

Free Articles and Indexes: Can You Afford Not to Use Them?

Two important resources that every library offers are periodical literature (e.g., magazines, scholarly journals) and indexes and abstracts (the tools traditionally used to access the information in periodicals). Casual readers, consumers, businesspeople, health professionals, teachers, and students frequently turn to periodicals not only for entertainment, but also for product evaluations, management data, research concerning medical treatments, lesson plans, and subject background information. Even younger pupils in primary grades are often expected to locate periodical articles to complement their budding research projects on volcanoes, the rainforest, and endangered species, for example. Although libraries are repositories of the materials required to fill these information needs, many librarians find it difficult to sustain collections that satisfy all their users' expectations.