Developing an Effective Search Strategy
Hello!

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Last time? Uh....
Develop and modify keywords that describe an information need in order to search with maximum flexibility and effectiveness.

Construct search strategies using appropriate commands for the information retrieval system.

Access library catalogs & databases in accordance with institutional policies.

By the end of the session, you will be able to:

- Describe an informational maximum
- Use appropriate commands
- Access library catalogs in accordance with institutional policies

20' - 35' - 20'
Developing an Effective Search Strategy

1. Formulate a research topic/question
2. Identify key search terms or phrases
3. Use standard techniques to broaden or narrow search
4. Identify and Evaluate information for its potential use
Narrowing Topic Ideas....

- What subtopics relate to my broader topics?
- What do you find interesting about the topic?
- Do you have sufficient time and resources to conduct the study?
- Does it meet the professor's requirements?
Narrowing Topic Ideas....

- Avoid the “all bout” paper.
- Ask open-ended “How” and “Why” questions
- Consider the “so what” of your topic.
- MEETS PROFESSOR'S REQUIREMENTS
Formulate a Topic or Research Question

“African Americans and the Civil War”

How did African Americans participate in the Union and Confederate armies change during the course of the war?

“Artillery and Napoleon”

To what extent did technological advances in artillery impact the outcome of the Napoleonic Wars?
Formulate a Topic or Research Question

How justified were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in punishing Germany?

What was the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany?

How did Germans respond to the Treaty of Versailles?

At the top of your page write YOUR research topic for this assignment.
Identify Keywords or Phrases

Never use sentence structure, such as your research question or thesis statement.

A keyword is a word used to search catalogs (e.g. GIL-Find) and databases (e.g. JSTOR) in order to locate results that match that word in a specific part or in any part of the item, such as the title or in the full-text.
Identify Keywords or Phrases

How justified were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in punishing Germany?

What was the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany?

How did Germans respond to the Treaty of Versailles?
Reasons became popular in Germany by 1930.

1. Anger and Humiliation due to defeat in WWI
   - Article 48 Misuse
2. Political Crisis
   - Weak Weimer Republic
   - Great depression
3. Economic Crisis
   - Inflation
   - Unemployment
4. Hitler's Charisma & Nazi Propaganda
   - Powerful Speaker
   - Nazi's promises to restore Germany dignity
Identify Keywords or Phrases

Research Topic/Question

- General Dictionary Or Thesaurus
- Subject Dictionaries
- Subject Encyclopedias
- LOC Subject Headings
- Database Thesaurus
Use Search Operators

Search techniques are the methods you use to search library catalogs (e.g. Gil-Find, Worldcat), article databases (e.g. JSTOR), and even web search engines (Google Scholar) to find information.
Use Search Operators

**AND**

Type **AND** between your keywords to narrow your search. The database or will only retrieve those results that contain both words.

Using **AND** will decrease the number or hits or articles or pages in your result list.
Use Search Operators

Type **OR** between your keywords to broaden your search.

Using **OR** will increase the number of articles or web pages in your result.

Use **OR** between keywords that are synonyms or have similar meanings.
Use Search Operators

**NOT**

Type **NOT** before a keyword to exclude that keyword from your search. Using **NOT** will decrease the number of articles or web pages in your result list.

The best use of **NOT** is when you are searching for a keyword that may have multiple meanings.
Quotation Marks

Quotation marks can be used to identify *phrases*. By using quotations marks, you are telling the computer to only bring back pages with the terms you typed in the *exact* order you typed them.
Quotation Marks

“Alexander the Great”
instead of
Alexander AND Great

“Paris Peace Conference”
Instead of
Paris AND Peace AND Conference

“House of York”
Instead of
York AND House
Truncation

Truncation allows you to search various forms of a word by finding alternate endings. The character (*) is placed at the end of the first few letters of a search term or at the end of its root.

**Teen***
Retrieves
- Teen
- Teens
- Teenage
- Teenager
- Teenagers

**Communis***
Retrieves
- Communism
- Communist
- Communists
- Communistic
Parentheses

You can use parentheses to build a search with a combination of operators.

(Using parentheses in your Boolean search, is a lot like using them in arithmetic - the search inside the parentheses is done first)
Using "Advanced Search" will help limit the number of search results, and the results found should be more relevant for your research question.
Where do you go from here? How do you find information?
Be an ACTIVE Researcher

- Record your search; Modify your search terms
- Write down any names, keywords, or subject headings that sound relevant
- RECORD ALL BIBLIOGRAPHIC details of resources you might use!
Be flexible!

- Sometimes, you may find that your topic simply isn't workable.
- You may not have to change your topic completely, simply try looking at a different aspect to see if that topic is more manageable.
Have Questions?

Need Help?

- Check the LibGuide
- Check the LibGuide
- Check the LibGuide

- Visit, email, or call me!
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