No Discovery? No Problem.

How One College Library in Quebec
Is Building Smart Researchers
with *Credo Reference*

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Champlain College Saint-Lambert in Quebec is a longtime subscriber of *Credo Reference* and a *Cégep*. Nicole Haché, Librarian at Champlain's George Wallace Library, shares her experience and ideas on basic research instruction for her college's first-year students. She discusses the specific challenges of working with young students and why starting research with resources like *Credo Reference* are so effective for this user group.

College libraries have many options when it comes to introducing new students to academic research. With so many different levels of academic awareness in a class of new students, this task can be difficult. Many colleges use robust discovery systems to get students started, opening doorways to an often overwhelming number of choices, which can flummox the inexperienced. On the opposite end of the spectrum, smaller libraries might rely only on their library catalog and point students to their physical collection and handful of e-resources, which might underwhelm more research-savvy students.

At Champlain College Saint-Lambert, in the Canadian province of Quebec, a combination of carefully curated e-resources and good old-fashioned library instruction are used to educate new students and ensure solid usage of library resources at the same time.

In Quebec, students coming out of eleventh grade who wish to attend university must first complete two years of *Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel* (*Cégep*), a public intermediary-level post-secondary school. The majority of students are seventeen when they enter *Cégep*, and many have never even set foot in a library.

"Students who enter *Cégep* are very new to academic research and to libraries in general," explains Nicole Haché, Librarian at Champlain College.

At this step in their education, these novice researchers have relied solely on Google or Wikipedia for information. Nicole's mission is to change that, starting with the students' first days at Champlain. "We really need to hold their hands and help them along from the very beginning." Nicole and fellow librarians at Champlain College believe this introduction is best accomplished by focusing on a select few resources that will instruct and meet the beginning researcher's basic needs.

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Upon their arrival at *Cégep*, "students don't know the difference between a print book and an eBook and journal article…Some don't even know there's a table of contents and an index in a book." This is why Champlain College's librarians believe that robust discovery services are counterproductive at this point in a young researcher's life.

Nicole explains, "A discovery layer gives students results, but results that are very confusing for them. They won't know what they are looking at. Teachers are asking them for journal articles, but these students have never even held a physical magazine in their hands. The very concept of a journal article is foreign to them. When they look at a page on an article database, they have no concept that they are looking at a page of a journal or a page of a book."
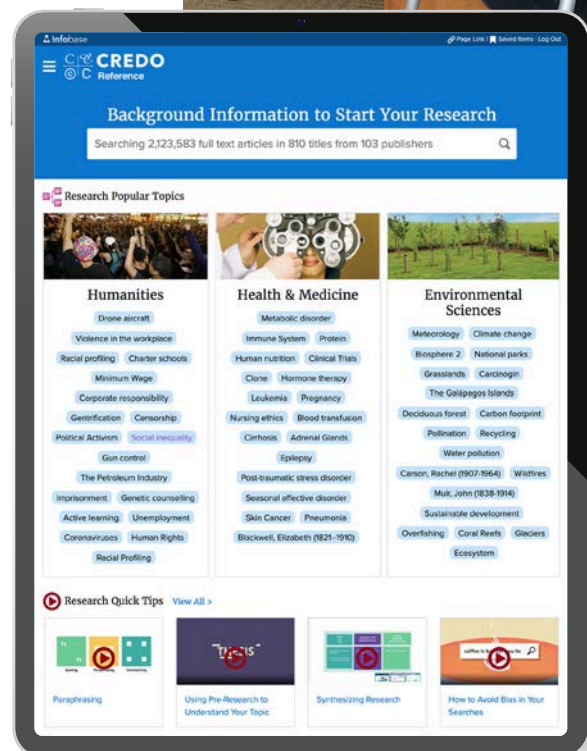
Building higher-level researchers

To remedy this problem, Nicole and her colleagues have partnered with Champlain College's Humanities department to help students build higher-level research skills. Since all freshmen must take *Humanities 101 Knowledge* during their first semester, the library department embedded two information literacy sessions in the course to focus on the fundamentals of research and research paper writing skills. The library hosts lessons in person or online if the course is remote.

"In the first class, we give them a Moodle 'Introduction to Research' quiz and have students use *Credo Reference* to find the answers to the questions. We show them the different formats that research materials can be found in. 'These are articles. These are books. This is an eBook. This is reference.'" Hands-on learning begins on day one. "Instead of telling them where to look, we actually have them go into the databases to search for themselves."

Start with *Credo Reference*

The librarians at Champlain College know from experience that students will always go back to the resource(s) with which they are most comfortable and familiar. For these students, perhaps this entire generation, those sources would be Google and Wikipedia. Nicole is determined to correct this habit.

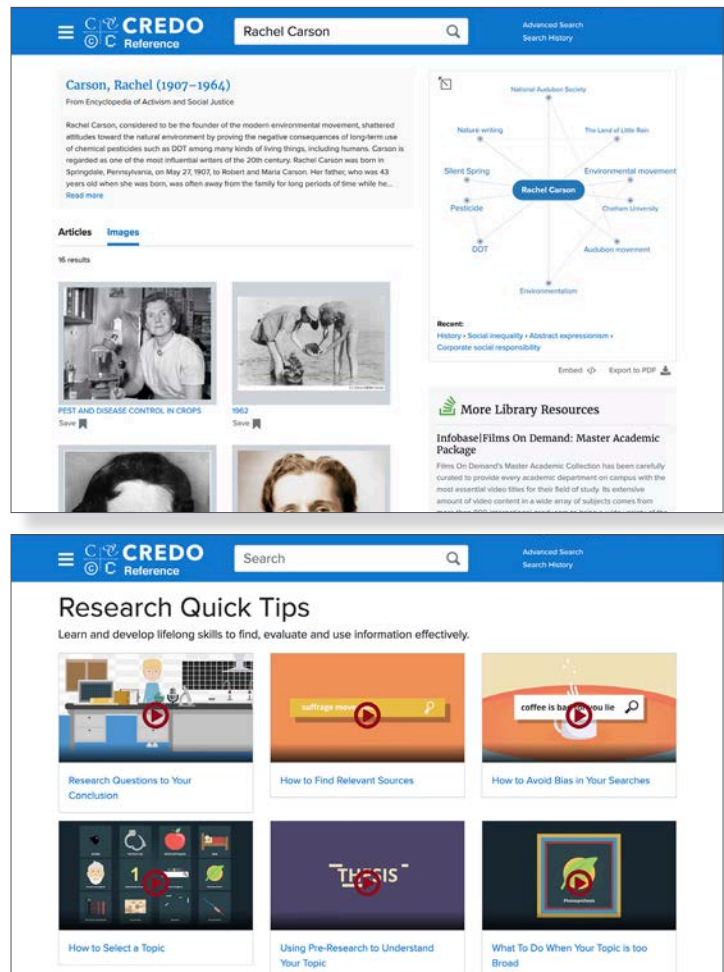# How One College Library in Quebec Is Building Smart Researchers with *Credo Reference*

"We tell them, 'For academic research, from now on you're going to go to *Credo* first. That's where you start,'" Nicole explains.

Beginning in the first few months of school, the Champlain College librarians show the students how to navigate *Credo Reference* to research—skills the students will fall back on throughout their academic lives. The Saint-Lambert campus library also shares access to *Credo Reference* with its two smaller sister campuses. Once *Cégep* students have mastered the basics of information literacy tools like *Credo Reference*, they will be better equipped to interpret the results out of a discovery layer in university and throughout their professional lives.

Here is Nicole's advice to other librarians hoping to similarly embed information literacy tools into a class but aren't sure how to initiate a conversation: "Partner with a teacher and do something absolutely amazing. All it takes is one enthusiastic teacher to have them spread the gospel."

About *Credo Reference*

Credo Reference: Academic Core enhances the research experience through authoritative reference content and a one-stop exploratory search platform that drives usage of all of your trusted library resources. The user-friendly interface is ideal for students starting their research or learning about the research process during information literacy instruction. With hundreds of searchable, full-text titles from the world's foremost publishers, *Credo Reference: Academic Core* covers every major subject.

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