



## Good Practices from Mellon Library Partners, 2003-2004

### Using a Pre-assignment as Homework Before the Library Session

**Environment:** French 102, Reading and Writing Skills in French, is “an exploration of the ways words and images structure thought, communication and interactions of the subject and society. Development of reading and writing skills leading to correct and effective expression in French” (UCB Catalog). This class of 12-15 students is a required course in the French major.

**Impact:** Developing a pre-assignment with the course instructor deepened integration of learning about research process into the content of the course. For students, the pre-assignment set the stage for the library session, establishing a shared topic for discussion and modeling initial stages of the research process. The pre-assignment also allowed me to address key outcomes that didn’t fit in the two 50-minute sessions.

**Description:** After gathering information about the course goals, I met with the professor to propose outcomes for two 50-minute library sessions and an initial pre-assignment. We discussed topics from the class for the pre-assignment and refined the outcomes together, then I mailed the finalized pre-assignment for distribution as homework before the library session. The final version was one double-sided page – one side a reference article and the other a set of questions (attached).

The learning outcomes for the activity were as follows:

After completing and discussing the pre-assignment (homework) students should be able to...

1. Glean background information and search terms from a reference essay.
2. Identify various types of research materials from a list of citations (encyclopedias, books, book chapters, and journal articles).
3. Differentiate between primary and secondary sources on literary studies topics.

After completing the follow-up activities in the library session, students should be able to:

1. From the citations listed in the bibliography of a reference essay, use the Melvyl library catalog to locate books, articles and other known items.
2. From the search terms gleaned from a reference essay, construct and refine subject searches in the Melvyl library catalog in order to locate books and other materials.

**Contact:** Sarah McDaniel, [smcdanie@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:smcdanie@library.berkeley.edu)

**Library Research Strategies for French 102**  
**Assignment – Complete before Library Session**

*The Feminist Encyclopedia of French Literature* contains a brief essay on Kim Lefevre (attached). Read the essay and bibliography, then complete the following questions.

I. You can use a reference essay to generate a list of search terms for use in the library catalog, article databases, or Internet search engines.

1. List three terms used in the essay to describe ethnicity or “otherness”

---

2. List three terms used in the essay to describe literary texts

---

3. Circle any additional terms in the essay that could be used to search for items on Kim Lefevre or the theme of “otherness” in French literature.

II. You can use the bibliography of a reference essay to find out about important texts on a topic.

1. The bibliography is divided into “primary” and “secondary” texts. What’s the distinction between the two types?

---

---

2. Other than books, what types of materials are included in the list?

---

---

3. What other types of materials are you interested in locating for your research?

---

---

---