

## Pricing the Ingredients

*Tammy Ivins, Transfer Student Services Librarian, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, ivinst@uncw.edu*

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

This flipped-classroom assignment is designed for use in a face-to-face, semester-long library course. (If the course is online or if you wish to use this activity as part of a one-shot library session, see the Allergy Warnings for substitutions). Student chefs will work in small groups to determine the monetary value of library resources. After this meal, student will understand issues around the access to information and the relative value of different information sources.

### Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Articulate the monetary value of library resources and relative costs of different information sources.
- Understand financial disparity issues related to access to information.

### NUMBER SERVED

5 to 50, in small groups.

### COOKING TIME

Prep time: Allow 10 to 15 minutes of previous face-to-face class time to prep the student chefs on their flipped-classroom assignment. (If you are using this activity as part of a one-shot library session and will not meet the students prior to the session, see the Allergy Warnings for substitutions). Allow a week for students to complete 'cooking' up their research.

Cooking time: Class time is dependent on the number of groups, as each will be expected to present their findings. For five student groups, plan for a 50-minute class.

### DIETARY GUIDELINES

*Frame:* Information has Value

*Knowledge Practice:*

Recognize issues of access or lack of access to information sources.

*Dispositions:*

- Value the skills, time, and effort needed to produce knowledge
- Are inclined to examine their own information privilege.

### INGREDIENTS & EQUIPMENT

- A whiteboard/chalkboard or computer & project/large screen (see the Allergy Warnings for online classes).

### PREPARATION

- Choose search topics, preferably from a wide range of disciplines. For example: Stem Cells, Pearl Harbor, Mars, and Shakespeare.
- At least one week prior to the class, the Head Chef (instructor) should explain the flipped classroom activity,

assign small groups & topics, demonstrate the activity, and answer any questions. (If you are using this activity as part of a one-shot library session and will not meet the students prior to the session, see the Allergy Warnings for substitutions).

### COOKING METHOD

1. Prior to the class, the student chefs will work in groups to search your library's discovery tool using the topic that the librarian has assigned (Figure 1).
2. Students will take the first page of results (or, however many of the results you assign) and calculate how much it would cost to buy those results out-of-pocket.
  - » Books & Media: Students should use retail tools such as Google Books and Amazon.com to identify the retail value of every book result.
  - » Articles: Students should use the periodical's website to determine the cost of a yearly individual subscription for each journal result.
3. Students record both the total and average cost of the journal subscriptions, books, and media. They should prepare to serve or present their findings in class.
4. On the day of the class, the student groups should serve or present their searches and results to the class. 5 to 7 minutes each.

**FIGURE 1.** Assigned Topic Worksheet**Assigned topic:** \_\_\_\_\_**Teammates:** \_\_\_\_\_**Due date/ Presentation date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment purpose:** You are going to calculate how much it would cost you to do research if you weren't a [insert your school here] student.

Divide-up the workload among your teammates and work together, but every member of the group must help.

1. **Search the Library's main search box for the topic** (above) your group has been assigned. You are going to look carefully at the results.
2. **Looking at the first page of results**, note the titles of every book and piece of media (DVDs, VHS CDs, etc.). Also note the periodical title (magazine, newspaper, journal, etc.) that each article result was published in.
3. **Calculate how much it would cost you to buy these items** out-of-pocket, if you weren't a student here.
  - » Use retail tools such as Google Books and Amazon.com to identify the retail value of every book & piece of media.
  - » For the periodicals, use the publishers' websites to determine the cost of a yearly individual subscription.
4. **Study the results and prepare** to present them to the class. At the very least, you must know:
  - » The total out-of-pocket cost for all of the research materials
  - » The average cost of a single periodical subscription, book, and piece of media.
5. In class, **present your findings** in 5 to 7 minutes. Your presentation must include:
  - » Your topic
  - » The total out-of-pocket cost for all of the research materials
  - » The average cost of a single periodical subscription, book, and piece of media.
  - » Any challenges & issues that you faced.
  - » Your thoughts on your findings. Were you surprised?

Be prepared to answer any questions from your classmates.

5. While the students are presenting their searches and results to the class, the librarian should record the results in a way that all the students can see, either on a classroom whiteboard or a word processing document on a computer and projector screen. (If the course is online, see the Allergy Warnings for substitutions).
6. Finally, the class should "dine on" or discuss the results. Facilitate the discussion by referring students to the visible list of results and with questions such as:
  - » What searches resulted in the most expensive results? Why?
  - » What items cost the most? How about the least? Why?

- » Why do we pay for information?
- » Does the library pay the exact same amount that you just calculated?
- » How do you think these costs affect people trying to do independent research?

**ALLERGY WARNING**

You can use this recipe in an asynchronous online course. For Serving (the in-class presentation), have student chefs share their results using a wiki (or similar tool). For the Dining (in-class discussion), use a discussion board (or similar tool).

If you are using this activity as part of a one-shot library session and will not meet the students prior to the session, have the course instructor divide the students into groups and assign the activity. You may need to meet with the course instructor to explain the activity.

**CLEAN UP**

To reinforce the learning outcomes, remind students of this activity at other times during the semester (or, remind the course instructor to do so). Challenge students to think about how they would do research (or if they could) without their campus access.