Speed Databasing

A Matchmaking Activity for Students and Library Databases

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EDUCATION CITY

Branch campuses of six American universities
99-104 Carnegie Skills Workshop

- Information literacy and research skills
- Librarian instructors
- 3-unit (i.e. 1 credit hour)
- Graded
- Graduation requirement
- All freshmen in fall semester
- Six sections; 15-20 students per section
Introduction to Library Databases

- Traditional show-and-tell
- Flipped
- Think, pair, share
- Small group presentations
- Let’s make a deal

... but still nothing really grabs their attention
Speed Dating

- Structured way to meet lots of people in a short time

- Created in the 1990s by a rabbi

- Includes movement and short spurts of interaction toward a goal – finding a match

- Fun and low stakes
Speed Databasing

- Structured way to introduce many databases in a short time
- Created in September 2016 by two librarians
- Includes movement and multiple search sprints toward a goal – finding articles about a paper topic
- Fun, fast-paced, and memorable
Hosting a Speed Databasing Event cont.

- Invite a variety of databases
- Place a personal ad for each database
- Create a mood
- Share wisdom
- Set the ground rules
- Give a little push
Database Profile Example

Name: Hoover’s
Age: up-to-the moment
Location: international
Background: a Dun & Bradstreet Company
Physical description: 85 million company profiles and over 900 industry segments

Interests: company reports, market research, industry reports
You’d be surprised to know: Voted most likely to know a company’s key competitors and financials
My ideal vacation: anywhere my private jet will take me
In search of: an investor to fund my billion-dollar idea
The First Date (and second, third, fourth...)

- At the bell, students had three minutes to review profiles, search in the databases, and take notes.
- At the next bell, students had a minute to wrap up, then move on to the next database.
- The process repeated until the end of class.
- Students completed a follow-up homework assignment:
  - Answer questions about a favorite database
  - Create an original profile for another library database (one they did not meet during class)
First Impressions

- Good for my major
- Additional benefit

- Can easily limit results by Historical
- Recommended bus for looking for

- Not very useful but interesting
- Use can be compared to that of Psycinfo
- Different languages pop up
- Study of work/role of diff. artist/architects
Student Database Profiles

**Name:** Access Science

**Age:** Age is just a number

**Location:** No matter where you are, whether it's a quarter-mile away or halfway around the world, you'll always be with me and you'll always be my researcher

**Religion:** Nope, database of science

**Physical description:** Don’t want to show off but super big like 8,500 articles and research reviews big, with a nice 115,000+ definitions. Don’t get me started about the 3,000 biographies and the 18,000+ images

**Interests:** In my database, I cover all major scientific disciplines with high quality

**My ideal dinner guest:** Galileo Galilei

**Favorite vacation:** The Hale Telescope at the Palomar Observatory in San Diego, Calif.

**My secret talent:** Curriculum maps and mobile access

**Dream job:** President of science
Name: Accounting, Tax & Banking

Location: America – as most taxes listed are based in America

My secret talent: My special talent is I filter everything for you, and if you want (by clicking under the search bar) I let you check full text and if you want the ones with peer review

My favorite hobby: Tax auditing and going over information

My favorite vacation spot: Washington, D.C., United States, where the main location for the IRS is

My ideal dinner guest: Martha Stewart because she would bring me some of her delicious home cooked meals; she would also be included in this database as someone who lied about their taxes and got caught

In search of: Business students and tax auditors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>PhilPapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>Very Old, contains tonnes of historical documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education:</td>
<td>Been around the world studying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical description:</td>
<td>Contains journals, books, research paper on a wide variety of topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests:</td>
<td>Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’d be surprised to know:</td>
<td>I speak 40 languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My ideal dinner guest:</td>
<td>Immanuel Kant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In search of:</td>
<td>A person who gets getting me (epistemology!)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Play a Round of (Analog) Speed Databasing!

- Tables will be given several envelopes each containing a database profile and screen shots.
- At the bell, open the envelope in front of you, read the profile, and review the screen shots.
- On the handout, in the space for the given database, note your first impressions.
- At the next bell, hand your packet/envelope to the person on your right, take the packet/envelope from the person on your left.
- Repeat until the round ends.
Getting to Know a Database

- How would this database meet your research needs?
- How would this database be useful for your major or classes?
- What are some ways that you can limit/narrow results?
- What are some of the database’s special features or tools?
- To whom would you recommend this database?
- Is this database easy or difficult to use?
- What do you like or dislike about this database?
What Did You Think?

- Take a few minutes to discuss the activity with your tablemates
  - What did you like or dislike about the activity?
  - How might you adapt it for your library?
Lessons Learned

- Offer a selection of databases to satisfy all majors and interests

- Depending on backgrounds and experience of participants, opt for a different name
  - Database Matchmaking
  - Database Roulette
  - Research Database Round Robin

- Tailor the handout to learning objectives

- Variety of options for assessment
Lessons Learned cont.

- Five minutes is the ideal amount of time to read the profile and explore the database.

- Allow time in between the switch to take notes, reset the machines, stretch, etc.

- Rather than moving people, have them remain at one station but switch databases at the bell.

- Play ambient music.
Lessons Learned cont.

- Provide example searches to spur imagination, but do not ask them to answer specific questions
- Activity can be adapted for different types of instruction sessions
- Speed Databasing is not just for students, it can be used with library staff and faculty, too
- Database profiles make great posters, handouts, bookmarks, LibGuides, or social media posts
Disclaimers

- Speed Databasing enhances, but does not replace, instruction

- Students still need to learn the anatomy of a database before participating in this activity

- Speed Databasing does not address search techniques, such as selecting keywords, adding synonyms, or using operators
Thank You!

❖ Questions? Feedback?

❖ If you try Speed Databasing, let us know how it goes or how you change the activity

❖ http://guides.library.cmu.edu/speeddatabasing

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