

TURN QUESTIONS INTO KEYWORDS

Get the most out of your search by developing your research question into keywords.

This activity quickly guides you through a few key strategies designed to help you explore your topic and get ready to research. Breaking down your research question into keywords is an important step in the research process. Good keywords will help narrow your search while capturing a broad scope of potential articles to enrich your research.

1

Do **crows** show **empathy**?



Identify the core concepts

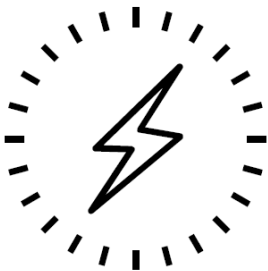
- What is your research question or topic?

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- What are the main concepts in your question or topic?

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2



Brainstorm related words and phrases

Generate several synonymous words and phrases for each core concept:

Concept #1

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Concept #2

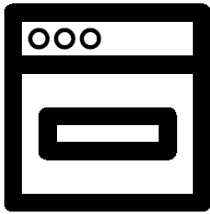
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Concept #3

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Construct Effective Searches

3



- Now that you've come up with words and phrases, practice constructing putting them together for a search!

- Use OR to join synonyms (e.g. crow OR raven)

_____ OR _____ OR _____ OR _____

- Use AND to join core concepts

_____ OR _____ OR _____

AND _____ OR _____ OR _____

4



Asterisks and Quotations

- Use an asterisk (*) at the end of a root word to find multiple endings, i.e.:

- empath* =

empathy
empathetic
empathize

- Place an asterisk around one of your keywords:

• _____*

- Place quotation marks (") around an entire phrase instead of just its component parts to see results that contain the words in that specific order, i.e. "social intelligence"

- List key phrases you will search for:

■ " "

What's Next?

- ☐ UCLA Library staff have put together hundreds of research guides:

<https://guides.library.ucla.edu/>

- ☐ Come visit us at one of our many Library locations or the UCLA Writing Center and get one-on-one research and writing assistance tailored to your topic and questions: <https://www.library.ucla.edu/help/research-help/>

- ☐ For more help with your writing, check out the Library's WI+RE website:

uclalibrary.github.io/research-tips