When you’re looking for a new pair of jeans, there are a number of factors to consider before you can find your “perfect pair.” Without a lot of conscious thought, we use limiters to narrow our search through the choices we make (price, fit, size, color, brand, etc.) We sometimes have to try on several (or a dozen) pair before finding one that works well, much like we have to look at several (or a dozen) sources to find the book or article that is most relevant, current, and authoritative. In this short presentation will demonstrate how the analogy can be applied in an instruction setting.

Target Audience: Undergraduate students – 1st or 2d year students primarily.

Student Learning Objectives: Students will see the connection between setting limits in an online database when looking for information and the types of limits we unconsciously set when shopping for material items like jeans (both online and in real life).

Based on an activity developed by Molly Beestrum, Columbia College, Chicago, IL
Activity Description:

Ask students to think about their experiences shopping for jeans (in real life) and the types of criteria they have when shopping: e.g. price, size, fit, color, brand, etc).

What does shopping for JEANS have to do with research?

You might be surprised!

What do you look for when you shop for jeans?

List your criteria...

If you don’t find the jeans you want, what do you do?
Open up a library database like Academic Search Complete and do a search for a broad topic, e.g. Fashion, discuss the limiters available in the databases (e.g. date, peer-reviewed, full-text, etc.).

If you don’t find the articles you want, what do you do?

This is a quick activity to get students acclimated to using library databases and can be done in just a few minutes. It works well to quickly engage students by asking questions and relating library sources to their everyday lives …. Jeans!

Joan Hopkins, March, 2016

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