

## **Database Guide with practice questions– LitFinder (Gale)**

**Use this database to** find full-text poems, essays, short stories, plays and speeches.

### **Description**

LitFinder has five sections:

**Poems** -- contains over 125,000 full-text poems including more than 25,000 copyrighted poems, 850,000+ poem citations, subject access, explanations, biographies, pictures, and Kids Korner.

**Stories** – over 5,000 full-text short stories plus explanations, biographies, pictures and genre access.

**Essays** – thousands of essays with literary criticism, biographies, pictures and other information about context of the essays.

**Plays** – over 1,000 plays with character lists and subject access.

**Speeches** – full text speeches with genre access.

### **Availability and Use Restrictions**

**In-Library Use:** Available at all library locations

**Remote Use:** Jefferson County Public Library Card required.

### **Searching**

Each section; Poems, Stories, Essays, Plays and Speeches may be searched separately or together. Click on the tab at the top of the screen to see the descriptions for each area. With each area, the methods of searching, print, etc. are the same.

### **Basic Search (from Home page or within a specific section)**

1. Enter a word or words in the search box.
2. Select to search all of LitFinder at one time or select specific sections by checking the appropriate box or boxes.
3. Click the search button (a box with >> in it).

### **Advanced Search**

There are four categories for advanced search, Literature, Author, References or All. Literature advance search will allow you to search within all modules for any keywords, title or author. Author advanced search allows you to search all modules for authors, gender, timelines and other limiters. The References area will search the published works the literature was located, for example *The New Yorker* or *Fireside Encyclopedia Of Poetry*.

1. Choose your search type.
2. Enter a word or words in one or more search box.
3. Use the Boolean operator to connect your search terms.
4. Use the drop-down lists to select limiters (none available in References section).

5. Click **Go**.

### **Browse Search**

You will see the browse search command after you click on one of the tabs for a specific section of the database.

1. Click **Browse Search**
2. You may click on an author or title link to go to that entry or you may select one of the links on the left side. These links may be different in each section, they allow you to browse subcategories such as subject, and genre.
3. Use the page numbers or next command to move through the lists.
4. Keep clicking on sub-categories until you reach the desired information.

### **Using the Boolean Operators**

Use **OR** to connect similar terms. OR broadens your search.

*Example:* hispanic or latino

Use **AND** to connect separate concepts. AND narrows your search.

*Example:* doctor and surgeon

Use **BUT NOT** to eliminate separate concepts. BUT NOT narrows your search.

*Example:* kennedy but not politician

### **Truncating Terms**

Use \* to replace one or more characters at the end of a search term.

*Example:* drug\* (retrieves drug, drugs, druggist)

### **Proximity Searching**

Use **Quotation Marks** to indicate exact phrases.

*Example:* "Mending Wall" or "civil war"

### **Displaying Search Results**

If you have searched more than one section of the database, the results will be displayed by section. Results are shown by author and by title. Author display gives you basic biographical information and links to all their works. The Title display gives you an author summary at the top, and then displays the full-text of the work, or basic information if full-text is not available.

1. Use the scroll bar to move through the first page of the list.
2. Use the **View all matches** command to see all the results in a particular category.
3. Click the title to go to the text or summary. A small T in front of the title entry indicates where full text is available.
4. Click the author to search for more articles by that person(s).

5. Use the scroll bar to move through the record.
6. At the top of the results is a command line that shows where you are, click one step back to get back to the results list.

### **Printing Search Results**

1. Display the record to be printed.
2. Click **Print Text** (may be at the bottom of the record).
3. A text-only version of the record will pop-up in a new window.
4. Click **Print**. **Note:** If you are using this database within a JCPL location there is a charge for computer printing
5. Click **Print** in the Print command window.
6. Close the window.

### **Downloading Search Results**

*LitFinder* does not have a formal download command. You can use the standard browser save as command. To use the information in any word processing or notepad application save in txt format.

1. Display the record to be downloaded.
2. Insert a formatted disk, a CD-ROM, or a memory stick into the appropriate drive.
3. Click your browser's **File** menu and select **Save As**.
4. Type the disk drive, the filename and .txt in the **File Name** box. *Example:*  
a:myfile.txt
5. Click **Save**.
6. At the top of the results is a command line that shows where you are, click one step back to get back to the results list.

### **Emailing Search Results**

This feature is not available in this database.

### **Beginning a New Search**

1. Enter a new search in the search box in the upper right of the screen.
2. Or click **Home** to see the main search page,
3. Or click one of the tabs to see a specific category.

### **Practice Worksheet**

**Goals:** To be able to use the LitFinder database to locate information on specific poems, stories, essays, plays and speeches. To also find information about the authors, genres as well as timeperiods.

**When finished practicing, you should be able to:**

- Find biographical information on a poet.
- Find poems based on words in the last line.
- Find stories with specific words.
- Find speeches on a specific subject.
- Find works by a specific nationality.

Find plays with a specific character.  
Find works in a specific time period.

**Practice questions/activities:**

1. Find a biography on Wallace Stevens.
2. Find the poem titled "The Waiter and the Alligator".
3. Find a poem with the last line "And haply may forget."
4. Find stories with the word "library" in them.
5. Find a speech by Winston Churchill about Russia.
6. Find a selection of Native American children's poetry.
7. Find a play which includes a character named "Murashkin."
8. Find a selection of essays from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.
9. What are the birth and death dates of Kenneth Koch?

**Answers**

1. Find a biography on Wallace Stevens.
  - Use **Basic Search**, enter "Stevens Wallace", check to search **Poems**.
  - Click >> (search)
  - Click his name to bring up a page with the poet's biography.
  - Click **Poems** to see a list of his poems.
2. Find the poem titled "The Waiter and the Alligator".
  - Using **Basic Search**, enter "Waiter and the Alligator", check to search **Poems**.
  - Click >>.
  - Then click on the title of the poem (The Waiter and the Alligator) to see the actual poem.
3. Find a poem with the last line "And haply may forget."
  - Using **Advanced Search**, go to the **All** section. Type "haply" in the first search box, use the drop-down menu and select **Works Last Line**, then using the **and** connector type "forget" in the second search box, also using the drop-down menu to select **Works Last Line**.
  - Click **Go**.
  - The results will bring up the poem title "Song" by Christina Georgina Rossetti.

4. Find stories with the word “library” in them.
  - Click the **Stories** tab, use **Basic Search**
  - Enter the word “library.”
  - Click >> (search).
  - Click story titles and look for word library in bold.
  
5. Find a speech by Winston Churchill about Russia.
  - Using **Advanced Search**, the **Literature** section, enter “Russia” in the keyword search box, enter “Churchill” in the author search box, and use the drop-down menu for **Type** to select Speeches and
  - Click **Go**.
  - You will see four speeches by Churchill that include references to Russia.
  
6. Find a selection of Native American children’s poetry.
  - Click the **Poems** tab and then click **Browse**.
  - On the left menu under **By Genre**, click **More** to see all of the headings, select **Children’s literature**.
  - On the left menu under the **Nationality** heading, click **More**, then click **Native American**.
  - A list of authors and titles will appear.
  
7. Find a play which includes a character named “Murashkin.”
  - Using **Advanced Search**, the **All** section, enter “murashkin,” then use the drop-down menu to select **Play Character**.
  - Click **Go**.
  - You will see Anton Chekhov’s play *A Tragedian in Spite of Himself*.
  
8. Find a selection of essays from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.
  - Click the **Essays** tab, and then click **Browse**.
  - On the left menu under **Timelines**, click **16<sup>th</sup> Century**.
  - You will see a list of authors and titles from that time period.
  
9. What are the birth and death dates of Kenneth Koch?
  - Use **Basic Search** and enter “Koch.”
  - Click >> (search).
  - Click Koch, Kenneth in the result list.
  - His birth and death years (1925-2002) appear under his name.