

## Exploring Ebooks

# Session Transcript

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FIONA: OK, welcome to this ebook session. And we're going to take a look at some ebooks and explore how you might use them and some of the tools available to get the most out of them. Can I ask how familiar you are with the library? Can you just pop in the chat whether you've used the library before or if you're new to it?

So most people are fairly new then. Yes, there's always more to learn about the library. I quite often find new things myself, actually. It's quite a complicated beast, really, library search.

Anyway, by the end of this particular session about ebooks, you should be able to search for information in online dictionaries and encyclopaedias which we subscribe to, be able to find and navigate around ebooks, and understand and use a range of tools, which may be available in ebooks. And I'm going to be demonstrating some of the things you can do with ebooks in the library, and then we've got a short activity at the end where you get to play with an ebook database yourselves.

And we've just got a short video to run, which we made about ebooks.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- Did you know there are hundreds of thousands of ebooks available from the Open University Library? The great thing about ebooks is they're flexible, portable, and can fit around your lifestyle. If you're on the go, ebooks go with you. ebooks are a gateway to a new way of learning. Our ebooks cover a wide range of subject areas related to your study and research.

Get started by using library search to find an ebook by topic or title within seconds and dive directly into the book. You can save time by searching the entire ebook for a term or concept. Navigate them easily by moving between pages or chapters to find the content you need, and you can increase or decrease the font size to suit your reading style. Some ebooks allow you to instantly highlight text, take notes, or bookmark pages to come back to later.

If you find something you love, share it easily with your OU community. Most of our ebooks are available to multiple readers at any time wherever you are. Connect to the internet and connect to the library.

[END PLAYBACK]

FIONA: So that's just a short promotional video about the ebooks. And I meant to say at the beginning, if you've got any questions as we go along, do feel free to ask. And I'll endeavour to answer them. So I've got a couple of scenarios that we're going to look at, and the first one is it might be useful to understand a bit more about some of the terms and concepts you've encountered so far in your module, or perhaps you want to know a bit more about someone you're learning about.



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The library has lots of online reference books, which might be useful. We've got dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and you can search library search for reference entries, but we have a page on the library website as well, which brings together collections of useful reference books, and we'll look at both of those now. So I'm just going to share my screen.

And hopefully, you can all see my screen. We're on the library website at the moment. So you can search for things in the search box on the home page of the library. And if you've done the other library training sessions, then you'll have come across that. I'm just going to do a quick search for a topic, like dinosaur.

And once you've done a search for a topic, then you'll find that you get lots and lots of results, and they're in all sorts of different formats. I've got quite a lot of results here, 95,000 or more. And you can see that we've got articles, we've got reference entries, and we also would find books if we kept scrolling down as well.

So the thing to do to just filter to what you're particularly interested in is to go to the right hand side of library search. And you can see there's all sorts of resource types here. So for example, newspaper articles, articles. And one we're particularly interested in today is reference entries. And this means that it's bringing back definitions and short pieces about our particular topic, which in this case is dinosaurs.

So this is one way of finding information on a particular topic. So for example, you might want just to have a quick look at what a definition of your keyword is or a little bit more about it if it's in an encyclopaedia, for example. So this is one way of looking for them. And as you can see, there's still quite a lot of results here. We've got 1,841, and they're coming from all sorts of different aspects. So for example, there's dinosaurs as part of science fiction, part of literary works, and also as a scientific concept, and even how to rhyme dinosaur with other words in the New Oxford Rhyming Dictionary. So there's a whole different selection of things that dinosaur might mean there.

So if we go to the library home page, this is the other way of looking for definitions of particular keywords and topics. So we've searched in library search, and we've filtered to reference entries. We also have a page which you can find by clicking on Database Collections, which is this link just here under the library search box.

And on the right hand side of this page, you'll see resources by type. So there's the databases, which are collections of different things like articles, books, music, and standards and things like that. And then there's other things here. So the one we're particularly interested in today is Dictionaries, thesauri, and encyclopaedias.

So we have the kind of things on this page, which you would expect to find in a library like Encyclopaedia Britannica and also the Oxford English Dictionary, which is probably the most famous English dictionary in the world, all 20 volumes of it. But we also have a couple of



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collections, which I want to point out. One of them is called credo reference, and this is access to a selection of 169 reference books, including encyclopaedias and dictionaries.

And then right at the bottom of the page, there's also Oxford Reference, which again, is a cross searchable collection of over 280 language subject dictionaries. We're going to have a quick look at how Oxford Reference works, but the other one, Credo Reference, works in a very similar way.

So what Oxford Reference contains is hundreds of dictionaries and encyclopaedias on subjects. So for example, there may be an encyclopaedia of mammals, for example. So this is Oxford Reference, and this means that we're now able to search across all those different subject dictionaries from Oxford University Press, and because it's Oxford University Press, it's usually considered to be a particularly reliable reference source. It has very good academic editors, so it's a good source to use if you want to put it into an assignment for example. So perhaps we'll just do a quick look for psychology, maybe.

And there are probably a lot of things to do with psychology in Oxford Reference, because it covers such a wide range of different dictionaries. And you can see here, for example, we've got the Oxford Dictionary of Psychology. In fact, most of the first lot of entries are here. And they'll be about different aspects of psychology. You can see what sort of books are bringing out these results as well.

So we've got a dictionary of psychology. We've got the Oxford Companion to World Mythology and the Oxford Companion to Consciousness, organisational behaviour, sport studies. So all of these subjects will have something to do with psychology. So when we did the initial search, it just brought back 24,000 entries from all the different resources, which were in Oxford Reference, but sometimes you might want to look in a particular book. So for instance, you might want a dictionary of psychology.

And one of the things which always used to frustrate me about the Credo and Oxford Reference databases particularly is that you have this search box at the top and that is searching everything that is in the database, but sometimes you just want to search a particular work. And to do that you need to scroll down a bit, and then you can see there's another search box here, which is search within this work, and then we could perhaps have a look for say cognitive psychology and see what we get.

And you can see here that we've, again, got quite a lot of results. We might want to refine our search even a little bit more perhaps. But one of the nice things about the Oxford Reference database is it actually shows you how many words. So if you're just looking for a very quick definition, you might want just a few words. If you want something a bit longer, for example, cognitive impairment has 23 words. And in some cases, you may very well find that there are hundreds of words on a particular topic if it's coming from an Encyclopaedia, rather than a dictionary.



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So if we go back to the home page of Oxford Reference, just search for another topic. You know, just a quick one, like saying "wizards"-- if I can spell it. They're very unforgiving, actually, the databases. It's not like Google, where if you spell something wrong, it will at least make an effort to try and guess what you meant. If you get the spelling wrong in a database, then it won't play ball.

And you can see, there are, again, several meanings of the word wizard, so it could also be something that helps you to perform a particular task in a programme. It could be something from children's literature, English folklore. So I'll just click on this one. And you can see, we've got a definition of 69 words here actually.

And then in the top right hand corner, you can see that you can do things with the entries from the dictionaries and encyclopaedias. So you can print them out, you can save them to your computer. There's a little tool here called Cite. And this will give you an indication of how you might perhaps want to cite the article. It's not quite the OU Harvard style, but it's fairly close. APA is very close. So this could help you to reference something from an Encyclopaedia if that's what you wanted to do. And you can also share these things-- although why you would want to, I don't know-- on Facebook, Twitter, and all sorts of other places as well. Perhaps you might want to post it to a Facebook group that you run or something like that.

So are there any questions, anything you want me to look up for you or any comments? Excellent. So hopefully that all makes sense. So that was our first scenario, where you've been asked to look up a definition, or you just to feel that you don't know enough about a particular subject, and you just want a bit of extra information. So that would be looking up our reference material, which is dictionaries and encyclopaedias, and we have a lot of those.

Another scenario is you're actually given a link or asked to find a particular ebook, or you may be asked to find something on a topic, and you want to find a particular book. And again, we can use library search to do that. We'll go back to sharing my screen again. Just go back to the library website.

OK, back to the library home page. Continuing on the dinosaur theme. Look for Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs. So that's actually the name of the book. Again, I need to spell it correctly. Not a good time for it. There we go.

So Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs is the name of a book that I've been asked to find. So I just put the title of the book into library search, and if we've got it, it should be one of the first results.

Sorry. My computer's a little bit slow this evening. And you can see that my very first result here is Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs: Evolution, Extinction, and the Future of Our Planet. And due to the fact that our records are coming from several different places, sometimes you



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may find that a book has more than one entry in library search, but they are, in fact, the same book, and the records are just coming from a couple of different places.

And you can see that it's actually brought up lots of other books on a similar topic, which I think it was Denise doing environmental science. This one sounds like it might be interesting, *How Plants Changed Earth's History*. And if we scroll down a bit further, you can see there's even an article about the book *Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs*, which will be a review of the book by somebody who tells you whether they think it's a good book or not.

If you are looking for a book on a topic, so for example, if we went back to dinosaurs, you want to see what sort of books we've got on a particular topic, you can just type your topic into library search. And then on the right hand side of library search, you've got the option here to limit by resource types. They've got articles, newspapers, et cetera. And ebooks is one of the filters that we could use.

So just click on it and apply the filter. And now, the only results I've got are ebooks about dinosaurs. And it's possible that you may just be looking for more recent books on the topic. So for example, we've got books from 1800 to 2019. So we might want to make that just the last 10 years, perhaps.

So that means that we've only got more recent books on the topic. I'm going to go back to *Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs*, which is one of the books, and just explain how it works. So if you click on the title of anything in library search, it would take you to a page which gives you more information about it, or you can just click on full text available. And that will take you to the full text. So let's just click on here, and then you can see a bit more information about the book.

So here we've got a description about the book, some subjects and key words about it, which perhaps you might want to use if we were doing a subject search, and we wanted to think of some more keywords. And we've also got a citation here, which is something that you might find useful, which will just give you an idea of maybe how the citation would look. It's not completely like OU Harvard, which is presumably what you're using in your modules. But it will at least give you an idea of the components of the citation. So it's sometimes quite a useful thing to know about.

We're going to click on where the full text is, and it's in the database called Ebook Central Academic Complete. And we have a lot of ebooks from this particular provider. There are, I think, something like 140,000 books from just this one database. And you'll see there are various options, which the publisher makes available to you. So you can read the book online, but this particular one, you can also download the book. And the book can be downloaded for up to 21 days.



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In order to read the book, you will need to download Adobe Digital Editions, which is a bit like Adobe Acrobat for PDFs, which is freely available software. And Adobe Digital Editions is something that you need to download in order to read these particular kinds of ebooks.

You can also see on the page that it shows you all the different parts of the book. Sometimes you'll find that the sections of the book are actually hidden, and you've got to click on an arrow or something in order to make them appear. There should be something in the book which shows you what the chapters are within it. So I'm just going to click on the first chapter.

And then once you've clicked on it, you can search within the book. So perhaps, I might be interested in a particular kind of dinosaur, and you can search within the book, and it will then show you where that word occurs within the book. Another thing which you can do with these books is you can highlight and make notes on them as well, and this is some highlighting I did a few days ago actually, and when you come back to the book, it will still show your highlights and your notes if you've made any.

So if you want to highlight a particular piece of text, there are tools which you can find just about at the top of the chapter. So this one here is the highlight tool. And then perhaps, I just wanted to highlight these two particular kinds of dinosaurs, Triceratops and Tyrannosaurus Rex. And then perhaps I might want to make a note. This is a note I made earlier, which again, I bring it up, and I can make some more notes.

And so once you've actually made your notes or you've done your highlighting, then next time you go back to the book, then the highlights and the notes will still be there. So this is a note I made earlier, and you can see that there's a little orange box in the top left hand corner, which tells me that I made a note for that particular page.

So I just want to go back to the home page of the book now and just point out some of the other things you could do with the book. Because this is a library book, it has the same kinds of copyright conditions that a library book would normally have. So it's not like the kind of book that you might buy from Amazon or something. So the publisher limits the amount of printing you can do. So you can see here that you can print up to 58 pages from this book, and you can download and keep 116 pages as a PDF.

So those are sort of like permanent copies of the book that you can make. You can, however, download the book as many times as you want. And this particular kind of book is available for anybody. So there's no limitations on the number of people who can access the book at the same time. So we could have 100 students downloading this book, and that would still be OK. And you can download the book for 21 days and then when the 21 days comes to the end you can download it again if that's what you want to do.



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So these are the options you've got. You can download it to read on a device, on your laptop, or on a tablet, or on your mobile phone. And then you get the option to do some printing and making permanent PDF copies of up to 116 pages.

And another key thing that you can do with ebooks, which makes them quite useful, is you can actually change the size of the text. The size of the text for me on this is perfectly fine. But if you're reading it on a mobile phone, for example, you might want to increase the size of the text, and you can do that with the zoom out and zoom in buttons up here on the top right hand corner.

So you can either download the whole book for 21 days, make a PDF copy of a chapter, part of the pages, and you can also share a link to this particular book, or if you're in library search, and you think that's a really useful book that you might want to keep, you need to sign into library search so that it knows who you are, which I haven't actually done. But we'll see under the blue search box where it says sign in for easier access, there's a link here that says Sign In.

If I do that, then library search will authenticate me and who I am. This is something you have to do extra to actually signing into the Open University. You need to sign in to library search as well so that library search knows who you are. Ah right, Denise. Yes, we'll get to that in a minute actually.

Right. So library search now knows that I'm Durham, Fiona. And if I want to save Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs to come back to at a later stage, I can click on Add to My Favourites now. This little pin icon. That now means if I go to the big pin icon next to my name at the top, it will have saved that the record of that book there, so that next time I can come back to it if I want to.

You can see that I actually save quite a lot of stuff over the years. So I've got a couple of hundred things in my Favourites, and Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs is the latest one I've now saved. Looks like quite an interesting read actually. I might go back to that.

So unless anybody's got any more questions, we'll go back to the presentation. And we'll just have a little talk about what you can do with ebooks. So they're published by a huge range of publishers, and they can look and behave very differently from each other. Some of them are easier to use than others. And some of them you can't download at all. You actually have to read them online.

And some of them will only allow you to download a part of them and others like the one we've just looked at will allow you to download the whole book for a period of 21 days or up to 21 days. And not every tool or function I've just demonstrated will be available in every ebook, because the publishers are very different in the way they do things. But don't be afraid to explore. Do have a look and see what we've got because there's some great ebooks in the library. You can't break it, so just play with it.



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So Denise has asked can it be downloaded to a Kindle, and the answer to that, I'm afraid, is it depends. So if the publisher makes that option available, then you can download it, and you may need to check the help information for the ebook publishers website. Kindles are a bit of a problem actually because they use a specific format the Amazon makes available called MOBI, M-O-B-I. And some of our ebook collections do actually make that format available, but not very many of them.

However, if the publisher allows you to download a PDF, it's sometimes possible to email the PDF to your Kindle, and depending on whether the PDF has something called Flow, which allows it to change shape, then it will work on a Kindle. Unfortunately, not all PDFs have this property. So what happens sometimes is that you email a PDF to your Kindle, and you can't change the shape of it, and it's so tiny, it's really almost impossible to read. So experiment if you found a book you like. See if there's a PDF version which you can email to your Kindle and see if it works for you.

So now it's your turn to have a go at playing with ebooks. And I've got an ebook collection called Very Short Introductions. I'm going to put the link in the chat as well for you. And you can browse by subject in Very Short Introductions. So go to Very Short Introductions, and I'll give you three or four minutes just to go and play with it and browse by subject. Pick a title which sounds interesting. Click on its title to access it, and then come back and copy and paste the title of the chapter or the book into the chat and let me know what you found.

So what is it? Eight minutes past now. If we come back about nine or 10 minutes past and just let me know what you found.

Excellent. A very short introduction to anxiety, a short introduction to the weather, how the advertising industry is structured. I've also got history of childhood as well. So it's a really good database Very Short Introductions. They're written by academics, and they're published by Oxford University Press, and because they're short, they're generally a bit easier to cope with than very large academic texts.

So if you want to get your head around a particular topic, they're quite a good way to read. They're about 100 pages. Angela says, do we need to create a new password? No, it's the same as the one that you use for the Open University for your module material or for any other of the library websites.

With some of the databases, you can also create your own personal account with them if you want to do things like saving stuff or getting alerts or something like that, but normally, if you just want to look at the books, then you just go, you put the password in, and that's it.

So just having a quick look to see what Karen has found. What was the title of the book, Karen? Oh, Angela, have you ever tried to log into any of the other library databases? So it's a bit strange that it's not because normally, if you can get into any of the other databases--



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oh, thanks, Karen, yeah, the civil piece. If you can get into the other databases, then you should hopefully be able to get in to Very Short Introductions.

Right. If you're still having problems in half an hour or so, then don't worry about it. Then contact the library help desk tomorrow. Send them an email. This is their-- so [libhelp@open.ac.uk](mailto:libhelp@open.ac.uk). As I said, if you're still having problems-- actually, you could try a different browser and see if that works, but otherwise get in touch with the library help desk, and they'll sort you out.

So I think we more or less almost come to the end of this session now. So there are some helpful links. There's Understanding Ebooks, which is on the home page of the library website, and the publishers usually have some kind of help pages if you need download information. And as I've just said, you can contact the library help desk if you're having password problems or you need some more information, and contact details for the library help desk are on every page of the library website, or you can just email, as I've just given you the email here.

So in summary, what we've done in this session is we've looked for information in online dictionaries and encyclopaedias and how we might find those. We've had a quick look at a particular ebook and how to navigate around it, and you'll find that most ebooks will let you do those sorts of things. But they may do them in different ways. And we've just had a look at some of the tools, which may be available.

So that's the end of the session. If you've got any more questions, do feel free to ask, and I'll try to answer them. And at the end of every session, we've got a feedback form, which we like people to fill in if you've got time. And every month, we put the names of people who fill in the feedback form into a draw. and the lucky winner gets a 20 pound Amazon voucher. Thank you very much for coming this evening. And wish you all the best for your modules that you're studying now. Thanks for coming. I'm glad you found it helpful, Jerry.



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