

## **SECOND GUESSING SECONDARY DATA: GETTING STUDENTS TO REFLECT ON WHAT THE INTERNET REALLY HAS TO OFFER**

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Generation Y students have grown up in a world awash in data. If they want to know anything, they simply turn to Google or Wikipedia and, voila, an answer pops up. And without question, they are often quick to accept answers at face value. Getting them to realize how little they know, and how difficult it is to actually ask the right questions in the right way is difficult in our computer driven and smart-phone equipped world.

As educators, we often assign research tasks to our students and are usually frustrated by their inability to use reason and analytical skills to properly formulate questions and logically answer them. How many times have we scratched our heads and wonder how they came up with this or that answer? How often have we complained to our colleagues about how little students seem exhibit any signs of thinking? As instructors, we are often privy to a stack of papers with a wide range of answers (both in terms of content and quality) to simple questions. It is based on such a bird's eye view that we can assess whether our students are actually learning. Unfortunately, we are usually disappointed.

Meanwhile, student evaluations of they own educational experiences ask them about how much they have individually learned. They do not have any basis for comparing their own levels of academic mastery to those of their classmates beyond final grades. They are asked about what they have learned and how well the instructor knows and presents their materials. They are seldom asked to reflect upon what they do not know and what they need to do to address those lacunae in their knowledge and their experience.

Perhaps asking students what they didn't know or didn't expect would actually make them reflect on what they need to know if they are to become truly learned and wise in the Socratic sense. This study outlines a simple marketing research assignment given to a group of college seniors and a subsequent reflective assessment of that assignment. Through their reflections on what they learned they didn't know, by comparing their individual findings with their colleagues, the students reveal what they truly learned about secondary data research.