Impetus
The words “information literacy” generally don’t strike fear in the hearts of first-year students, but they can in the hearts of instruction librarians faced with teaching these concepts to first-year students who have never heard of the concept before & have no understanding of what it means or why it’s important. As an instruction librarian, I’ve found my heart sinking when in the midst of teaching I see a sea of glazed-over faces staring back at me…or just a likely, a sea of glazed-over faces sneaking looks at their phone’s in their laps. Consequently, I decided to find a way to do my own sneaking: sneaking the concepts of information literacy into an active-learning lesson by using Harry Potter as a frame.

Learning Objectives:
Locate & Evaluate Information

Locate
- Explore databases (Infocruxes) to:
- Identify keywords & synonyms for keywords
- Learn Boolean searching
- Follow citations forward & backward in time

Evaluate
- Learn about various types of sources, both scholarly & non-scholarly
- Learn criteria to determine whether something is a scholarly or non-scholarly source
- Learn criteria to understand when something is a good- or poor-quality resource
- Understand when it’s appropriate to use different types of resources

Acknowledgements
Many thanks go to Dawn Stahura, Research and Instruction Librarian for the Social Sciences at Simmons College, & the instructor of the American Library Association’s e-course “Putting the ‘Pop’ in Information Literacy,” designed to teach librarians how to use a pop culture theme when developing lessons on information literacy.

ACCIO SOURCES!

Remember—constant vigilance!

—Mad-Eye Moody
(...is needed to be on guard against poor-quality information sources.)

Evaluate
To assist students in remembering what criteria to use when evaluating sources, I developed the acronym ACCIO SOURCES (if you’re not familiar with Harry Potter, “accio” is the spell that means “bring me” or “come here). ACCIO are more the criteria to use when looking over a resource as a whole; SOURCES are criteria that relate more to the content of the source.

Locate
To assist in identifying keywords & synonyms, the students use the chart (right) to break down their thesis statement or research question.

Adaptability
Both the Locate & Evaluate lessons are adaptable to a wide variety of subjects; the Locate lesson can focus on whatever databases are best suited for that particular course’s theme, & the Evaluate lesson can be adapted by using articles that echo the theme of the class (e.g., using environmentally focused articles to evaluate in an Environmental Studies class, & dividing the class by Harry Potter magical creature instead of by House).

Post-Class Self-Assessment for Students
If you had to take an OWL exam in research & library skills after this class, how do you think you would do? Please put a check next to your anticipated grade.

Outstanding: Madam Pince is retiring & has recommended me for her job!
Exceeds Expectations: I’ve been recommended for a researcher’s job in the Ministry of Magic!
Acceptable: I know to check the sources in the Quibbler, but think everything in the Daily Prophet is always right.
Poor: When Professor Umbridge saw all of my sources came from Google, I had to write three feet of lines: “I will always use scholarly sources.”
Dreadful: After reading my paper, Professor Snape is making me clean all of Ministry of Magic!

Additional comments: