

Analogies Designed to Make Learning Legal Research Easier

- Legal research process – putting together a jigsaw puzzle
 - Not an annoying one-solid-color puzzle
 - 1) sort pieces by color = setting up your research Qs
 - 2) outer pieces = secondary sources
 - Shows the scope of the puzzle/problem
 - 3) start on your piles
 - Solve one problem first (or til you're stuck)
 - Then move on to the next
 - When am I done? When the puzzle is complete
- Case law – a river
 - Citators. You have your case in a fixed pt of the river
 - Table of authorities – everything flowing into your particular case
 - Citator – everything flowing forward from your case
 - Statutes and regs stay the same size whether more are added or taken away
 - Cases grow bigger and bigger until you get to the ocean
- Find one statute. You are a magical mouse. You can see the page, you can find it clearly but you're only a mouse
 - Transform into a magical eagle and you have a broader view with good vision – TOC/Index – gives you a complete picture
- Citatory – baby case is born and it gets a name and an SSN and forever after the NSA is building a case file on it
- Any Harry Potter analogy
- Legal research = ordering a pizza
 - Strikes fear! Scare them from Google
 - Go on Google, type pizza Cleveland
 - Lots of options and you're probably happy
 - Instead find the best pizza in a particular area, gluten content, 100% organic, list of ALL options, don't spend more than \$X, provide me a detailed explanation of all the rankings of all the pizzas for all time so I can evaluate your choice that this is the best pizza
- Statutory research – serious illness → get a second opinion
 - Search two versions of a code if possible – each offers excellent additions
- Topic and key numbers = GPS address of where case lives
 - Topic = street
 - Key number = house number
 - Sub-numbers = getting students in the right room
 - Same address works for Iowa, California, etc. –
 - You can then live in a room and look around and know how to build a similar room going forward

- Family rule: successful dentist appointment = ice cream!
 - (1) find rule of law = statute of ice cream (e.g., product incentivization rules)
 - Look at definitions, remedies, defenses
 - (2) tiny cavity on molar = a problem; tiny cavity on a baby tooth = no problem (cases interpreting the statute)
 - (3) key numbers to update. Cavity doctrine is still good. But line may be blurring. Medium size cavity might be okay
 - Can refer back to it over the course of a semester if you're talking about one piece of the analogy/research process
- Federal, state, local ordinances = like paying taxes
 - Three different tax types, three different jurisdictions
 - Sometimes they relate, but sometimes they don't
 - All have their own rules BUT some tax the same things
- Court structure and concept of precedent like Russian nesting dolls

Remember: know what people like/can relate to (e.g., people might not like cars, football, etc.)