

Hello, I need data identifying two categories for children ages 0-17 years old in the United States and also globally. - Top 15-20 children illness AND - Top 15-20 children surgeries.

January, 2014



Lisa Elliott

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Lisa Elliott of Tigard Public Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in May 2013.

Lisa picked up a chat call with a somewhat complex statistical question about childhood diseases. The patron asked for information about the top 15-20 childhood illnesses and the top 15-20 childhood surgeries, both in the U.S. and globally.

Lisa was immediately friendly and welcoming. Her first thought of a resource was the CDC. A search of CDC.gov led Lisa to a report on children's health, including a great deal of data, but not the specific statistics for which the patron was searching.

Lisa was undeterred. She moved on to searching for World Health Organization data. When the data continued to be elusive, Lisa offered to have other librarians continue the research and send an answer to the patron via email. Librarians at OHSU Library did send an email answer to the patron with additional resources.

The Quality Team is impressed with Lisa's friendly tone, knowledge of authoritative resources, and clear determination to answer the question.

As an expression of our appreciation, Lisa was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College (stephanie.debner@mhcc.edu)

Joanna Milner, Multnomah County Library (joannam@multcolib.org)

Hillary Ostlund, Hillsboro Public Library (Hillary.Ostlund@hillsboro-oregon.gov)

Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library (emilyp@multco.us)

I am looking for a children's book about the Pendleton Round-Up.

February, 2014



Nadia Abdullah

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org>), recognizes volunteer Nadia Abdullah for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in September 2013.

The question that Nadia answered is one that was submitted to the service via text message. The challenges of answering a reference question in a text message environment include the need to send brief answers, limiting use of web addresses (since patrons may not have smart phones), and making it clear to the patron that the person answering the question is human, and a friendly human at that. Nadia excelled on all counts.

In this conversation, the patron asked for help finding a children's book about the Pendleton Round-Up. Nadia provided the title of a book that, while not a children's book, has many photographs of the Round-Up. She also offered to have a children's librarian research the question further and send additional resources via email. The patron shared her email address and received additional information later the same day (to which the patron replied, saying thank you and stating that she was impressed and amazed).

The Quality Team is impressed with Nadia's skill in finding a suitable book for the patron, her thoughtfulness in offering follow-up help, and her friendly manner. And she did all of this in the concise space allowed for text messages.

As an expression of our appreciation, Nadia was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

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Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College (stephanie.debner@mhcc.edu)

Joanna Milner, Multnomah County Library (joannam@multcolib.org)

Hillary Ostlund, Hillsboro Public Library (Hillary.Ostlund@hillsboro-oregon.gov)

Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library (emilyp@multco.us)

2 OHSU medical research questions

April, 2014



OHSU reference librarians

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org>), recognizes Oregon Health & Science University Library (OHSU) for the excellent virtual reference work performed by all the OHSU reference librarians.

We're breaking with our practice of giving notable awards to a single librarian and instead we are presenting an award to all the OHSU reference librarians.

OHSU Library has been a valued partner library since the Answerland pilot project began in 2003. After a short stint staffing the chat service OHSU librarians opted to focus on what they do best - acting as trusted experts answering medical research and health information reference questions.

Many of the questions that we refer to OHSU are questions from students doing research. We also know that in some cases, we receive questions from library patrons who are contacting the library because they or someone close to them has recently been diagnosed with a serious illness. In their moment of crisis, OHSU librarians are a resource for treatment information and support resources for specific medical conditions.

We've seen impressive answers and we're highlighting 2 transcripts.

The first transcript that we are highlighting is one in which the patron came to Answerland via email last August to ask for advice about doing a search for information on green hospitals and to ask if being a green hospital has an impact on an individual's decision to be a patient at that hospital.

The Quality Team is impressed with Loree Hyde's thorough answer. She provided information that addressed both facets of the patron's question. She listed relevant subject headings and keywords to search, and added details regarding the databases she had searched. To help the patron assess if these were the types of desired, relevant resources, Loree created a short annotated bibliography and attached it to her response. When the patron asked a clarifying question, Loree not only answered the question, but provided the patron with an alternate search option and included a screen shot of what that search looked like in the relevant database.

The Quality Team commends Loree for her use of authoritative sources and for providing the patron with exactly what she needed: strategies for research. Loree went above and beyond for the patron by attaching documents that indicated sources found and that demonstrated a successful search on the patron's topic. She employed a friendly tone and invited the patron to respond to the email if the patron had further questions.

The second transcript that we are highlighting is one in which Jackie Wirz sent an answer to a question about the top 15-20 childhood illnesses and the top 15-20 childhood surgeries, both in the U.S. and globally. After the patron chatted with another Answerland staffer, the question was put into follow-up for an email answer. When Jackie picked up the question in email follow up, she collaborated with other OHSU librarians to research the question. In the answer sent, Jackie confirmed that two of the sources that had been provided in chat were the most comprehensive information sources for this query. She explained to the patron why it was not possible to find a single source with the data that the patron needed. Jackie then provided several links to specific pages at the Centers for Disease Control and the Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, and pointed out the limitations of each source. She greeted the patron and concluded the email in a friendly manner.

As an expression of our appreciation, OHSU librarians were presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating them!

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Joanna Millner, Multnomah County Library
Hillary Ostlund, Hillsboro Public Library
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library

How many women received degrees in physical chemistry in 1920 to 1930 in the United States compared to other countries?

June, 2014



Chris Jakel

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Chris Jakel of Multnomah County Library for his excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in January 2014.

Although the patron initially asked, “How many women received degrees in physical chemistry in 1920 to 1930 in the United States compared to other countries,” the patron actually had a very different question. It was through Chris’s skillful reference interview that the actual reference need was revealed.

The patron, a college student, needed the information in order to write a blog post assigned to a class. The initial question transitioned into a question about Maria Telkes and women’s rights in Hungary and the U.S. Then it became a question about finding general statistics on the number of professionals in the solar energy field in 1948. And then it became a question about what was Hungarian and U.S. culture like for women in the 1920's.

Chris ultimately identified the reference question as a query about how many women were trained for the solar energy field, how large the field was, and how many professionals were employed in the solar energy field after World War II.

Throughout the chat Chris considered various options including a search of research on women and science degrees, authorship on scientific research in the field at that time, membership in professional organizations related to the field, and teaching positions held.

As Chris worked with the patron to clarify the question, he noted that it can be challenging to find information on women's contributions in areas where traditionally (or institutionally) they have been marginalized.

From the beginning to the end of the conversation Chris was friendly and welcoming and used authoritative resources. Chris referred the question to email follow-up so that other librarians could work further on the question. He concluded the conversation by saying, “you have a fascinating, complex, puzzling and exciting task ahead of you! :-D.”

We think that Chris's work on this question is fascinating and notable.

The Quality Team is impressed with Chris's friendly tone, knowledge of authoritative resources, and work identifying the actual reference question.

As an expression of our appreciation, Chris was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating him!

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Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College (stephanie.debner@mhcc.edu)

Joanna Milner, Multnomah County Library (joannam@multcolib.org)

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Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library (emilyp@multco.us)

My book group is focusing on Mexico this year. Do you have any recommendations for an adult book on the Mexican revolution (non-fiction)

August, 2014



Kirsten Brodbeck-Kenney

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org>), recognizes Kirsten Brodbeck-Kenney of Driftwood Public Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in March 2014.

The patron submitted a chat question, asking, “My book group is focusing on Mexico this year. Do you have any recommendations for an adult book on the Mexican revolution (non-fiction)?” Kirsten was immediately friendly and expressed enthusiasm saying “What an interesting topic!” and offered to search for an answer. However, the patron needed to log out after just a minute and asked that an answer be sent by email instead of through chat.

Kirsten researched the question and found a wide variety of books on the topic which she sent to the patron later the same day. The suggestions include several engaging books about the revolution as well as a book about women of the Mexican Revolution. Kirsten consulted authoritative resources and shared book reviews to annotate her suggestions.

We appreciate Kirsten’s eagerness to help the patron from the beginning of the chat conversation through her completion of the email answer. We’re guessing that one of these books led to a good read for the book group and a lively discussion for the group members.

The Quality Team is impressed with Kirsten’s friendly tone, readers’ advisory skills, and use of authoritative resources.

As an expression of our appreciation, Kirsten was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

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