

## Week 9: Random Sampling

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### I. Abstract

This week's assignment calls for us to explore the technique of random sampling in the Seattle Library database. For this project, I decided to test the implementation of a blind book date event at the Seattle Public Library. Blind book dates have become popular in the most recent years as a way for readers to detach their biases from pretty book covers and focus more on the work itself. The idea is that the books are either physically or virtually covered/blocked so that the patron may not see the title, and instead may only read the description of the book. They then make a selection from a random sample of profiles and make their pick - all without even knowing their fated book's name! This project will focus on creating a simulation of such an event using randomization.



## II. Query Explorations

Traditionally, blind book projects are done using books only and not other forms of media, so I will need to focus my query on only item types that end in “bk” referring to books. The first query is to just see which item types fall into the category and the second query is our first sample of books of all these types.

---

```
SELECT
DISTINCT itemtype
FROM spl_2016.inraw
where
itemtype like "%bk";
```

```
SELECT
bibNumber,
title
FROM spl_2016.inraw
where
itemtype in (
'acbk',
'ahbk',
'arbk',
'bcbk',
'jcbk',
'jrbk'
```

)

group by bibNumber,title

order by rand(51)

LIMIT 100;

**CSV RESULTS (\*click\* on file link below):**

■ Week 9 Query A - Week9QueryB.pdf

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After reading through the list, I realized I should focus primarily on fiction books, as some books such as “Electric Transmission of Water Power” are more informative than entertaining and will likely only satisfy a very niche audience. Though the concept is still random, the goal is to produce a lineup of books that would satisfy the largest audience. Fictional books are also more likely to have a captivating description over non fiction ones in some cases. Therefore, I went back to my query and altered it accordingly.

---

SELECT

bibNumber,

title

FROM spl\_2016.inraw

where

itemtype in (

'acbk',

'ahbk',

```
'arbk',  
'bcbk',  
'jcbk',  
'jrbk'  
)  
  
AND  
  
deweyClass = ""  
  
group by bibNumber,title  
  
order by rand(36)  
  
LIMIT 100;
```

**CSV RESULTS (\*click\* on file link below):**

■ Week9QueryC - Week9QueryC.pdf

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This query produces much better results in that the titles are much more appealing and legible than the previous. The results of this query essentially would simulate the randomized list of books available for the patron to then read the description of and ultimately choose (blindly). To simulate the process of picking such a book, I made the next query to choose a random entry from the previous table where I will then be able to find its respective subject tags to get an idea of the book before making the final reveal.

---

```
SELECT  
  
bibNumber,
```

```
title
FROM
(
SELECT
bibNumber,
title
FROM spl_2016.inraw
where
itemtype in (
'acb',
'ahb',
'arb',
'bc',
'jcb',
'jrb'
)
AND
deweyClass = ""
group by bibNumber,title
order by rand(36)
LIMIT 100
)x
order by rand()
```

LIMIT 1;

**CSV RESULTS (\*click\* on file link below):**

■ Week9QueryD - Week9QueryD.pdf

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bibNumber	title
3474484	binding

The result of this randomized query is pictured above. The book we have essentially chosen then is called “Binding” and has the corresponding bibNumber “3474484”. The purpose of this is to cross reference this result (specifically the bibNumber) with the subject tags it corresponds to. Therefore, the following query does so:

---

```
SELECT *
```

```
FROM spl_2016.subject
```

```
where spl_2016.subject.bibnumber = 3474484
```

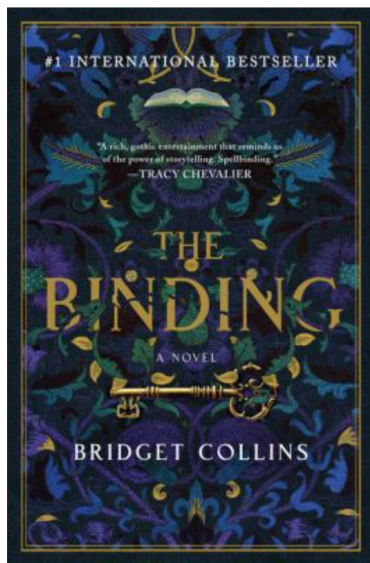
**CSV RESULTS (\*click\* on file link below):**

■ Week9QueryE - Week9QueryE.pdf

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bibNumber	subject
3474484	Bookbinders Fiction
3474484	Books and reading Fiction
3474484	Fantasy fiction
3474484	Gothic fiction
3474484	Large type books
3474484	Magic Fiction

The above results are the subject tags of the supposed book we randomly chose. From reading these tags, we can decipher that we have chosen a large fictional book based off of some dark fantastical concept. After this step, the patron would then check out said book and reveal the title (which for query purposes, we, “the librarian”, already know) and cover.






## The Binding

a Novel

Collins, Bridget

★★★★☆ (199 ratings) ☆☆☆☆☆ Rate this ▾

 Book, 2019	 eBook	 Audiobook CD	+2
Available	Available		

"Young Emmett Farmer is working in the fields when a strange letter arrives summoning him away from his family. He is to begin an apprenticeship as a Bookbinder--a vocation that arouses fear, superstition, and prejudice amongst their small community, but one neither he nor his parents can afford to refuse. For as long as he...

[Read more ▾](#)

"Young Emmett Farmer is working in the fields when a strange letter arrives summoning him away from his family. He is to begin an apprenticeship as a Bookbinder--a vocation that arouses fear, superstition, and prejudice amongst their small community, but one neither he nor his parents can afford to refuse. For as long as he can recall, Emmett has been drawn to books, even though they are strictly forbidden. Bookbinding is a sacred calling, Seredith informs her new apprentice, and he is a binder born. Under the old woman's watchful eye, Emmett learns to hand-craft the elegant leather-bound volumes. Within each one they will capture something unique and extraordinary: a memory. If there's something you want to forget, a binder can help. If there's something you need to erase, they can assist. Within the pages of the books they create, secrets are concealed and the past is locked away. In a vault under his mentor's workshop rows upon rows of books are meticulously stored. But while Seredith is an artisan, there are others of their kind, avaricious and amoral tradesman who use their talents for dark ends--and just as Emmett begins to settle into his new circumstances, he makes an astonishing discovery: one of the books has his name on it. Soon, everything he thought he understood about his life will be dramatically rewritten."-- [Read less ^](#)

After searching up the appropriate information on the official Seattle Public Library website, our blind date book is revealed. The book is about a young boy named Emmett that becomes a binder of books to which some books essentially reveal secrets, including that of his own life.

### **III. Conclusion**

Overall, I was able to create an entire simulation of a real event that entails having a blind date with a book using randomization. The whole process is meant to physically manifest the famous quote “don’t judge a book by its cover” and has proven to do so. Many libraries and bookstores have implemented this concept into their systems annually, ranging from huge bookstores such as Barnes & Noble and smaller university libraries.

### **IV. References**

[1]<https://dal.ca.libguides.com/findingfiction/bdwb>

[2]<https://seattle.bibliocommons.com/v2/record/S30C3427324>