JSTOR

Case study

Faculty time constraints are our concern: JSTOR's interactive research tool maximizes efficiency

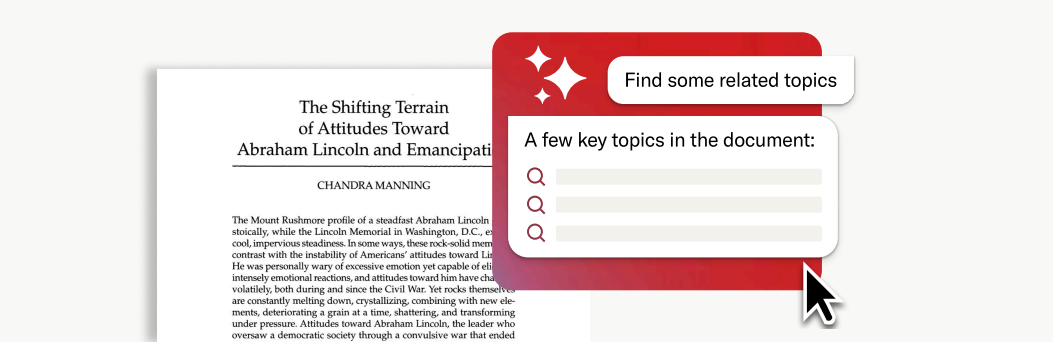
"Having the research tool integrated into JSTOR is incredibly helpful. ChatGPT sometimes provides inaccurate summaries—mixing up different sources or misinterpreting reviews. JSTOR's tool delivers accurate, context-specific insights without leaving the platform."

Steve Hermann, a high school English teacher at Marine Leadership Academy

Public school educators often juggle multiple roles beyond subject matter expert. Bess Wilhelms currently teaches US history, world history, and civics at George Rogers Clark Elementary School in Chicago. Previously, she taught high school AP psychology and AP US history. Steve Hermann, a lifelong public school educator, teaches at Marine Leadership Academy, also in Chicago. He is a special education teacher who also leads a dual-credit English course that offers college freshman-level English credit to high school seniors.

Bess and Steve became familiar with JSTOR when they were undergraduate students, and know from experience that it is a reliable source for vetted scholarly articles. Bess describes JSTOR as her "go-to resource" for finding articles related to the history topics she teaches. Steve introduces his students to JSTOR to give them early exposure to college-level, high-quality articles. He is the only teacher at his school who does this.

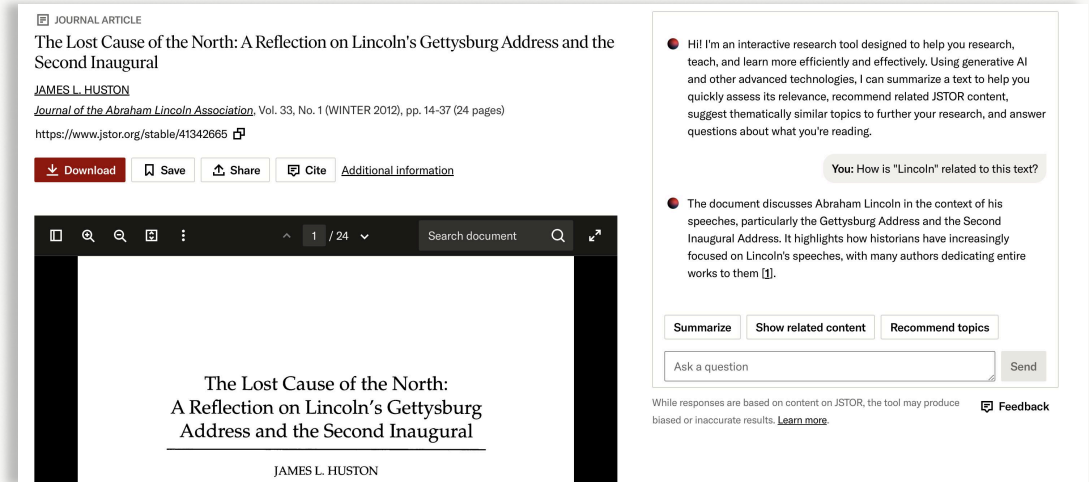
While exploring the platform, each discovered JSTOR's interactive research tool and soon found it invaluable to their work. That's because the tool leverages AI and other advanced technologies to help teachers and students expand their research and unearth new avenues for discovery. It surfaces key points from texts and facilitates engagement with articles and book chapters. Because the tool is seamlessly integrated with JSTOR's trusted scholarly resources, Bess and Steve also use it to streamline tasks like lesson planning and reviewing students' work. This case study reflects the experiences of the two public school educators we interviewed.



They found that JSTOR's interactive research tool provides consistent value by maximizing efficiency, providing reliable results for educators and their students, and responding to the needs of educators, especially those in the humanities and social sciences.

An efficient assistant

This year, Bess happens to be teaching US and world history to middle school students for the first time. As she prepared her lessons, she used JSTOR's interactive research tool, which made the process of finding articles on specific topics much faster.



"I was looking something up for a lesson—I think it was Lincoln—and needed a specific fact. I knew it existed but didn't have the exact year or number. I just typed in what I knew, and JSTOR's tool quickly pointed me to the right section of the article."

Bess Wilhelms, a middle school history teacher at George Rogers Clark Elementary School

While a traditional keyword search can help find a range of articles, JSTOR's research tool allows users to quickly locate specific information, eliminating the need to skim through an article to see if it contains the desired information. For educators like Bess, who use JSTOR articles to refresh and reinforce her subject knowledge, the tool helps her save time by streamlining the lesson-planning process.

Meanwhile, Steve uses the tool to check on his students' engagement with journal articles. In his English class, students must select at least three articles from JSTOR to write a research essay on a topic of their choice. As part of this assignment, students document their research process—finding relevant articles, identifying key information, and reflecting on how they might use the material in their essays. As students establish their arguments, Steve uses the research tool to verify whether they have correctly grasped the main ideas of the articles. It takes time to check three articles for each student, but the tool gives Steve the ability to quickly locate the articles his students read and extract the main ideas without having to read the entire article himself.

Accurate and reliable performance

Steve prefers using JSTOR's interactive research tool over other services that leverage AI and other advanced technologies, like ChatGPT. As a longtime reader and educator, Steve can easily identify when an AI-generated summary is "on point" or inaccurate. Steve likes that he doesn't need to leave JSTOR to verify the main points in his students' selected readings. As he has demonstrated to his students, generative AI tools like ChatGPT often fail to produce accurate summaries because they crowdsource information from the internet. In contrast, JSTOR's tool is designed to positively impact student outcomes and draws on reliable content from the platform's trusted corpus. By extracting information directly from the full article itself, the tool eliminates the risks of misinformation or third-party bias in generating accurate responses.

Maximize efficiency while improving search results

Bess and Steve, like many other educators, must manage multiple responsibilities in- and outside their classrooms. Their experience using JSTOR's interactive research tool demonstrates how it addresses the specific and unique needs of secondary school teachers. The tool has unlocked time-saving capabilities that give educators like Bess and Steve the opportunity to teach more efficiently while boosting student engagement with high-quality scholarship.

To explore the benefits of JSTOR's interactive research tool, sign up for our beta. Join a community of forward-thinking educators, librarians, and students working to enhance academic accessibility and drive impactful research.