

Teaching Legal Research from the Inside Out

By Thomas Keefe. 97 Law Libr. J. 117 (2005).

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Reviewer's Summary:

In this article, Keefe presents the idea of teaching legal research by first approaching online databases as a paradigm shift. In 2005, members of the "Internet generation" were newer to law schools and the idea that print materials should be taught first in legal research courses was common. He discusses the principal of learning as transfer from previous experiences, and leveraging students' common experience with internet searching as the starting point for teaching legal research. He further posits that it is more important to teach principles of information science like taxonomies and hierarchical organization than to give students "treasure hunt" problems in particular resources. Keefe concludes by explaining that the "print first" method of teaching legal research alienates students from both print resources and law librarians, whereas a "computer first" approach (his inside out teaching method) builds on what students already know.

Summarized by: Jill Sturgeon, University of Colorado, Wise Law Library, in 2020.