

Speed Databasing

A Matchmaking Activity for Students and Library Databases

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EDUCATION CITY

Branch campuses of six
American universities

Carnegie Mellon University Qatar

Biological Sciences

Business Administration

Computational Biology

Computer Science

Information Systems

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

statista 

• Good for my major



Can easily limit results by historical
recommended links 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 dif. 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

Student Database Profiles *cont.*

ProQuest

All databases > Business databases > Accounting, Tax & Banking Collection | Change databases

Accounting, Tax & Banking Collection

Basic Search

Advanced Search

Publications

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

Student Database Profiles *cont.*



Name: PhilPapers

Age: Very Old, contains tonnes of historical documents

Location: Everywhere

Education: Been around the world studying

Physical description: Contains journals, books, research paper on a wide variety of topics

Interests: Life

You'd be surprised to know: I speak 40 languages

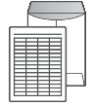
My ideal dinner guest: Immanuel Kant

In search of: A person who gets getting me (epistemology!)



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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