

Find Articles and Web Sites: Resource Guide/Instructions

FIND ARTICLES

Step 1: Brainstorm Keywords

The best place to start your search for articles on a topic is in a **library database**, which contains **citations*** to numerous articles which you can **search** by title, author, keyword, etc. Some databases also contain the **full text** of the article.

***Citations** are references to articles, books or other material. Citations for articles often include the author, title, journal or magazine name, volume, issue, date and page numbers. You need citations for your Works Cited list and to find the article in the library, whether it is online or in print. See “Step 5” for help identifying elements of a citation.

Library databases work differently than Google – so you’ll need to search them in a different way. Brainstorm your search terms in the table below. Write your key concepts in the first column (including perhaps broader, narrower, or related terms). Write synonyms (words with similar meanings) and alternative word forms in the second and third columns.

Example:

Topic: Do we still have racial stereotyping in the mass media?

	Concepts	Synonym	Synonym
Concept 1	race	ethnic	ethnicity
Concept 2	stereotyping	stereotypes	prejudice
Concept 3	mass media	television	movies

Step 2: Choose a Library Database

Some databases are **multi-disciplinary** and contain popular and scholarly articles from across disciplines. Others only cover material from a **specific discipline or subject**, such as geology or environmental studies. A list of all databases can be found at <http://www.dccd.edu/Current+Students/Libraries/Research+a+Topic/Databases.htm>, arranged alphabetically and by subject and course.

When choosing a database, consider whether you want scholarly or non-scholarly articles. Articles in **scholarly** sources are written by scholars and researchers for an audience of their peers – other scholars, scientists, and researchers in their field of study. Many scholarly articles are **peer-reviewed** – before the article is published, an editorial board made up of other scholars and researchers reviews it. Articles in **non-scholarly** sources (such as newspapers and magazines) are written for the general reader. They often report about studies published in peer-reviewed sources.

Recommended Databases:

- **Academic Search Complete:** This multidisciplinary database includes articles from journals, magazines and newspapers on numerous topics.
- **Opposing Viewpoints:** This database covers current event issues and controversies, providing facts as well as pros and cons. Includes e-books, magazine articles, newspaper articles, multimedia, charts, graphs, and images. Updated daily.
- **SIRS Knowledge Source:** This database includes articles published since the late 80's, with a focus on research topics, current events and issues. Includes opposing viewpoints, charts and images, maps, and topic overviews. Updated daily.

Step 3: Construct a Search

When searching in a database, you want to connect your keywords using AND and OR.

- o **AND** tells the database to find items with all of the words
- o **OR** tells the database to find items with any of the words

Example:

Organic food **AND** environmental impact

Organic food **OR** organic produce **AND** environmental impact **OR** sustainability

This is how an advanced search looks in the database *Academic Search Complete*:

Find:	organic food OR organic produce	in	Select a Field (optional)	<input type="button" value="Search"/>	<input type="button" value="Clear"/>
	and environmental impact OR sustainability	in	Select a Field (optional)		
	and	in	Select a Field (optional)	Add Row	

Step 4: Find the full text.

Sometimes the full text of the article is in the database. If it is not, you can **follow the [Article Linker](#) link** to see if it is available in another database or in print in the library.

Step 5: Cite the Article

Title:	Theoretical Interpretations of the Growth in <i>Organic Agriculture</i> : Agricultural Modernization or an <i>Organic Treadmill</i> ?	Find More Like This		
Authors:	Obach, Brian K. ¹ obachb@newpaltz.edu	article author		
Source:	Society & Natural Resources ; Mar2007, Vol. 20 Issue 3, p229-244, 16p, 3 charts, 1 graph	The article is 16 pages long, has 3 charts and 1 graph		
	Journal title	Date of journal	Volume & Issue	The article appears on these pages

Hint: Use NoodleBib (<http://0-www.noodletools.com.library.dcccd.edu/login.php>) available through the Library, to automatically format citations in MLA or APA style.

EVALUATE WEB SITES

Because **anyone** can publish on the Web, it is important to be able to distinguish between reliable and unreliable web sites. Consider **all** of the following criteria when evaluating a web site. It's easy to remember by using the **C.A.R.B.** formula. (see table below)

Criteria	Factors
Currency	<input type="checkbox"/> When this information was published or last updated? <input type="checkbox"/> Is it current enough for your research? <input type="checkbox"/> Is timeliness important for your topic?
Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Who wrote it? <input type="checkbox"/> What are their qualifications? <input type="checkbox"/> Are they experts? <input type="checkbox"/> Who published/hosted it? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the publisher/host reputable?
Relevancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Is this source really relevant to your topic? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the information a news item or a substantial commentary or study? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there better sources available? <input type="checkbox"/> Would refining your search statement or making it more specific give you more useful results?
Bias	<input type="checkbox"/> Why was this site created? <input type="checkbox"/> Is this fact or opinion? <input type="checkbox"/> Is it biased?

TIPS:

- The **author and publisher/host** may be the **same**. For example, if you don't see an author's name on an organization's website, then the organization is both the author and the publisher.
- You may not find all of your answers on the web page provided. You may have to **look at other pages** on the web site (look for an "about" link, for example) or search the web for more information about the person or organization that created the web site.
- **Weigh all four criteria** when making your decision. For example, the information may appear accurate, but if the authority is suspect you may want to find a more authoritative site for your information.

NEED HELP?

Ask a Librarian – visit us in the library or email us
richlandlibrary@dccd.edu

Name _____
Student ID _____
Teacher _____
Date _____

Articles and Web Sites: Worksheet

Instructions: Please complete this worksheet using the accompanying resource guides/ instructions to guide you.

Part I: Find an Article

1. Write down your topic and underline the key concepts.
2. Write your key concepts in the first column (including perhaps broader, narrower, or related terms). Then, brainstorm synonyms (words with similar meanings) and alternative word forms in the second and third columns.

	Concepts	Synonym	Synonym
Concept 1			
Concept 2			
Concept 3			

3. Choose two library databases. List each database you chose, what it contains and why you chose it.

Database 1:

Database 2:

4. Using one of the databases you selected, search for articles on your topic.
 - A. Which database did you search?
 - B. Write down your search.
 - C. How many results did you get?
 - D. Revise your search. How did you revise your search? How did that change your search results?

5. Find a useful article from your search results.
 - A. Write down the citation.
 - B. Find the full text of the article. How did you find it?
 - C. What are the author's credentials? (Hint: Scholarly journals often indicate an author's affiliation. Try Googling the author to find out more about him/her.)
 - D. Is this article fact or opinion?
 - E. Write a brief paragraph explaining why you chose this article.

Part II: Find a Web Site

1. Using Google, search for a web site on the same topic as your article. What search terms did you use? How many results did you get?
2. Choose a useful web site and write down the URL.
3. Because **anyone** can publish on the Web, it is important to be able to distinguish between reliable and unreliable web sites. Consider **all** of the following criteria when evaluating a web site. Answer the questions below for the web site you chose.

Currency:

- When was this information published or last updated?
- What timeframe is current enough for your research?
- Is timeliness important for your topic?

Authority:

- Who wrote the site?
- What are their qualifications?
- Are they experts? Why or why not?
- Who published/hosted the site?
- Is the publisher/host reputable?

Relevancy:

- Is this source really relevant to your topic?
- Is the information a news item or a substantial commentary or study?

- What better sources might be available?
- How would refining your search statement or making it more specific give you more useful results?

Bias:

- Is this fact or opinion?
- Is it biased?

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What is the most important thing you learned doing from this exercise?

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How will you use what you learned for your next research paper or project?

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You have now completed the Research 2 written exercise. To get credit for this exercise, turn it in to the librarian at the Reference Desk. It will be checked for completion and accuracy. Return tomorrow to pick up your completion slip.