



## Combating AI with Gale Literature Resource Center

Seeking to deepen engagement and provide historical context in her Literature 155 course, Professor Alisa Allkins of Harold Washington College leveraged *Gale Literature Resource Center* to introduce students to diverse primary sources connected to the book *Passing* by Nella Larsen. The result? Richer discussions, varied journal responses, and a powerful strategy to counter AI-generated work.



### ALISA ALLKINS

#### Instructor at Harold Washington College

A literature and composition instructor at Harold Washington College, Alisa teaches a highly diverse student body with a wide range of ages and backgrounds. Committed to accessibility, she prioritizes free or low-cost resources to support varied learning needs and ensure all students have the materials they need to succeed.



“I got the most genuine responses, the most genuine journals out of this assignment (using these resources) out of any of the other ones this semester.”

### THE CHALLENGE: INSPIRING GENUINE ENGAGEMENT IN ONLINE LEARNING

Alisa used *Gale Literature Resource Center* for her literature and film class, a completely online course. Teaching literature in an online setting presents unique challenges, particularly in inspiring student engagement and critical thinking. Traditional resources often lack the interactive and historical depth necessary for meaningful analysis. Additionally, as AI-generated content becomes more sophisticated, ensuring authentic student engagement has become a growing issue and concern. Alisa sought out a solution that would encourage deeper analytical and original thinking, and provide structured, high-quality resources to keep students engaged.

### THE SOLUTION: INTEGRATING GALE LITERATURE RESOURCE CENTER

Midway through the semester, Alisa introduced her students to *Gale Literature Resource Center*, guiding them through the platform and demonstrating how to find relevant historical documents. Students quickly adapted to the resource, easily accessing materials. She then designed a journal assignment where they selected a primary source that deepened their understanding of *Passing* by Nella Larsen and analyzed its significance.



“Having Gale as a free resource for my students through the library—I mean, that’s a no-brainer!”



“AI is really consuming a lot of our mental energy as instructors, and this resource made it harder for students to just rely on AI. I like that aspect of it a lot.”

## THE NEED FOR DIVERSE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT IN LITERATURE COURSES

Teaching *Passing* requires a deep understanding of its historical and cultural backdrop. Alisa incorporates secondary sources into each of her units, but she was particularly drawn to *Gale Literature Resource Center* for its curated selection of primary texts and historical documents. The platform provided a range of materials, including resources on the film adaptation, aligning seamlessly with her literature and film course objectives.

Reflecting on her students' engagement, Alisa remarked, “I was so worried that nobody was going to use the supplemental materials. But I want to just say, most of them used the supplemental materials and every one of the materials was used. They didn't gravitate toward one in particular or opt out of one. I think that they engaged with it really, really well.” She emphasized that every item from the curated materials on *Passing* within *Gale Literature Resource Center* contributed meaningfully to student learning, ensuring a balanced and engaging academic experience.

## THE IMPACT: MAKING REAL CONNECTIONS WITH AI-RESISTANT ASSIGNMENTS

One of the biggest successes of integrating *Gale Literature Resource Center* was its ability to deter AI-generated work. Traditional essays and discussions are easy targets for AI and often slip past detectors. But Alisa's assignment required students to engage with verified primary sources, making AI-generated submissions ineffective.

In one case, a student who had relied on AI submitted a paper citing a nonexistent source—an immediate red flag. As Alisa noted, “We have a built-in AI detector, but that student's paper showed 0% AI. The only reason I knew it was AI-generated was because the source didn't exist. That's the challenge we're facing now—identifying AI-generated work is nearly impossible.”

Beyond deterring AI, the wealth of resources sparked more diverse student responses. Instead of generic reflections, Alisa saw students making unique connections between *Passing* and historical documents, deepening their understanding of the novel's themes.

## THE COST FACTOR: ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

Keeping costs low for students is a top priority for Alisa. “My students can't afford expensive materials. They don't want to spend \$400 on a textbook or pay for access to a resource,” she explained. To make learning accessible, she prioritizes free or institutionally funded options.

This commitment to cost-effective education underscores the importance of institutional support. By securing *Gale Literature Resource Center* through library funding rather than direct student payments, institutions can provide access to high-quality research materials while alleviating financial pressure on students.

## A RESOURCE FOR THE FUTURE OF LITERATURE AND HUMANITIES COURSES

Alisa expressed strong interest in continuing to use *Gale Literature Resource Center*, recognizing its value beyond literature courses, with applications in humanities, pop culture, and art classes. “There are so many disciplines that could benefit from this resource,” she noted. She also sees opportunities to expand its use across multiple units in her literature and composition courses, further enriching student engagement and analysis.

With *Gale Literature Resource Center*, Alisa has enhanced her online literature course, offering students a deeper, more interactive learning experience. Its impact on student engagement and support for academic integrity highlight its value as a powerful tool for educators.

 Learn more about **Gale Literature Resource Center**



Gale, here for **everyone.**