Turn a topic into a question.

1. Write down your topic. Turn to your neighbors and ask them what they are researching. Your peers might suggest keywords or find something useful to you as they search.
2. Search in PSU’s [PRIMO database](https://search.library.pdx.edu/primo-explore/search?vid=PSU&mode=advanced) or [Gale Virtual Reference Library](https://stats.lib.pdx.edu/lg.php?url=http://go.galegroup.com/ps/start.do?p=GVRL&u=oregon_portland) for useful articles. Email yourself promising leads.
3. Your topic will have alternate keywords or related terms. These are leads that could help you find more sources. Write those down:

1. After looking through your early results, write down what people are arguing about. Are there controversies or arguments? Why do people care about this topic? Who (what experts, fields of study) cares about this topic?
2. Was there anything new or surprising you learned about your topic during your search? Were there unexpected controversies or alternate keywords you had not considered? Write those down:
3. Test these new keywords above in [PRIMO](https://search.library.pdx.edu/primo-explore/search?vid=PSU&mode=advanced) or a [subject-specific database](http://guides.library.pdx.edu/az.php). Email yourself the results.
4. Try to write a question about the topic you want to explore. It should not be a yes/no question, but instead a more open-ended how/why question. If you are having difficulty, try a less narrow topic to explore.

Concept map

As you draw your topic, ask:

What questions do I have about my topic?

What are my most promising leads?