Searching ERIC using EBSCO

A good method to follow for finding the material you need is this:

1. Type in “keywords” into the search boxes.
2. Look at the records that are displayed.
3. Find the first one that is relevant to your needs (a good rule of thumb is to check and see if your “keywords” appear in the title).
4. Click on the title and open the record.
5. Read the Abstract!
6. At the bottom of the page will be a list of index terms (Descriptors). These will narrow your search.

**Remember**: Break your search up into key concepts. Sample Question: “How can I raise the scores on reading in my class? You might break that question up into the key concepts listed below.

**Database: ERIC**

**Find:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find</th>
<th>in</th>
<th>Default Fields</th>
<th>Search</th>
<th>Clear</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>improving</td>
<td>in</td>
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This produces a set of 382 records which is more than you want to scroll through.
If you scroll down to item no. 8, you will see a record that appears relevant.

8. **Impact of a Middle School Reading Strategies Elective on Reading Comprehension Test Scores and Reading Confidence.** Komfeld, Tammy Wilks, 2003 (ED478309)
   Full Text from ERIC

9. **Improving Oral Fluency, Written Accuracy, and Reading Comprehension in the 3rd Grade Using Visual Art Content.** Nickell, Brian K., 2003 (ED479667)
   Full Text from ERIC

10. **Improving Primary Students' Reading Fluency.** Eber, Fran; Miller, Sara, 2003 (ED478067)
    Full Text from ERIC

1 - 10 of 382 Pages: 1 2 4 5 Next

Click on the blue title to produce the full record.

**Title:** Impact of a Middle School Reading Strategies Elective on Reading Comprehension Test Scores and Reading Confidence.

**Authors:** Komfeld, Tammy Wilks

**Publication Year:** 2003

**Descriptors:** Instructional Effectiveness; Reading Improvement; Reading Instruction; Reading Strategies; Elective Courses; Grade 7, Grade 8, Middle Schools; Reading Achievement; Reading Attitudes; Reading Difficulties

**Abstract:** In the fall of 2001, a local middle school decided to implement a new elective course. This course was designed to assist struggling middle school readers in acquiring the reading proficiency that would be required to succeed in higher-level coursework. Students remained in their regular English classes, but devoted the elective period that their peers spent playing steel pans or learning perspective drawing to improving their reading skills. The central focus of the class was to teach students the strategies proficient readers use and provide a supportive environment for the practice and development of these strategies. Classroom teachers and the

The record above is not complete. The complete record would include all of the abstract, as well as some specific publishing information. However, this record does highlight the Descriptors. Descriptors identify the key concepts in an article. They are also used to index similar articles. When you search using Descriptors you will find articles containing the central important ideas that you have identified. You can search using any combination of Descriptors and “keywords” but you cannot write your own Descriptors. That is why its good to find the Descriptors that match the concepts you have identified.

When we examine the record above, we discover several Descriptors that are a match for our key concepts. These include reading instruction and reading improvement. If I search for these terms as Descriptors; I must open the box next to them and click on “SU Descriptors (All).”

**Note:** I have left the last box “scores” as a Default Field because I do not yet know the Descriptor for test scores.
This search yields 229 hits. I can now repeat the process; looking for relevant citations, checking the descriptors on those citations, and using those Descriptors to narrow my search.

Note: ERIC will always save your searches. When you return to the Main Search Screen there is a button on the tool bar that reads “Previous Searches.” When you start a new search you can combine it with the results of your old searches by clicking on this button.

There is another way to identify relevant Descriptors. At the Main Search Page there is a button on the green tool bar that reads “Thesaurus.” You can click on this and type in a term. The one below is for “standardized tests.”

If you click on the term Standardized Tests, you will get a definition and a list of related Descriptors.
Accessing Full-Text Articles and Documents in ERIC

There are two types of documents in ERIC. EJ documents and ED documents. EJ documents are periodicals. These include teacher magazines (Principal) and peer-reviewed journals (Harvard Educational Review). ED is a broad category that includes conference papers, curriculum guides, government documents, and various reports. You can eliminate one or the other from your search by clicking on the Document Type box on the Main Search Page.

All EJ entries have a red tag that reads “Find Full Text.” This connects the citation to a software program (SFX) that tries to locate the article in any of our databases.

If you click on the tag and SFX finds the article it will produce a record like the one below. Clicking on the GO button will produce the document. If SFX cannot locate an online copy of the article, it will check the Lovejoy Library catalog to locate a print or microform copy. Clicking on GO for that record will reveal the Library holdings for that journal. If we do not have the journal in print or online, SFX will direct you to a form for Inter Library Loan.
Almost all ED documents from 1991-present are available online. There is a blue link that reads Full Text from ERIC in the citation record. ED documents from 1966-1991 are available in microfiche on the 2nd floor of Lovejoy Library.