Reflective Essay on McGill Library Resources

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The process of researching and writing this essay was very rewarding, and
McGill’s library resources were invaluable in allowing me to increase the scope and
the depth of this essay. Throughout the process of researching for this essay I also
gained a much better understanding of many valuable library resources.

Except for a general interest in blood transfusion, I had very little knowledge
about the topic when I started the process of researching this essay earlier this year.
I am very grateful for the library resources that have made it possible for me to, in
the limited free time available to any medical student, quickly access a wealth of
pertinent information from many fields. My essay developed depth because of what
I learned about the history of blood transfusion through the McGill Library. And,
unexpectedly, through the McGill library’s search system, I became aware of a
sociologic outlook on blood transfusion, a perspective that I was previously
unaware of, which added much scope to my paper.

The process of writing this essay exposed me to many library resources that I
had little knowledge of beforehand. For instance, it is possible to view many books
online, page by page, from home through the use of the McGill library page and a
virtual private network connection. Also, it is possible to access many books and
articles that McGill does not have through COLOMBO, the online inter-university
exchange system.

However, the most valuable thing I learned during this whole process was
the benefits of physically going to the library. The internet is convenient and quick,
but to me, the library offers much more. For one, the process of searching a shelf for
books, or having to physically find an article by paging through a journal exposed
me, even just briefly, to a broader range of ideas. Second, many of the McGill
libraries are beautiful and contemplative places, and they offer esthetic aspect that
is not recreated with online access. There was a something to be said for the
pleasure of holding a physical book in your hand, appreciating its cover and font,
and grasping the weight of the pages as you turn them.

 In conclusion, McGill’s library resources have been invaluable in making this
research fruitful and convenient, and thus helping to provide the necessary scope
and depth to my essay. I am indebted to the many helpful and hard-working
librarians who have guided me towards new resources. Without them, this essay
would have not been possible.