Part 1: Search Terms

Begin your process by dissecting your topic into parts, or concepts. Professor Sebert-Kuhlmann has identified these parts for you: **Public health issue**, **Target population**, **Country of interest**

My example topic: I am exploring the potential effects of **aflatoxin** on **hepatitis b sufferers** in **China** and the link to **liver cancer**.

Concepts	Concept Terms	Synonym/Related Term 1	Synonym/Related Term 2	Synonym/Related Term 3
PH Issue (cause)	aflatoxin	furano-furano-benzopyrans	food toxin	poison
PH Issue(effect)	liver cancer	hepatocellular carcinoma	liver neoplasms	cancer
Target Population	hepatitis b	orthohepadnavirus	liver inflammation	blood disease
Country	China	People's Republic of China	Rural China	East Asia

Practice 1: Pull three conceptual elements from your research topic, write at least 3 terms (key words) for each concept (10 mins)

Concepts	Concept Terms	Synonym/Related Term 1	Synonym/Related Term 2	Synonym/Related Term 3
PH Issue (cause)				
PH Issue(effect)				
Target Population				
Country				

Part 2: Searching

Once you have your concepts, you can begin combining terms in a **keyword** search. It is important to start with keywords, not subject terms.

Keyword = A significant word or phrase in the title, subject headings (descriptors), contents note, abstract, or text of a record in an online catalog or bibliographic database…
Subject (term)= Any one of the topics or themes of a work **assigned** to an article or book, to assist users in locating its content by subject. **This is controlled language** – you probably can't guess it.
AND combines terms with distinctly different meanings to bring back results with both term somehow included (many databases presume you want to AND your terms, in that case the database searches with AND automatically)
OR combines terms that are similar, telling the database that you would be pleased with results that have either term, but need not have both (a database doesn't do this for you, you have to tell it to)
Truncation allows variations of terms; use the stem of the word with an asterisk (e.g. inflam* instead of inflammation)
Parentheses keep your search organized, so that you use the right and/or **combinations** use (),
Search tips - Databases are like **snowflakes**, they're all a little different, read the search tips to find out how it can be **effectively searched.**

Your Notes

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Examine Records:

- **How many records** – you definitely want less than 100, more than that is unmanageable. If you have less than 10, there's probably more out there – but if they are 10 perfectly relevant articles, that's a great start!
- **Scholarly or Popular** – some hallmarks of a scholarly article are: **publisher** (in a journal associated with a university press or professional association), **editorial review** (experts in the field reviewed it for accuracy, validity – often peer review), **length** (usually ten pages or more), **author** (an expert in the field), and **bibliography included** (cited sources)
- **Subject terms –** when you have found a relevant, scholarly record look at the subject terms used. Search with those subject terms to create a powerful search; those results will all be on the topic described by those terms
- **Bibliography –** When you find a very relevant article, look at the bibliography; you will undoubtedly find other relevant articles on your topic.

Practice 2: Search using keywords; write down one relevant citation and 3-5 subject terms from a relevant record. (10 minutes)
Citation:

Subject terms

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Part 3: Get your citations and articles

Cite – copy, email, collect your citation; use your guide to help you cite correctly. There are tools for citation management (**Zotero**, **Mendeley**) for in-depth research; if you are interested in those, please feel free to contact me. The library provides guides and classes for getting started.

Now that you have found your articles, get them

- Some databases will have your articles in **full-text**

Don't fret if there isn't a full-text link, use the *Get it!* button, a few things could happen:

- You may be **linked to the full-text in another resource** we have access to
- You may be sent to the ***Get it!*** screen where you can **search for the article in print** (option 1), if it's not available online
- Also on the ***Get it!*** screen (option 2) you may **request it through ILL,** it most cases you will have that article in **less than two days.**
- When all else fails, contact me, I will help you get what you need**.**

Practice 3: Spend the rest of the time exploring other resources; relevant databases can be found in your research guide, http://libguides.wustl.edu/international_public_health, under journal resources.

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