Research Roadmap

Prepare to search:

Step 1. What are you looking for? Please state your research question or topic. Be specific.

Step 2. What do you already know about this topic? Use individual words and phrases to answer this. No need to use complete sentences.

Step 3. What do you more do you want to learn/know about this topic? List your questions or phrases.

Step 4. Generate a list of words and short phrases to use in searching for and recognizing useful - relevant - sources/information. Remember that this list of words will continue to be useful in later stages of your project: in becoming more knowledgeable about your topic and in writing persuasively about your topic.

Tips to generate more search terms:

- If you have a main idea stated as a singular item/idea, can it be plural? Or vice versa?
  Example: scandal - scandals
  Explanation: Search engines do not know that one scandal is the same topic/idea as more than one scandal. You must tell the search engine to look for both.

- Are there other forms of the word that might be useful in searching?
  Examples: scandal - scandalized, politics - political, teenager - teens - adolescents
  Explanation: Anticipate that articles that mention the idea you’re investigating may refer to it in different ways.

- Are there similar, more general or narrower terms that are related to your big idea(s)?
  Examples: divorce - marriage, separation, legal separation
  Explanation: Anticipate that articles that mention the idea you’re investigating may refer to it in different ways.
• Are there people, organizations, places, etc. that are related to your big idea(s)?
  Example: bitcoin - created by Nakamoto in 2009-10
  Explanation: Like a breadcrumb trail, finding out about the people and places connected to
  your big idea(s) can lead you to even more - and better - information.

Consider creating a chart like this to help collect and track your potential search terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword Patterns</th>
<th>Idea 1</th>
<th>Idea 2</th>
<th>Idea 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Synonyms</td>
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<td>Broader terms</td>
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<td>Narrower terms</td>
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<td>People or groups</td>
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<td>Places</td>
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<td>Related ideas</td>
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Step 5: Start Your Search

Use your search terms - in various combinations - in the search engine in the library databases. Tips for better search results:

- Only one word or brief (2-3 words) phrase per search row/line.
- Avoid typing in a whole sentence or question.
- The order of the words/ideas counts. To change your results, change the order of your search terms.

Limit your search:

- Choose Full Text
- Choose and set a specific date range [Published Date]
- Choose a source type that is the most appropriate for your project.
Step 6: Review, Refine and Reduce Results

Review your first set of results. To what extent are they relevant to your answering your research question? Are the sources authoritative? Do the voices represent a range of perspective [points of view]?

Read each entry [details about each source in the results list].
  ○ Check the length.
  ○ Check the currency. When was it published?
  ○ Check the subjects to see what main ideas are shared.

To change the results, change the search terms. Draw from the words you have in Step 4.

Step 7: Keep track of your research journey. Use a chart or some other means of recording the citation of every source you consider using as you find it. For each subtopic, record brief notes about the authority, the relevance, the bias/purpose of the source. What does each source contribute to your growing knowledge and understanding of the topic?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source citation 1</th>
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