

Conservation Research Practicum Research Log

NAME(S):

PROJECT:

Tracking Your Research Results

Use this worksheet to practice using research strategies and selecting library resources, and to track your results. In the table, the left side of this worksheet gives examples based on a sample search topic. The right side allows you to explore your own topic.

Pre-Search

- What information do you currently have?
- What information do you need?
- What questions do you have (in general and for your conservation partners)?
- What resources have you searched already and what have you found?

Searching

CREATING RESEARCH STATEMENT(S) or QUESTION(S)	
Sample topic: State it as question(s) or phrase(s). For example, "Violence on Television and Children"	Your topic:
Sample research statement or question: Do children	Your research statement(s) or question(s):

who are exposed to violence on television exhibit more aggressive behavior than those who are not? NOTE: You'll probably find you have more than one research questions and sub-questions of those and these will be refined & change as you research	
Key concepts for sample research statement: Break each topic down into words and phrases. (Think of synonyms and related terms. "Phrase searching" gives you better and less general results than single words for	Key concepts for your research statement:

general terms. In your initial searches for background, look for useful keywords or subject headings or descriptors) Sample keywords: violence, aggression television, mass media child, children, youth	

Identifying the KINDS OF INFORMATION You Will Need

Decide what aspects of the topic to investigate (subtopics, geographic region or time period, or types of information), what type of information you need, and where to start.

Questions to Ask: Who's interested in this and where do they publish/put information? What is the scope of your literature search? What disciplines are relevant? What time frame will you be searching—only recent articles or older as well? What types of information do you need - will you only be searching published journal articles or will you consider 'gray' literature, such as conference proceedings and government reports? What about languages?

USING LIBRARY AND OTHER RESOURCES TO LOCATE ARTICLES:

Possible resources:

- Books (from library catalog)
- Government reports (online [try a search for your keywords followed by site:.gov for US govt sites] or in library catalog)
- Other Reports (especially think tank and NGO) from organization websites
- Primary research articles; secondary review articles, systematic reviews and meta-analyses (from library databases)
- Evaluation reports (from organizations, think tanks, policy groups, funders, etc)
- Funders & funding requirements (from Foundation Directory & funders' websites)
- Theses and dissertations (from Proquest Dissertations and Theses)
- Associations (from a Google search for your topic + association or Associations Unlimited (available through Databases))
- Data and statistics
- Spatial and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data - Center for Geospatial Analysis and mapping [guide](#)

NOTE: Databases allow you to locate articles within journals and magazines. Try browsing research databases by subject or type/format. Try searching different databases using the same search strategy.

ACTIVITY:

- Looking at the [Databases](#) or (or any other relevant [research guides](#)) sections of the library website, which other resources look like they might be promising resources?
- Try some searches in at least one of the resources you selected. See how many and what kind of results you get. What options are there to refine your search to more relevant results? See if you can find at least one relevant reference - bonus points if it's a recent review article

Your Searches and Results:

- **Write down the searches you used (start broad and narrow down):**
- **What do you note about the features of the resource and your results?**
- **Pick at least one thing you think is useful and write down the citation information**

Resource Name:

Your Searches and Results:

Resource Name:

Your Searches and Results:

Managing Your Information

Keeping track of your citations (and data if applicable) as a group is important and harder with more than one person. A citation manager like Zotero can make it much easier. I've created a [Zotero group](#) for you all and will add you to this. You can find your group's particular folder in the listing on the lefthand side. To use this Zotero group, you'll need to accept the invite I send you (check your spam or junk folder if you don't see it after class). To use Zotero in general, you can download the software (and browser connector if applicable) and use as normal, just put your citations into the group library underneath your individual libraries.

Next Steps

- What's your next step in your research plan?