

Selecting a Topic and Finding Background Information

An interesting topic I have run across in the resources below, or in the news, talk shows, discussions with others, or that personally interests me (hobby, career, etc.):

Terminology and concepts—that I have picked up from the sources below or elsewhere—which suggest search terms and keywords for information on my topic:

Resources for topic ideas and background information:

ONLINE

On the ACC Library homepage (www.youseemore.com/ArapahoeCC)—
CQ Researcher; ProQuest (Topics). On Other Databases page: Facts on File Issues & Controversies; Encyclopedia Britannica Online.
On the ACC Library Reference page—Topics & Issues; Underreported News.

PRINT

Use the ACC Library online catalog on the Library homepage—
Topic guides—*10,000 Ideas for Research Papers; Taking Sides; Opposing Viewpoints; Current Controversies; At Issue.*
General encyclopedias—*Britannica, World Book, Americana, Collier's.*
Specialized encyclopedias (using the Library online catalog, combine search term *encyclopedia* with one of the following: art, biography, medicine, music, mythology, music, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, technology)

Useful print and online resources I have found:

NewsBank
Username: ra-8849 PW: ra-8849

EBSCOhost
Username: s8985942 PW: password

ProQuest
Username: htfngdk7pf PW: welcome

Mapping out your search strategy

1	A general topic. Just a rough idea.	(Write your idea here; it can be a couple of words.)				
2	Write down a question regarding your topic.	(Narrow down your topic with a specific issue—focus!)				
3	Underline two or three concepts essential to your question.					
4	Write each essential concept at the top of its own column separated by AND	term 1	and	term 2	and	term 3
		_____or_____		_____or_____		_____or_____
		_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
		_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
5	Use the columns to list synonyms under each concept (keywords that have similar meaning for each concept) separated by OR	_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
		_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
		_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
		_____or_____	and	_____or_____	and	_____or_____
<p>Enter a search query in a database or search engine using some of the combinations of search terms above, separated by AND or OR (this is called Boolean searching).</p>						

For more copies of this worksheet, go to www.KnowledgeResearch.homestead.com/ACC.html or type in Google: ACC library handouts (click link called HOME, near top of page)