

Dissect Your Research Question

Dissecting your research question will help you identify keywords or concepts and help you effectively search for sources in library databases. **Please complete steps 1 & 2 before visiting the library.**

1. Write your research question in the space below and underline the main keywords or keyword phrases.

Research Question:

2. Brainstorm additional keywords that are either synonyms, broader keywords, or narrower keywords.
 - a. Synonyms are words that mean the same thing as a main keyword and help you find articles on similar topics
 - b. Narrower keywords help focus your question if you are getting too many articles
 - c. Broader keywords help expand your question if you are getting too few articles

Write down your main keywords or concepts and then brainstorm synonyms, broader keywords, or narrower keywords. **You do not have to complete every spot in the table as sometimes there are no alternative keywords.**

Main Keyword	Synonyms	Narrower Keywords	Broader Keywords

3. Choose a keyword from each row and then add each selected keyword to its own search box to start searching. Different keyword combinations will give different search results. Keep track of the different keyword combinations in the space below.
4. As you search and try different keyword combinations, write down any new keywords that you discover in the box below.

New Keywords:
