



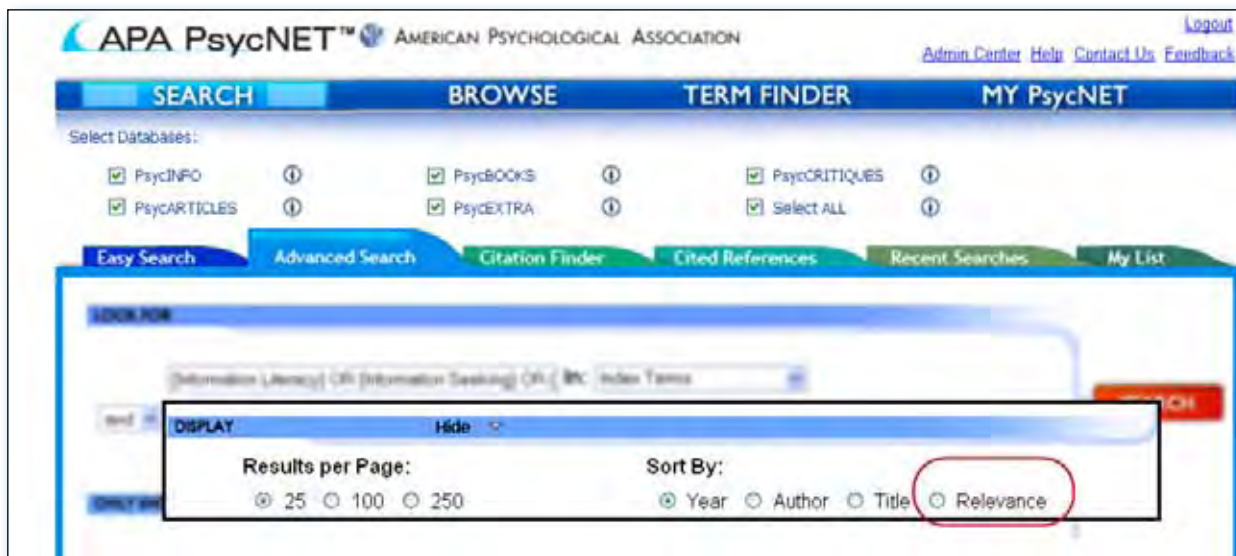
## In Search Of: Information Literacy and APA PsycNET's New Relevancy Sort

### Situation:

In this search we look at an issue that we hope will resonate with our readers. Librarians are increasingly adopting Web 2.0 (and beyond) technologies and social media to provide library instruction and information literacy training. What information is there in the PsycINFO database on the subject?

### Build Your Search in PsycINFO using the relevancy sort on APA PsycNET

APA PsycNET has recently added a Relevancy sort option. To begin our search, let's look at how the Relevance option works. You access it from the Sort By area:

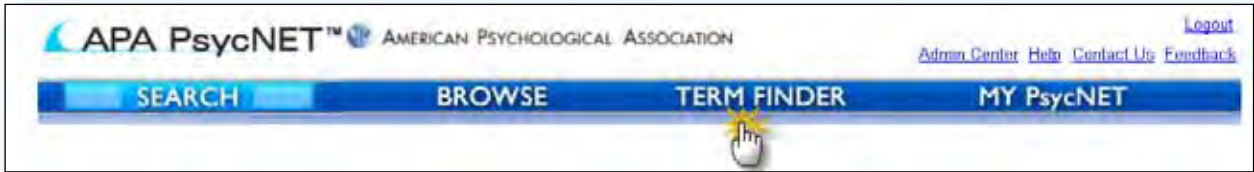


The Relevance process is this: first, initial selection is carried out based purely on the user's search. Once that is done, the selected records are given a relevance score that determines the order of the results. That relevance score is determined on the basis of terms' presence in the Title (document title) and Index Terms fields, which are given the greatest weight; then by keywords, author, and abstract, in that order. There is also a small weight given to the presence of the term anywhere in the record. Boosting factors are also used, such as the presence of a term in a short field, thus a search for literacy weights "The Uses of Digital Literacy" more than The Role of Literacy, Occupation and Income in Dementia Prevention: The São Paulo Aging and Health Study." This is done on the assumption that the former is likely to be more specifically focused on the topic. Finally, there is a boost for recency, or "freshness," which means that among items with similar scores, those that are more recent will appear higher in the list.

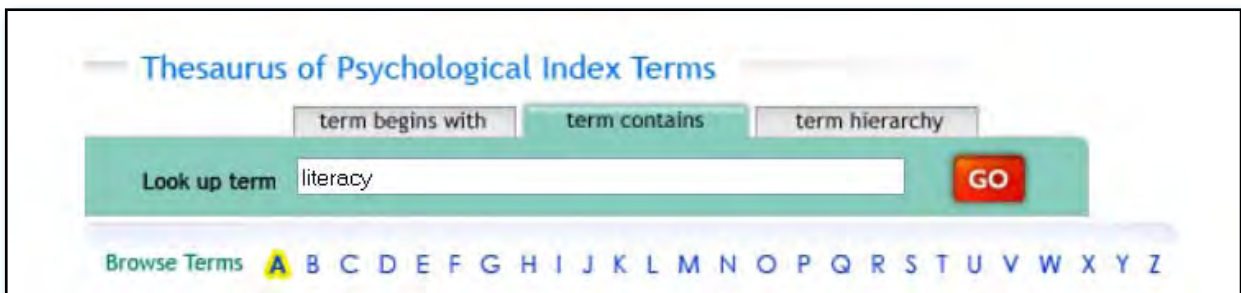


Let's do the search using two of the richer features available in APA PsycNET, Term Finder and the Classification Codes.

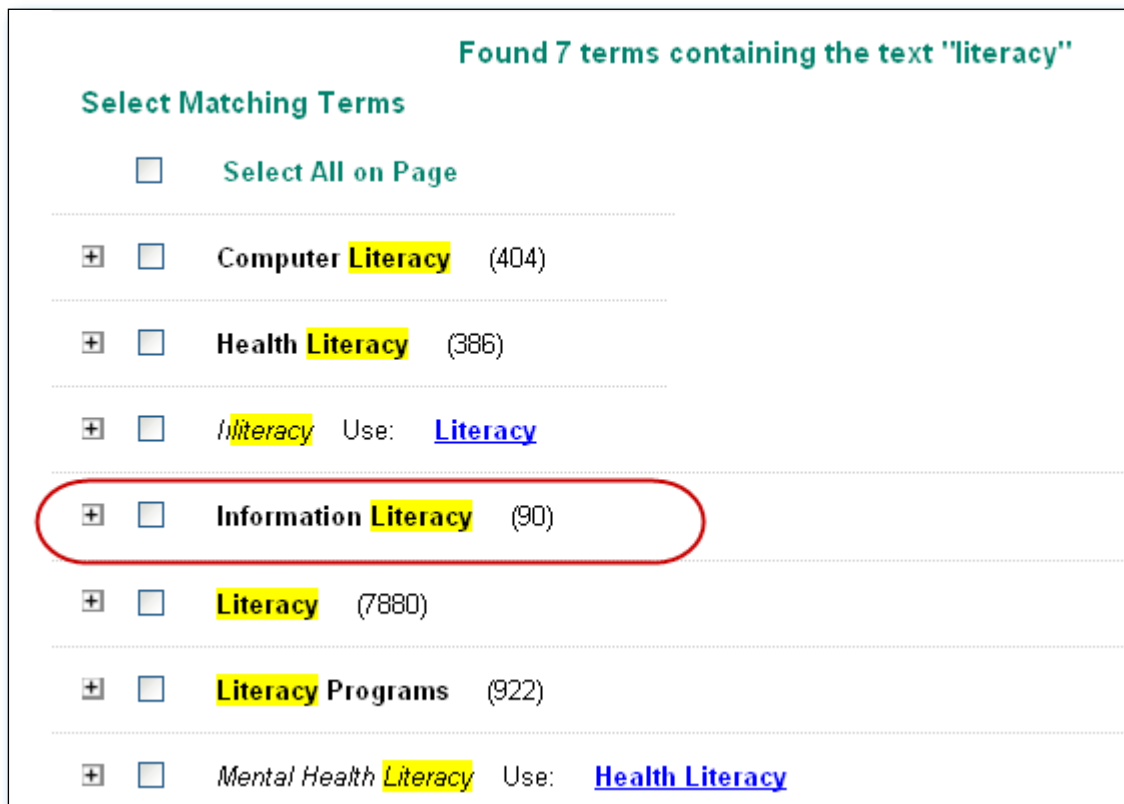
A nice feature of the APA PsycNET platform is that it makes access to the *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms* prominent with the Term Finder tab.



The thesaurus allows three ways to search, alphabetically, with a rotated index, and hierarchically. We can search for both of our major concepts. First for literacy:



Among the results is the specific term we were looking for.



We'll take a closer look at the term. In this instance, the term was recently added, in 2007, and there are no broader or narrower terms. There are, however related terms that may be relevant to the search.

**Information Literacy** (90)

**Year Introduced:**  
2007

**PsycINFO Posting Notes:**  
90

**Scope Note:**  
Skills needed to locate, retrieve, evaluate, and use information.

**Historical Note:**  
This term was introduced in April 2007. Relevant records were re-indexed with this term. The posting note reflects the number of records that were re-indexed.

**Related Terms:**

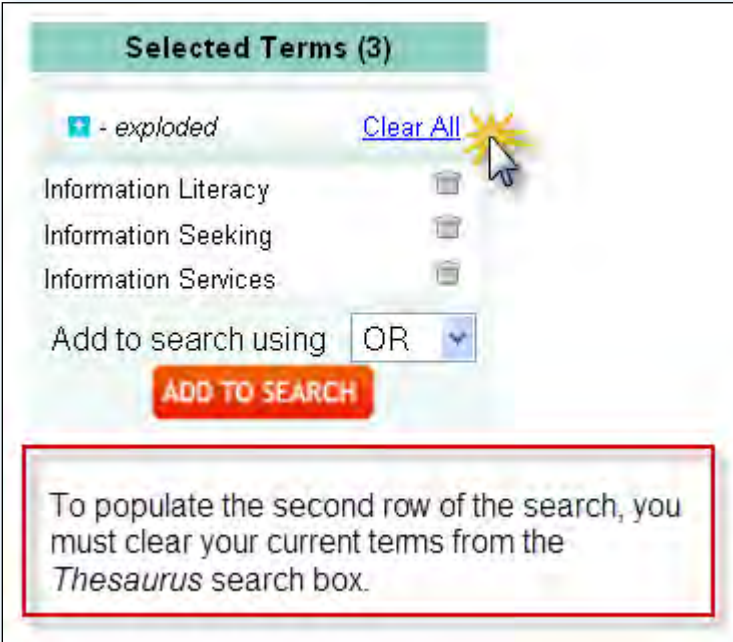
- [Digital Divide](#)
- [Information Dissemination](#)
- [Information Seeking](#)
- [Information Services](#)
- [Information Systems](#)

By expanding the related term records, choosing additional terms, and clicking the search button with the default Or Boolean, we've created a search for one prong of our topic. To create the second prong, we must, we must repeat the process in the next row:

LOOK FOR

{Information Literacy} OR {Information Seeking} OR {	In: Index Terms
and	In: Any Field

Clear the search terms box.



**Selected Terms (3)**

- exploded [Clear All](#)

Information Literacy

Information Seeking

Information Services

Add to search using

**ADD TO SEARCH**

To populate the second row of the search, you must clear your current terms from the *Thesaurus* search box.

We now try searching the Thesaurus with our second search concept: Web 2.0 OR “social media.” This time, we aren’t able to find the specific term we were looking for.



**Social Mobility** (722)

**Social Movements** (2432) Neither social media nor Web 2.0 is a term.

**Social Networks** (4654)

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*Web Based Mental Health Services* Use: [Online Therapy](#)

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*Web Sites* Use: [Websites](#)

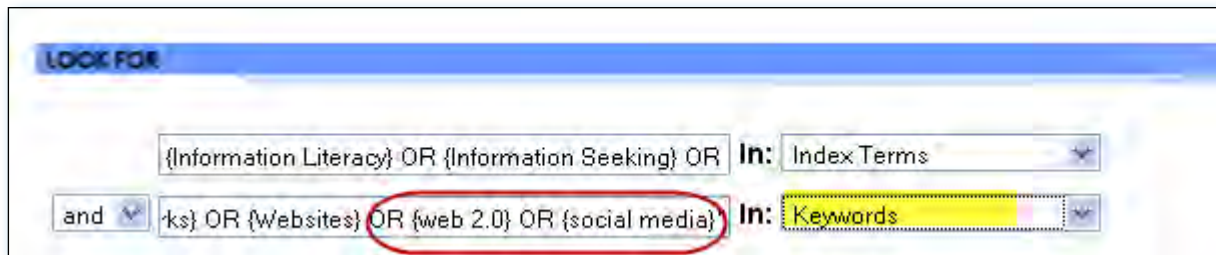
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**Websites** (1718)

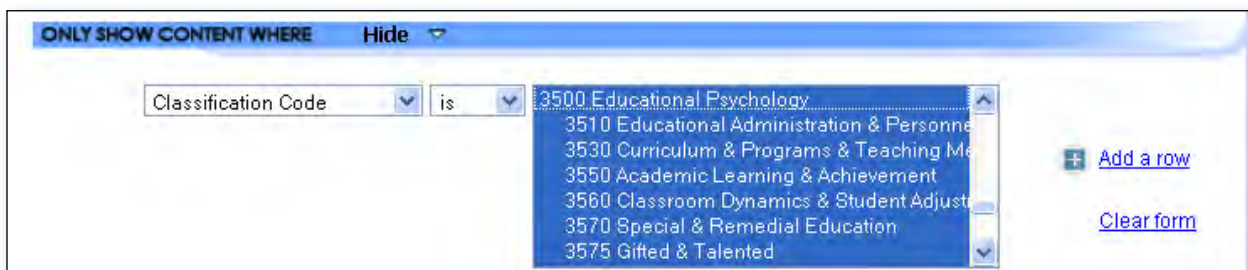
However, there do seem to be a number of related terms that would be useful, and so we add them to the Thesaurus search box.



This adds the index terms to the search. But if we still want to include the terms “Web 2.0” and “social media” in our search, we simply add them to the end of the search string and change index terms on the drop-down menu to keywords; thus, we include both the power of the controlled language and the flexibility of specific keywords.



Finally, we add as a limit a range of classification codes that will restrict the results to research classified as being primarily about education. Go to the “Look for” section and access classification code. Scroll through the categories until you find relevant codes.



Here is the final search.

The screenshot displays the APA PsycNET search interface with the following sections:

- Navigation:** Easy Search, Advanced Search (selected), Citation Finder, Cited References, Recent Searches, My List.
- LOOK FOR:**
  - Search 1:  In:
  - Search 2:  In:
  - Buttons: [Add a row](#), [Clear form](#), [Journals Lookup](#), [Authors Lookup](#), **SEARCH**
- ONLY SHOW CONTENT WHERE:** Hide
  - Classification Code:  is 
    - 3500 Educational Psychology
    - 3510 Educational Administration & Personnel Education
    - 3530 Curriculum & Programs & Teaching Methods
    - 3550 Academic Learning & Achievement
    - 3580 Classroom Dynamics & Student Adjustment
    - 3570 Special & Remedial Education
    - 3575 Gifted & Talented
  - None selected is
  - Buttons: [Add a row](#), [Clear form](#)
- DATE:** Hide
  - APA Full-text only  Peer-Reviewed Journals only
  - Published:**
    - All years  to present
    - From  to
  - Added to PsycNET:**
    - in the last  days
- DISPLAY:** Hide
  - Results per Page:**  25  100  250
  - Sort By:**  Year  Author  Title  Relevance

And we retrieve 43 Relevance-sorted results. Here are the top results.

#### APA CITATION

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