that the following websites will help you find your answer:

1.) The first website is called Encyclopedia Mythica:

http://www.pantheon.org/
Encyclopedia Mythica is an online encyclopedia that contains information on Greek people and Greek mythology. In order to find Encyclopedia Mythica, I went to the search engine “Dogpile” and typed in, “Encyclopedia Mythica”.

http://www.dogpile.com/

At the reference source Encyclopedia Mythica, I first searched for information on the mortal women in the Odyssey. In order to do this I selected “Greek Mythology” on the left side of the page under “Most popular areas”.

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek/

At the “Greek Mythology” page, I placed my cursor on the words “Greek People” in the second paragraph about Greek mythology and clicked on the hyperlink.

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek_people/

At the “Greek People” page I placed my cursor on the words “available articles” toward the end of the page and clicked on the hyperlink.

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek_people/articles.html

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/332mx4b

On the “Greek people” page, you will see a list of names from ancient Greece on the left hand side of your page. In this list you will find information on three important mortal women found in the Odyssey. The first of these women is Helen. On the left hand side of the page locate the name “Helen” within the name list. Once you find the name Helen, use your cursor to click on the name and you will be directed to an article about Helen:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/h/helen.html

The second important woman in the Odyssey I researched is Nausicaa. To locate the page of information on Nausicaa, repeat the steps you followed above to find the name Helen on the left hand side of the page but this time search for Nausicaa:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/n/nausicaa.html

The final woman from the Odyssey I researched is Penelope. To find information on Penelope, repeat the steps you used above to find the names Helen and Nausicaa but this time search for the name Penelope:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/p/penelope.html
After completing the steps above and finding information about mortal women from ancient Greece, return to the “Greek mythology” page. Now it is time to search for information on the immortal women of ancient Greece: the Greek Goddesses. Click on the words “Encyclopedia Mythica” at the top of the page and return to the homepage. Here you will see “Greek Mythology” again on the left hand side under “Most popular areas”. Click on “Greek Mythology”:

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek/

On this page you will scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the words “available articles”:

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek/articles.html

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2j2t6

Once again you will see a list of names on the left hand side of your screen. From this list search for information regarding the principal Greek goddesses of ancient Greece that appear in the Odyssey:

http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/europe/greek/articles.html

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2j2t6

From the research I did, the four main Greek goddesses in the Odyssey are Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, and Artemis.

To search for Hera, click on the name “Hera” on the left hand side of the page to be directed to her information page:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/h/hera.html

To search for Athena, click on the name “Athena” on the left hand side of the page to be directed to her information page:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/a/athena.html

To search for Artemis, click on the name “Artemis” on the left hand side of the page to be directed to her information page:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/a/artemis.html
To search for Aphrodite, click on the name “Aphrodite” on the left hand side of the page to be directed to her information page:

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/a/aphrodite.html

2.) In addition to Encyclopedia Mythica, I also found the answer at the Minnesota State University EMuseum:

http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/

The Minnesota State University EMuseum is a university internet museum that works with the Anthropology Department of Minnesota State University. This Emuseum is full of information on topics such as ancient cultures.

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “Minnesota State University museum”:

http://www.google.com/

On the Minnesota State University EMuseum main webpage, select “Cultures” on the left hand side of your screen. This will lead you to the “Cultures” page of the EMuseum:

http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/

On the cultures page, place you cursor in the search bubble at the top right-hand section of the screen. In the search bubble type “Greek women”. This will take you to a list of results. Select the first result titled “The Women of Athens”:

http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/prehistory/aegean/culture/womenofathens.html

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2cxcyf

This webpage is full of general information on the characteristics of ancient Greek women in Athens. You can use this information to compare to the characteristics of modern women in today’s society.

3.) In addition to the Encyclopedia Mythica and the Minnesota State University EMuseum, I also found information about the modern woman on the International Humanist and Ethical Union website:

http://www.iheu.org/

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “International Humanist and Ethical Union”:
http://www.google.com/

The International Humanist and Ethical Union is an organization with the vision of uniform human rights throughout the world. In the right hand corner of the International Humanist and Ethical Union main webpage, locate the search bubble in the right hand corner of the screen. In the search bubble type in “21st Century Woman” and press search. On the search results page select the article “Women in the 21st Century” by Sangeeta Mall.

http://www.iheu.org/women-21st-century

This article discusses the modern woman in today’s society and will be useful in comparing the modern woman to ancient Greek women.

I hope what I have presented you with above answers your question! Please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any more questions. Thank you for asking you question at the Internet Public Library!

Details of Question and Answer #1

Since this question was my first “real” IPL reference question, I spent a great deal of time answering it to the fullest extent. In total, I spent two interrupted hours searching for credible resources on the internet to answer all segments of this question. After finding the web resources I used in answering, I spent another hour putting my answer together in accordance with the IPL’s standards. The first sources I consulted for question one were encyclopedias and Wikipedia. These sources narrowed down the important female characters in the Odyssey, both mortal and immortal, that were relevant to this question. After discovering these figures, I was able to use the myth encyclopedia to find specific characteristics about each important female figure previously discovered through Wikipedia. After answering this segment of the question, I then searched for information on Google about the characteristics of modern women to provide comparable information to the characters in the Odyssey.

I am satisfied with the answer I provided because I did not directly answer the question for the student. I felt that it would be unethical to provide a direct thesis statement in answering this question from my own analysis. I decided it best to provide resources for the student that
would allow him/her to form their own thesis for the project, thus coming to the true answer of the question without violating any form of a school honor code. If I were given the chance to answer this question differently, I would not have done so much extensive, detailed research for the student. In retrospect, I did not provide reference for the student; I provided direct resources with direct research he or she should have conducted on their own for their school project. This situation has caused me to wonder about the ethics of reference services, particularly online reference sources, and the dangers of students taking advantage of virtual reference and violating school honor codes of doing one’s work without outside assistance.

**Question and Answer #2**

*Question:*

Where can I find some good reading lists?

area: Biography
reason: genknowledge
school: No

*Answer:*

Greetings from the ipl2!

Thank you for your question about where to find good reading lists for the biography genre. I have done some research, and I believe that the following websites will help you find your answer:

1. The first website is called the UC Berkley Summer Reading List:

   [http://reading.berkeley.edu/](http://reading.berkeley.edu/)

   The UC Berkley Summer Reading list is distributed annually by the University. The list is compiled by the faculty and staff at Berkley. The 2008 theme of the UC Berkley Summer Reading List was “Biography: Writing a Life”.

In order to find the UC Berkley Summer Reading List, I went to the search engine “Google” and typed in, “UC Berkley Summer Reading List”.

http://www.google.com/

By searching for “UC Berkley Summer Reading List”, I was brought to the following page:

http://reading.berkeley.edu/

At this reading list’s page, I clicked on the 2008 “Biography: Writing a Life” link on the left hand side of the list. By clicking on this link, I was brought to the “Biography: Writing a Life” reading list page of biographies.

http://reading.berkeley.edu/2008.html

2.) In addition to The UC Berkley Summer Reading List, I also found a reading list of biographies at the Scottsdale Public Library’s webpage:

http://www.scottsdalelibrary.org/

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “Scottsdale Public Library”:

http://www.google.com/

The Scottsdale Public Library serves the community of Scottsdale in Arizona with a BookNews webpage full of booklists for the general public. To locate the BookNews webpage, click on the “Books, Movies & Music” tab on the left hand side of the library’s home page:

http://library.scottsdaleaz.gov/books

On the “Books, Movies & Music” page, place your cursor on the first option under “Additional Resources”. The first option is “What to Read Next”. By clicking on the “What to Read Next” icon, I was brought to the Scottsdale Public Library’s “BookNews” page. This webpage is full of booklists:

http://www.supportlibrary.com/nl/nl_rview.cfm?x=843

Included on this page is a hyperlink titled “Pulitzer Award for Biography”. To locate this hyperlink, I scrolled down to the “Award Lists and Best-Sellers: Adult Titles” section. On the right hand side of this section, the hyperlink “Pulitzer Award for Biography” is located nine hyperlinks down. By clicking on this hyperlink, I was directed to a reading list of biographies that won the Pulitzer Award for Biography:

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2ehc2q4

3.) The final extensive biography reading list I located apart from the UC Berkley Summer Reading list and the Scottsdale Public Library BookNews page is on the BookBrowse website:

http://www.bookbrowse.com

BookBrowse is a website that recommends current books according to reviews and booklists. On the left hand side of the BookBrowse home page, I located the “Suggested Links” section and then selected the “Adult non-fiction” hyperlink. This brought me to the “Find a Book” page with lists of genres, including the “Adult non-fiction” genre:

http://www.bookbrowse.com/category/index.cfm?tab=0

On the “Find a Book” webpage, I scrolled down and clicked on the “Biographies & Memoirs” hyperlink under the “Adult non-fiction” genre section. This led me to a list of two hundred and forty-three biography and memoir recommendations:

http://www.bookbrowse.com/browse/index.cfm/category_number/1/Biographies-&-Memoirs

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/29cjsta

I hope what I have presented you with above answers your question! Please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any more questions. Thank you for asking you question at the Internet Public Library!

Details of Question and Answer #2

When I first saw this question on the IPL, I thought it would be a quick, uncomplicated answer that would not take a significant amount of time to find. I was entirely incorrect in this assumption. This question took me roughly an hour and a half to complete in full because it was difficult to find adult-age book lists within the specific biography genre. Through initial Google searches entitled “biography book lists”, I was presented with search results for general booklists, biography booklists for kids’ summer reading, and book reviews on biographies. Even the search “biography book lists adults” came up with very little legitimate search results that did
not have the sole purpose of selling books to consumers. After forty-five minutes of not finding a satisfying source, I sat back and thought about where I personally find books lists when deciding what book to read next. My two booklist resources are public library websites and my undergraduate college library’s website. With this in mind I added the search terms “public library”, “college”, and “university” in Google and was directed to a number of credible sites with biography genre booklists.

Since I put so much thought into where I was finding my sources for this question, I am extremely satisfied with this response. The patron is now aware of public library resources for finding book lists as well as the potential in summer reading booklists for colleges and universities that are available to the public online. If I were to do anything different in regards to this particular question, I would not have wasted so much initial time on websites like Barnes and Noble and Borders Books, thinking I would find credible booklists backed by academics, librarians, or scholars.

Question and Answer # 3

Question:

My question is can you still live a successful live if you don't go to college because some people say you have to go to school or you'll have to work really hard like some people do and some people who don't go to college end up homeless or hobos so I just want to know if thats true or not. P.S. I thing I spelled some words wrong and sorry I made my sentence so long.

grade: fourth grade
area: Education
school: Yes
length: Two pages
sources checked: I came here first because my friend said that you can get it really fast.
don’t use: Encyclopedia Textbook
Answer:

Greetings from the ipl2!

Thank you for your question about whether or not you can live a successful life if you don’t go to college. In order to provide you with the best answer possible, I have provided information that argues for and against the need for a person to go to college in order to be successful.

The first websites listed below argue why you do not need to go to college in order to be successful. After I provide you with the argument against the need to go to college, you will also be given websites that argue for the need to go to college in order to be successful.

Since the grade level you listed is the 4th grade, I have done my best to make sure the sites and articles I provide are close to your grade level. If any of the websites I have provided you with above seem to be too difficult for you to understand as a 4th grader, please ask a teacher, mentor, or guardian to read and discuss the websites with you so you can fully understand the information they provide on college and whether or not you need to go in order to lead a successful life.

I have done some research, and I believe that the following articles and websites will help you find your answer:

1.) The first website is an article titled “Success without a college degree” on CNN.com:


This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2ubdlb5

CNN is a worldwide news leader both on television and the internet. The article, “Success without a college degree” is written by Kate Lorenz of Careerbuilder.com, a separate website dedicated to helping individuals with their career decisions. This article argues that a college degree is not necessary in order to lead a successful life. Included in this article are many examples of people who have led very successful lives without a college degree, including people like Rachel Ray, the famous TV personality and cook.

In order to find this particular article on CNN.com, I went to the search engine “Google” and typed in, “Success without a college degree”.

http://www.google.com/

After searching for “Success without a college degree” on Google, Google’s search results page has this exact CNN.com article listed first on its list of search results. Click on “Success without
a college degree—CNN” and you will be directed to the full-text of this article that argues against the need of a college degree in order to lead a successful life:


This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2ubdlb5

2.) In addition to the CNN.com article “Success without a college degree”, I also found information arguing against the idea that you must have a college degree in order to lead a successful life at the website Universities and Colleges.org on the page “Is College Necessary for Success?”:

http://universitiesandcolleges.org/is-college-necessary/

UniversitiesandColleges.org is a non-profit website with the purpose of providing students with online resources focused on educational needs. The website’s page “Is College Necessary for Success?” argues that in order to determine whether college is necessary for success, you must first determine if college is necessary for you individually. This particular page also includes a video that further discusses whether or not college is for you.

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “Universities and colleges is college necessary for success”:

http://www.google.com/

By typing in “Universities and colleges is college necessary for success”, you will be directed to Google’s search results page where the first search result will lead you to the “Is College Necessary for Success?” page on the UniversitiesandColleges.org website:

http://universitiesandcolleges.org/is-college-necessary/

3.) Apart from the CNN.com article and the UniversitiesandColleges.org webpage, I also found sites that argue for the need to go to college in order to lead a successful life. The first of these is a PDF booklet called “College: Making it Happen” from californiacolleges.edu for middle schoolers and their parents:

http://www.californiacolleges.edu/resources/docs/CMIH_English.pdf

This printable PDF booklet from californiacolleges.edu contains a chapter (Chapter 1) titled “The Benefits of a College Education”. This chapter discusses the positive job opportunities, knowledge, and individual potential of people who decide to go to college. Although this booklet is for middle schoolers and you are in the 4th grade, I believe the maturity of your question for a 4th grader is on the same level of the college information discussed in this booklet.
To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “California colleges college making it happen”:

http://www.google.com/

By typing in “California colleges college making it happen” into Google, you will be directed to a search results page with “College: Making it Happen-CaliforniaColleges.edu-Home” as the first search result. By clicking on this first search result in Google, you will be directed to the printable PDF booklet called “College: Making it Happen”:

http://www.californiacolleges.edu/resources/docs/CMIH_English.pdf

4.) In addition to the Californiacolleges.edu “College: Making it Happen” booklet, the website “KnowHow2Go” has a webpage for middle schoolers that discusses “Why College?” and the success that comes with a college degree:

http://www.knowhow2go.org/middle_college.php

KnowHow2Go is a website dedicated to the KnowHow2Go campaign of the American Council on Education, the Lumina Foundation for Education, and the Ad Council. This campaign aims to give students the necessary information needed to achieve a college education and to live a successful life. The KnowHow2Go webpage titled “Why College?” provides four solid reasons why you should go to college in order to lead a successful life.

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “knowhow2go middle schoolers why college”:

http://www.google.com/

By typing in “knowhow2go middle schoolers why college” into Google, you will be directed to a search results page with “Middle Schoolers-Why College” as the first or second search result. By clicking on this first search result in Google, you will be directed to the KnowHow2Go’s webpage on Why College? for middle schoolers:

http://www.knowhow2go.org/middle_college.php

Although this webpage is for middle schoolers and you are in the 4th grade, the maturity of your question for a 4th grader leads me to believe that this website is appropriate for your reading level.

Please remember, if any of the websites I have provided you with above seem to be too difficult for you to understand as a 4th grader, please ask a teacher, mentor, or guardian to read and discuss the websites with you so you can fully understand the information they provide on college and whether or not you need to go in order to lead a successful life.
I hope what I have presented you with above answers your question! Please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any more questions. Thank you for asking your question at the Internet Public Library!

Details of Question and Answer #3

This question was by far the most difficult for me to answer not only as an LIS student, but as a huge proponent and supporter of higher education. It was a challenging question because I knew I had to maintain my personal biases supporting higher education and provide the patron with a balanced and unbiased answer that would not sway him or her one way or the other. While researching and answering this question, I felt as though I had an opportunity to influence a young person’s life for the better and help provide them with information that would lead them on a path toward achieving a college diploma. Although this feeling kept nudging me toward constructing an answer that would push this fourth grader toward going to college, I forced myself to set it aside and fulfill my ethical obligations as a future LIS professional. By pushing this feeling aside, I was able to find information that was both for and against the need for higher education in order to lead a successful life. Now that I have the opportunity to reflect on the answering of this question, I am satisfied with my answer and very glad I gave this kid multiple resources for both arguments, thus allowing him or her to make such an important decision without a stranger’s influence.

I spent the most time answering this question out of all the other questions and the total time it took to answer it was a little less than four hours. The search for this answer took so long for a couple of reasons. First off, I knew I needed to find information that was at or close to a fourth grader’s reading level; a difficult task when the material answering this question is directed to middle school age kids at the youngest. From the information I found directed toward middle-schoolers, it took me a long time to sort through the pamphlets and PDF booklets in order
to find the most concise and complete resource for a fourth grader. In order to counteract this reading level dilemma, I made sure to include guardian assistance encouragement in my answer. I did this so the patron knew if he or she had any confusion because of reading level, he or she should ask a guardian to review the resources provided. If I could do anything different with question number three, I would emit this encouragement from my answer and search more extensively for resources directed toward elementary age kids, not middle-schoolers. After four hours of researching and trying to find resources on college for elementary age students, I came up with nothing and thus resorted to the youngest age I did find: middle school.

*Question and Answer #4*

*Question:*
how far does a dolphin swim a day
grade: 9
area: Biography
school: Yes

*Answer:*

Greetings from the ipl2!

Thank you for your question about how far dolphins swim per day. I have done some research, and I believe that the following articles and websites will help you find your answer:

1.) The first website is the Smithsonian Institute:

[http://www.si.edu/](http://www.si.edu/)

The Smithsonian Institute is the world’s largest museum and is comprised of nineteen museums total! The Smithsonian Institute’s webpage includes an educational teacher’s resource booklet on dolphins that I think you might find useful for your search.

In order to find the Smithsonian Institute’s webpage, I went to the search engine “Google” and typed in, “Smithsonian Institute”:

After searching for “Smithsonian Institute” on Google, Google’s search results page lists the Smithsonian Institute as its first search result. I clicked on “Smithsonian Institute” and was directed to the Smithsonian Institute’s homepage.

On the homepage, I located the search box in the upper right hand corner of the page. In this search box, I typed in the words “Dolphins TG” and was directed to a list of search results. The first search result, titled “Dolphins TG” is the booklet containing the information you seek. I clicked on “Dolphins TG” and was brought to the booklet:

http://www.si.edu/group_tours/Education_Guides/Dolphins.pdf

This booklet is a teacher’s guide for the educational film *Dolphins*. The teacher’s guide is full of fantastic facts and information about dolphins, as well as science experiments related to dolphin facts. In the guide’s introduction, your question is answered: dolphins, in groups or pods, can travel up to fifty miles a day.

2.) In addition to the booklet “Dolphins” within the Smithsonian Institute website, I also found information that answers your question on the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) website:

http://www.cms.int/index.html

CMS is a conservation convention with the purpose of conserving all types of migratory wildlife, including dolphins.

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “Convention on Migratory Species”:

http://www.google.com/

By entering this search term into Google, I was directed to a search results page with the CMS homepage as the first search result. I clicked on the CMS homepage link and entered into the CMS website. In order to find the information needed within the CMS website, I clicked on the word “Search” at the top of the CMS homepage and was directed to the search page:

http://www.cms.int/search/index.htm

In the search box page I entered the words “Bottlenose Dolphin”. By entering these search terms into the search box, I was directed to a search results page with “CMS:Tursiops truncatus, Bottlenosed dolphin” as the first search result. I clicked on this link and was brought to the CMS webpage on bottlenosed dolphins:

http://www.cms.int/reports/small_cetaceans/data/t_truncatus/t_truncatus.htm

This link is quite long and could break, so here is a shortened version for your convenience.

http://tinyurl.com/2w7dn79
This webpage within the CMS website is also full of educational information on bottlenosed dolphins. Scroll down on this page until you reach the bold section titled “Food”. In the section titled “Food”, count down to the seventh paragraph that starts with the sentence, “Although individual feeding…” In this paragraph, the answer to your question is located.

According to the CMS website, dolphins that were tracked in a separate study traveled 28.3 kilometers a day (or about seventeen miles). It is important to note that 28.3 kilometers is the mean distance traveled per day. This means that some dolphins traveled more than this and some traveled less. When all of the distances of the dolphins traveled were averaged, the end result was 28.3 kilometers, or seventeen miles, traveled per day.

I hope what I have presented you with above answers your question! Please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any more questions. Thank you for asking you question at the Internet Public Library!

**Details of Question and Answer #4**

I almost did not find the answer to this question since I came very close to aborting question four after an hour of searching and finding no answer. Whenever I found a credible website or resource on dolphins, the source would reveal that the amount dolphins travel daily is unknown. Since I would not accept this answer for the patron, my frustration became personal and I found myself determined to find the answer. The sites I initially searched include conservation websites and academic research department websites. I even found an interview between a conservation magazine and a credible biologist where the biologist states that no one has extensively studied how far dolphins travel per day because it is so difficult to track dolphins and determine distance travelled. My strategy for answering this question became hit or miss as I kept sorting and searching through whatever material I could find on dolphins. This included specific scholarly studies on particular dolphin species which presented another problem since the patron’s grade level for this question is the ninth grade.

I am not entirely satisfied with my response to this question because I feel as though I presented the patron with the best I could find, not the best information available in cyberspace.
The answers I did find on dolphins’ average travel distance pertained to specific dolphin species in different parts of the world. Now that I have reviewed my answer to this question, I wish I had presented each specific specie study to the student even though the resources were derived from free academic publications available online and might have been above the patron’s reading level. Perhaps I underestimated this patron due to their age and therefore did not provide the best reference answer possible. This did teach me a valuable lesson about virtual reference compared to in-person reference and how it is impossible to determine certain aspects about the patron online in order to formulate an answer to a reference question. If this reference question had been asked in person, I might have been able to better determine the patron’s reading and education level and provide him/her with scholarly reference materials that would better answer his/her question.

**Question and Answer #5**

**Question:**

I need some books on blended families, remarriage families, separated families. The publication can't be no older than 2004. thank you
location: dallas, tx
grade: 10
area: General Reference
school: No
length: Other ()
don’t use: Encyclopedia Textbook

**Answer:**

Greetings from the ipl2!

Thank you for your question about books published after 2004 on blended families, families with remarried parents, and separated families. I have done some research, and I believe that the following websites will help you find your answer:

1.) The first website is The Dallas Public Library:
I noticed that you are from Dallas, Texas, and your local public library is always a great place to conduct research. Within the Dallas area, there are over twenty localized public libraries for you to choose from to visit.

In order to find the Dallas Public Library’s webpage, I went to the search engine “Google” and typed in, “Dallas Public Library”:

http://www.google.com/

After searching for “Dallas Public Library” on Google, Google’s search results page lists the Dallas Public Library as its first search result. I clicked on “Dallas Public Library” and was directed to the Dallas Public Library’s homepage.

On the homepage, I located the catalogue search box on the right side of the page. In this catalogue search box, I typed in the words “Blended families”, clicked on the “Keyword” button, and was directed to a list of Dallas Public Library catalogue search results on blended families:

http://catalog.dallaslibrary.org/Polaris/search/searchresults.aspx?ctx=1.1033.0.6&type=Keyword&term=Blended%20families&by=KW&sort=RELEVANCE&limit=TOM=*&query=&page=0

The second and fifth search results, *Blended Families: an Anthology* and *Becoming One Family: Bringing Blended Families Together* were both published after 2004.

2.) In addition to the catalogue search at the Dallas Public Library webpage, I also found information about blended families, families with remarried parents, and families with separated parents at the Parentbooks webpage.

http://www.parentbooks.ca/index.htm

Parentbooks is a website and retail bookstore in Toronto, Canada, that aims to provide resources for families and professionals serving families.

To find this site, go to “Google” again and type in “Parentbooks”:

http://www.google.com/
By entering this search term into Google, I was directed to a search results page with the Parentbooks homepage as the first search result. I clicked on the Parentbooks homepage link and entered into the Parentbooks website. In order to find the information needed within the Parentbooks website, I clicked on the “Browse Booklists” icon in the upper left-hand corner of the homepage. This directed me to a webpage with a list of different family-related booklists provided by Parentbooks:

http://www.parentbooks.ca/Booklists.htm

On this Parentbooks’ booklist page, I scrolled down the second column of booklists until I located the “Step & Blended Families” hyperlink. This hyperlink is the third last hyperlink in the second column on this booklist page. By clicking on this hyperlink, I was directed to a list of books for families focused on this particular subject area:

http://www.parentbooks.ca/Step_&_Blended%20Families.html

This booklist contains dozens of current books on blended families, families with separated parents, and families with remarried parents. There is also a separate booklist section at the very end of the booklist specifically for kids and teens.

I hope what I have presented you with above answers your question! Please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any more questions. Thank you for asking you question at the Internet Public Library!

Details of Question and Answer #5

I spent a long time formulating a response to this question because I am not familiar with the term “blended family” nor am I familiar with other terminology involving divorce. Due to this personal reality, I had to spend some time doing extensive research on divorce terminology in order to educate myself on the topic and thus better serve the patron with my answer. For the first hour I spent answering this question, I Googled and read about divorce and the different terms used to describe divorce and separation as well as terms often mistakenly associated with divorce. This research allowed me to better search for credible resources for the patron because I gained a wider and educated keyword base to conduct a search with.
With this new knowledge, my searches typically led to private counseling practices’ webpages and small, localized support groups for blended, remarried, and separated families. Interestingly, I found lots of great information about books with these keywords on an official Australian government webpage that contained booklists, PDF booklets, pamphlets, and webpages offering support to kids, teens, and adults in Australia. When I found this .gov website based out of Australia, I assumed that the United States must have similar .gov web resources about blended, remarried, and separated families for US citizens. I was wrong and this surprised me greatly. I thought a US .gov website similar to the Australian government website would be a great resource for this patron so I searched extensively for such a government run website but was unable to locate one. Since the Australian government website had legal advice based on Australian laws, I did not provide this as a source to the patron.

Although I am satisfied with the answers I provided to this patron, I am still greatly disappointed that I was unable to provide him/her with a US government webpage similar to the Australian page I found. On this question, I decided to include in my answer the patron’s local library as a resource. I am glad I provided this resource so the patron realizes that it is not necessary to spend money at a local bookstore or to shop online for books on this subject. The link of the Dallas Public Library webpage I provided includes a list of books on blended, remarried, and separated families published after 2004 that the patron may elect to check out of his or her local library.

Reactions

Overall, I would say my experience with the IPL was educationally beneficial and challenging. There is no doubt that the rules and regulations the IPL maintains has contributed to my ability in answering reference questions where I work at Soka University of America. Now
when I sit at the reference desk, I remember not only my previous training from Soka, but also
the training given to me through the IPL. Although the IPL is online reference, it does have
practical applications to in-person reference as well. The mandatory introduction, repetition of
question and clarification, providing at least two credible sources, and the closing paragraph are
all aspects I now try to incorporate in-person when working with students and patrons.

At first, searching for information to answer reference questions with the IPL was
difficult. This difficulty lessened with each question as I became more familiar with the IPL
format and strengthened my search techniques in order to find legitimate resources. Toward the
day, this IPL project became less like an assignment and more like an online treasure hunt.
Although there was a twenty-four hour time limit, finding answers for patrons was enjoyable
online because I did not feel pressured to hurry up and find an acceptable answer right away so
that the patron could continue on with their day.

Although the IPL assignment was predominantly positive, there are a few aspects of the
IPL that do not effectively teach LIS students the realities of in-person reference interactions. I
found myself always claiming answers that seemed interesting and were answers I wanted to find
out for myself too. This made searching easy since I always picked out the questions myself.
This aspect of the IPL does not relate to real-life reference since you do not get to pick and
choose what questions you want to accept and which questions you would prefer to ignore. In
this sense, IPL does not train LIS students to answer personally uninteresting questions in-
person. Even though I would have disliked this subsequent suggestion for IPL while completing
the assignment, perhaps it would make the IPL a better training tool for in-person reference. My
suggestion is the following: when a volunteer logs onto IPL, they do not get to see the actual
questions being asked by patrons but instead select a question at random that does not reveal the
subject or question being asked. This suggestion would train students to find credible answers to reference questions that are not personally appealing.

After completing this assignment, I cannot see myself working with virtual reference services on a frequent, everyday basis. I enjoy in-person interaction with patrons at the reference desk where I work because I can see how much it means to people when their important reference questions are answered. With the IPL, I press send and that is it, there is no visible patron satisfaction as a motivator for doing my best. Although I do not see myself working with virtual reference services, virtual reference such as the IPL will be a good tool to use to keep my reference skills up to par since the IPL does provide feedback.

In conclusion, I see the future of information services as a mix of both the old and the new. I do not think that virtual reference will completely take the place of in-person reference, but I do see the LIS profession as one that adapts to and embraces technology for the sake of patron services. Nothing can replace human contact and the benefits that come from open and instant in-person dialogue with facial expressions and tone of voice. Just as the field has been adapting to the information age, it will continue to adapt and evolve with the key focus on patron services and satisfaction through the union of traditional LIS services and newer services like virtual reference.