

Babe... You're a Bit of a Know It All

Student Love and Breakup Letters to a Library Research Skills Tutorial

Danielle Dennie & Susie Breier
Concordia University Library's 17th Annual Research Forum
April 26, 2019

In February 2018, we launched the Library Research Skills Tutorial

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Concordia University Library Research Skills Tutorial. At the top left is the Concordia University logo with the text 'UNIVERSITE Concordia UNIVERSITY' and 'LIBRARY' below it. To the right of the logo is the title 'Library Research Skills Tutorial'. Further right is a 'Live chat' button and a search bar with the text 'Search' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the header is a navigation menu with the following items: 'GETTING STARTED', 'SEARCH BASICS', 'FINDING ARTICLES', 'FINDING BOOKS', 'FINDING OTHER TYPES OF SOURCES', 'READING, WRITING & NOTE-TAKING', 'CITING', and 'CONCLUSION'. Below the navigation menu is a breadcrumb trail: 'Concordia.ca / Library / Learn'. The main content area features a paragraph: 'This tutorial can be used to help you achieve academic success and undertake university-level research by providing the necessary skills to find useful information, evaluate it critically, and use it wisely for your various assignments.' Below this paragraph are four columns, each with an icon and a description of a tutorial section: 1. 'Getting started' with a red shoe icon and the text: 'Learn how to choose a research topic, come up with a research question, and find the right place to search.' 2. 'Search basics' with a red laptop and magnifying glass icon and the text: 'Discover the best search techniques for finding books and articles, as well as what to do if a search produces too few or too many results.' 3. 'Finding articles' with an orange document icon and the text: 'Learn about the different types of articles and the peer review process. Explore how to identify, search for, select, access and evaluate articles.' 4. 'Finding books' with a yellow book icon and the text: 'Learn about the different types of print and online books available at the Library. Explore how to identify, search for, select, access and borrow books.' In the bottom right corner, there is a vertical 'Feedback' button with a red plus sign icon.

UNIVERSITE
Concordia
UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

Live chat

Search

GETTING STARTED SEARCH BASICS FINDING ARTICLES FINDING BOOKS FINDING OTHER TYPES OF SOURCES READING, WRITING & NOTE-TAKING CITING CONCLUSION

Concordia.ca / Library / Learn

This tutorial can be used to help you achieve academic success and undertake university-level research by providing the necessary skills to find useful information, evaluate it critically, and use it wisely for your various assignments.

Getting started

Learn how to choose a research topic, come up with a research question, and find the right place to search.

Search basics

Discover the best search techniques for finding books and articles, as well as what to do if a search produces too few or too many results.

Finding articles

Learn about the different types of articles and the peer review process. Explore how to identify, search for, select, access and evaluate articles.

Finding books

Learn about the different types of print and online books available at the Library. Explore how to identify, search for, select, access and borrow books.

Feedback

Informal user testing gave us very positive results

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Library Research Skills Tutorial

Live chat Search

GETTING STARTED SEARCH BASICS FINDING ARTICLES FINDING BOOKS FINDING OTHER TYPES OF SOURCES READING, WRITING & NOTE-TAKING CITING CONCLUSION

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We had two research questions that we wanted to explore

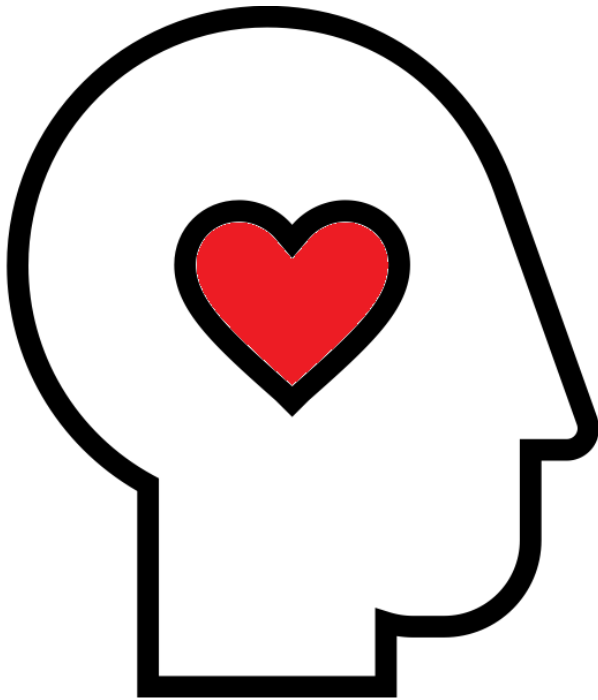
1

Is the Library Research Skills Tutorial a useful tool when recommended to undergraduate students with research assignments?

2

...

We decided to investigate our question using a UX methodology



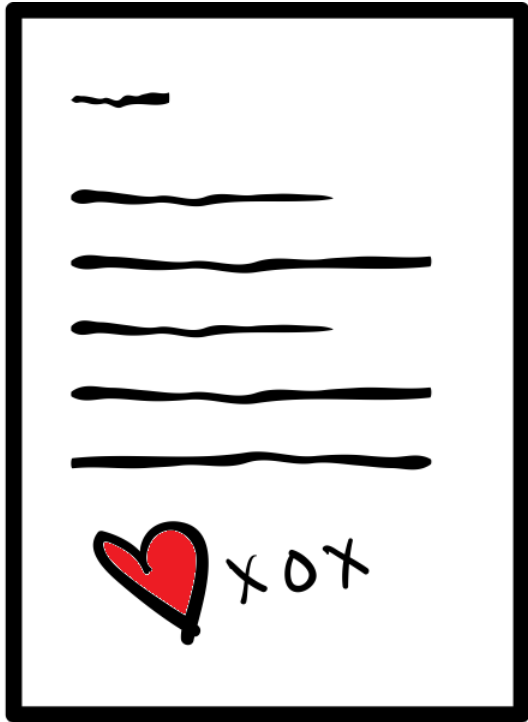
Created by Mooms
from Noun Project



User Experience is everything that happens to your users when they interact with your service in any way (physically or remotely). It includes everything they **see**, everything they **hear**, everything they **do**, as well as their **emotional reactions**.

- Priestner (2017)

We chose a novel UX method: the love / breakup letter



Created by Lil Squid
from Noun Project

“ A method that reveals how people relate to and are attached to everyday technologies [or services] by asking them to participate in the familiar activity of writing love or break-up letters (...). These letters tend to be playful, but also facilitate emotional expression in a way that can allow users to easily reflect on their attitudes and feelings

- Walker (2018)

Our second research question relates to the effectiveness of this UX method

1

Is the Library Research Skills Tutorial a useful tool when recommended to undergraduate students with research assignments?

2

Will the love / breakup letter method work in a library setting? Will students know how to participate? Will it provide helpful feedback, different from our pre-launch user testing?

We worked with four social sciences classes to recruit participants

Incorporated tutorial
in assignment
description



Created by Thijs Rentier
from Noun Project

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Did not reveal
methodology to students
until evaluation day



Created by Adrien Coquet
from Noun Project

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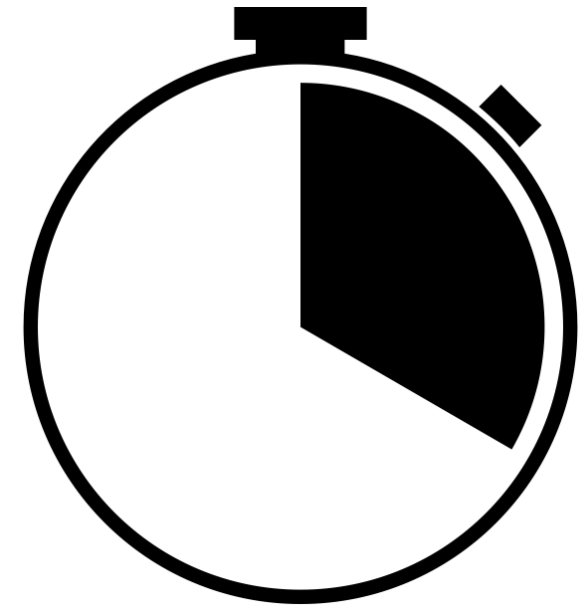
Created by Thijs Rentier
from Noun Project

Did not reveal
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Created by Adrien Coquet
from Noun Project

Gave students
only 20 minutes
to write letters

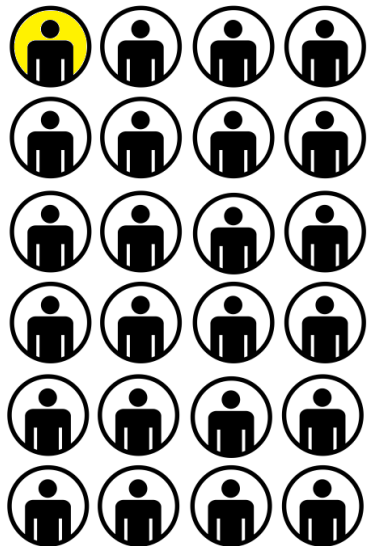


Created by Thomas Marijnissen
from Noun Project

52 students participated in our study

SOCI/ANTH 298

2 (75)



AHSC 281

21 (50)



AHSC 350

21 (41)



SOCI 402

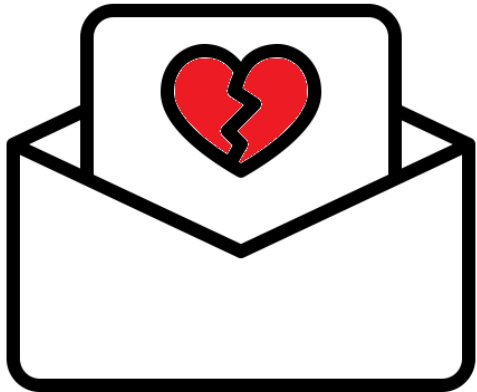
8 (9)



We received 41 usable letters, which we divided into 4 groups

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Breakup



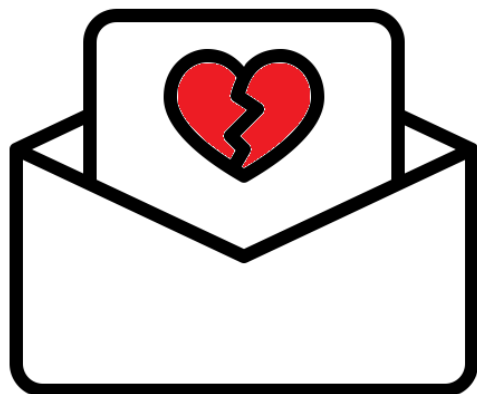
Love



We received 41 usable letters, which we divided into 4 groups

Breakup

56%



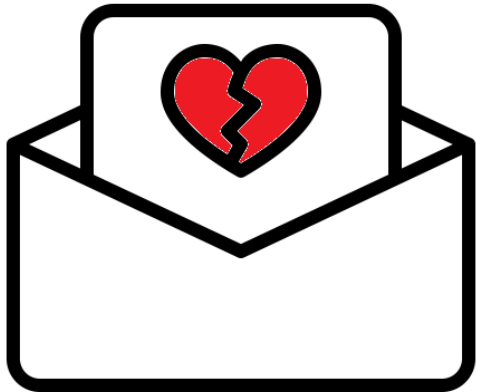
Love



We received 41 usable letters, which we divided into 4 groups

Breakup

56%



Love

22%



We received 41 usable letters, which we divided into 4 groups

Breakup

56%



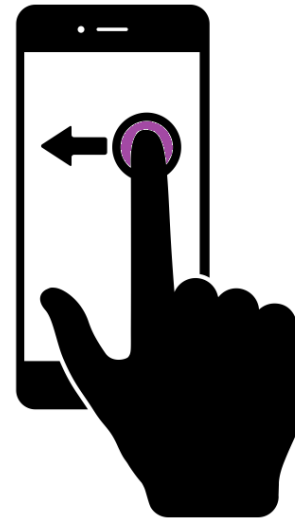
Love

22%



Swipe left

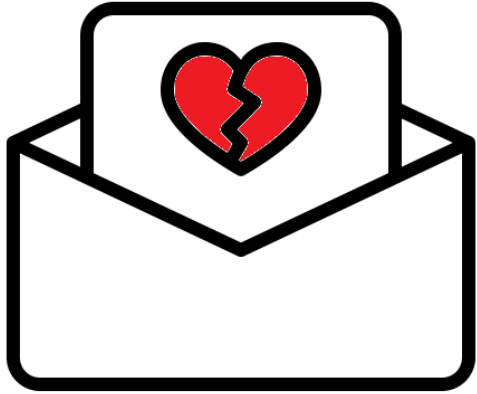
15%



One-night stand

7%





Created by amy morgan
from Noun Project

“

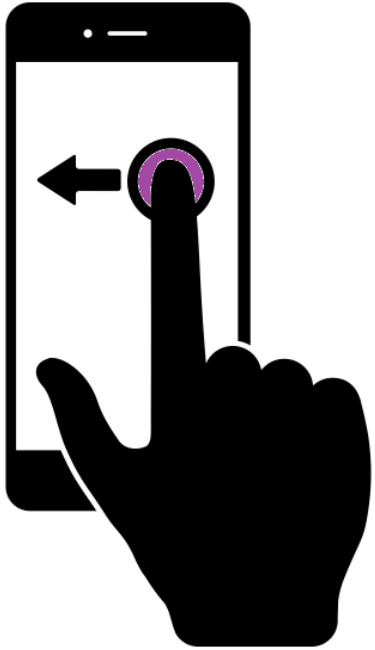
Dear LRST,

As I am already pretty comfortable looking for articles and research papers I was very reluctant to go on a first date at all.

Seeing how a friend set us up, I decided to give it a chance. I wasn't particularly wowed as the information was pretty basic. Too many links also create stress. I personally would have preferred a webinar style tutorial

Anyway, it was nice to meet you

Take care



Created by TMD
from Noun Project

“

Dear Library Tutorial,

I'm sorry I never gave you a fair chance. I am sorry to say I've been using another software. Coming from cegep where I am used to using google scholar to write my papers, I have trust issues using someone new.

I suggest to promote yourself competitively to convince me why I should choose you. Don't be so shy next time, brag about your qualities!

I am not used to new relationships and tend to stick to my old ways.

Maybe in the future I will give you a second chance 

I mean it when I say, it's not you it's me.

Love, Google Scholar user 



Created by Gan Khoon Lay
from Noun Project

“

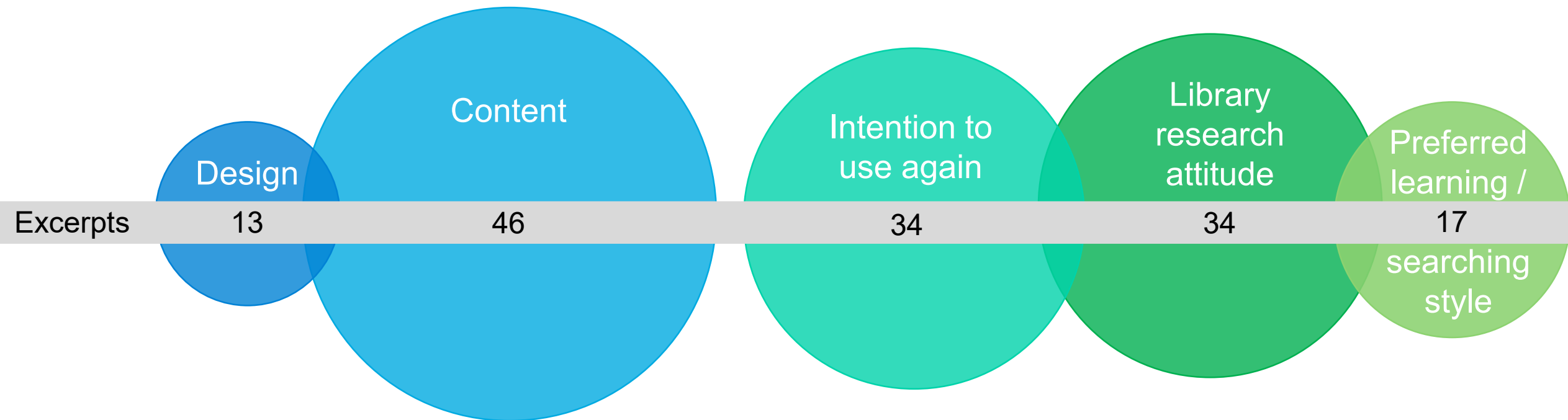
Dear Library Research Skills Tutorial,

Our relationship is kind of like when you try and make a meal for the first time. You already have an idea of how it should be prepared, but you feel somewhat unsure of all the intricacies of how to go about it. Looking at the long list of steps to follow is daunting and makes you question if it's really worth it or if you should just pop a microwavable meal in instead. You muster up all your energy and plow forward. As you continue, you see that it isn't so hard at all, and when the meal is done, it was well worth [it]. The next time you make the meal however, you don't follow the guidelines. You might look at it every now and then for a reminder, but generally you don't need it and want to go forth and try things on your own. You were great at the start (...) However, I've grown since then and want to fly on my own now. We can stay in touch.

We uncovered five major themes in the letters, divided into two frames:
tutorial characteristics and student context

It's you

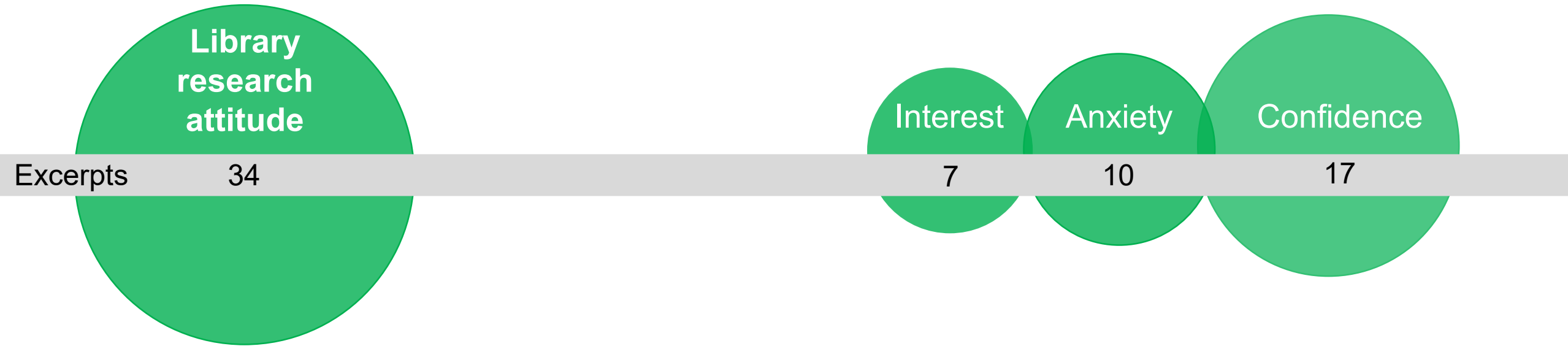
It's not you, it's me



It's not you, it's me

Attitude towards library research:

Refers to how students perceive library research



Confidence: students already know how to do library research or learned it previously

Library
research
attitude

Interest

Anxiety

Confidence

Excerpts

34

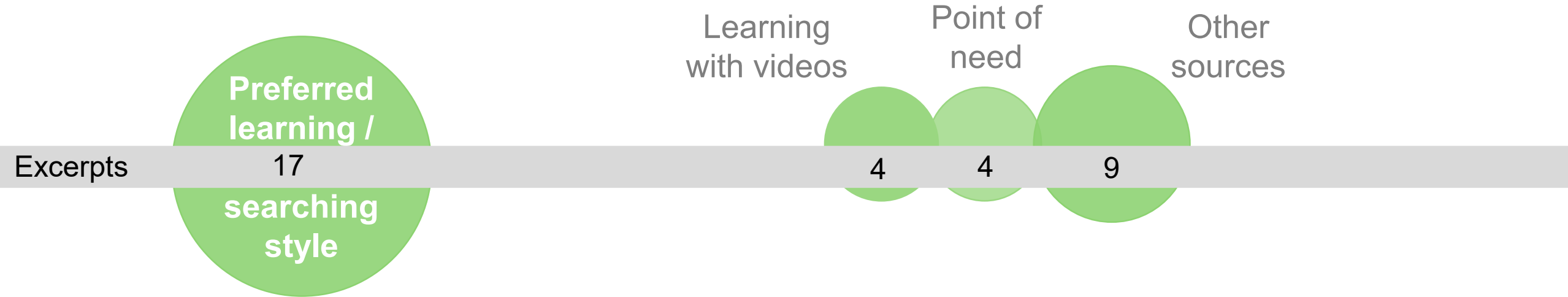
7

10

17

“ If I have made it to university its because this isn't the first paper I write

Preferred learning or searching style: How students prefer to learn or where they prefer to get library research help or to search for information



“ I have found other, better, more user friendly resources to have my academic paper writing time with

The answer to the first research question:

1

Is the Library Research Skills Tutorial a useful tool when recommended to undergraduate students with research assignments?

The answer to the first research question: NO

1

Is the Library Research Skills Tutorial a useful tool when recommended to undergraduate students with research assignments?

Gross & Latham (2009)

“

[S]tudents report that they do not use electronic resources such as help files or online tutorials. Their overwhelming preference is just to ask someone else, whether that is a family member, a friend, a classmate, or the person who happens to be sitting next to them

“

[P]eople who have a lot of confidence about their level of ability are unlikely to seek opportunities to build skills they think they already have. (...)

The answer to the second research question is more nuanced

2

Will the love / breakup method work in a library setting?

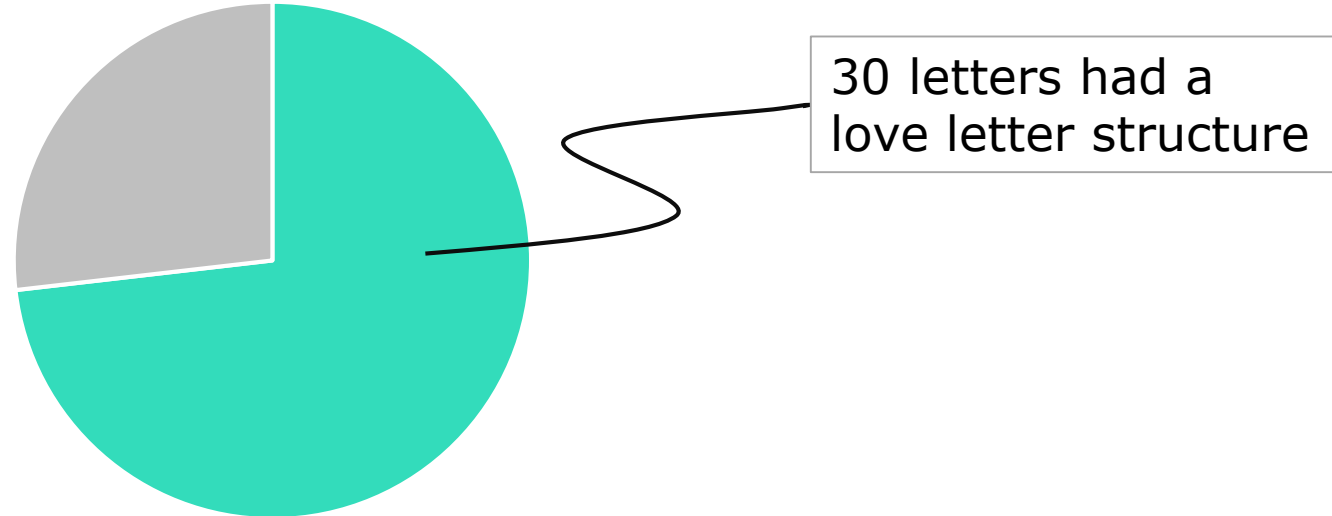
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The answer to the second research question is more nuanced

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Will the love / breakup method work in a library setting?

Will students know how to participate? Will it provide helpful feedback, different from our pre-launch user testing?



The methodology may be more successful if attempted with a technology / service that elicits attachment

2

Will the love / breakup method work in a library setting?

Will students know how to participate? Will it provide helpful feedback, different from our pre-launch user testing?



Acknowledgements

Andrea Cameron, Dianne Cmor



References

Gerber, E. M. (2012). Tech break ups: A research method for understanding technological attachment. *Interactions*, 19(5), 26-30. doi:10.1145/2334184.2334192

Gross, M., & Latham, D. (2009). Undergraduate perceptions of information literacy: defining, attaining, and self-assessing skills. *College & Research Libraries*. **70**(4), 336-350.

Priestner, A. (2017). In front of our very eyes: The value of UX research methods. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/AndyPriestner1/in-front-of-our-very-eyes-the-value-of-ux-research-methods-80607322>

Thank you!

