

1 Your Research Topic

What are the key words or phrases in your research topic? Write the words in section 2.

Write Your Topic Here: _____

Then circle the important words and cross out the other words

Example: ~~Should~~ Wikipedia ~~be used as a~~ source ~~of~~ information?

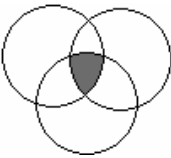
Circle important words or phrases that best describes your topic

Avoid using vague or non-descriptive words like **the, it, in, used, at.**

Place the circled words in the box in section 2.

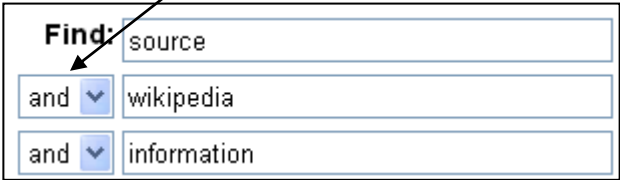
2 Transforming Keywords into a Search Statement

Connect your keywords or phrases with **AND**

Example using AND	Your new search statement connected with AND	Why use AND ?
wikipedia and source and information		AND focuses your search by requiring all words be present in the information retrieved 

3 Test Your Search Statement

Test your search in a library database on the Library Services website at lib.mnsu.edu:

For books: use the Books quick search box on the center of the page	For journals, go to Article Databases A-Z and select Academic Search Premier
ONE box Searching: Type AND between your search words in one long string	THREE box Searching: Place each keyword or phrase in a box. AND is automatically placed in between the boxes.
<p>Search for:</p> <input type="text" value="wikipedia and source and information"/>	

4a Your Results: Finding too Much Information

The topic may be too broad and needs to be narrowed.
You may want to break your topic down by population, issue, and/or location.

Example populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• children• adults• elderly• African American• women

Example Issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• education• racism• sports• technology

Example Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• United States• Europe• Minnesota• Los Angeles• Midwest

Add a subtopic like the ones listed above to your search by using **AND**

Example: Wikipedia and source and information and education

4b Your Results: Little or No Information

Option 1: Check your spelling. Misspelled words may be the reason for few results. Check your spelling at www.dictionary.com.

Option 2: Break down the long strings of words by placing AND

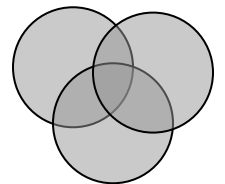
Option 3: Search for alternative word endings

- To search for various word endings, place an asterisk (*) at the end of the word root
Example: inform* will retrieve information, informed, informative, informing, etc.

Option 4: Search similar or related words by placing **OR** between the words

- Connecting the synonyms with **OR** will broaden your search by returning records in which any of the words appear
- Especially with ONE BOX searching, use **parentheses** around your words connected with **OR**

Example: (information or research or data)



Option 5: Try a subject database

Your Subject	Try this Database (under Databases A-Z)
Business	ABI Inform, Business Source Premier
Education	ERIC, Education Full Text
Environment	Environment Issues and Policy Index, Science Direct
Health	Health and Wellness Resource Center, ProQuest Nursing Journals
Psychology	PsycINFO, ProQuest Psychology Journals

Still not finding information? It is time to ask a librarian!