Hubble: ENG B1A
“A Cause Worth Fighting For”

Professor Sondra Keckley, Reference Librarian
What do you consider “A Cause Worth Fighting For”? 

- Homelessness
- Veterans
- Education
- Prison Reform
- Immigration
- Wage Issues
- Discrimination
- Animal Rights
- GMO Issues
- Autism
- Rights for the Mentally Ill
- Environmental Issues
- Medical Research
- Political Issues—Electoral College, Term Limits, etc.
- Elderly
What Makes a Good Research Topic?

- Focused and specific
- Enough information about it to develop an argumentative essay
- Asks a single question
- Can have several answers
- Open to interpretation
- Has opposite sides that need to be considered
First Step: Brainstorm Ideas & Outline Your Existing Knowledge of the Topic

- Doesn't have to be a formal outline.
“You have a working knowledge of a topic when you can talk about it for one minute without repeating yourself.” (Research Strategies, Badke, 2008, p.21)

- Read material that will give you a broader picture of the topic.
Reference Books

- Examples: encyclopedia, dictionary, almanac, atlas, directory, handbook, thesaurus.
- Can help you figure out or narrow down your topic.
- Gives overview or background info on a topic.
- Quick access to facts.
- Not read cover to cover.
- Can’t be checked out.
- Found in bookcases with green labels.

Some books on the cart...
Keep Going!

- As you learn more, you should be asking more questions.
- Pick one of your questions that could have more than one answer or point of view to explore in depth.
- This should help you focus in and narrow down your topic.
Examples of How to Narrow a Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrow Topic By</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>More Specific</th>
<th>Very Specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>NBA</td>
<td>Changes in the NBA since the 1960s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Mammals</td>
<td>African mammals</td>
<td>Big cat mammals in Africa</td>
<td>The Cheetah’s future in Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Rock &amp; Roll</td>
<td>Early rock &amp; roll artists</td>
<td>Elvis Presley’s influence on rock &amp; roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of study</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Development of vaccines</td>
<td>Use of vaccines in preventing Polio</td>
<td>Dr. Salk’s contribution to Polio prevention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that each broad topic is narrowed until a manageable research topic is clarified. The last column can be turned into your paper’s **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**.
All Together Now...

- Pre-research and narrowing down your topic.

Pre-Research Video
How to Develop Keywords/Search Terms

- Find **key words or phrases** in your paper’s essential question.
  - The word or words that the question is about.
  - The important words related to your topic.

- Example: How does someone’s poverty level affect their access to higher education?
  - What are the important words?

  How does someone’s **poverty** level affect their access to **higher education**?
Next you will develop a list of **synonyms** for these key words/ phrases.

What are words we could use for **higher education**?

college, university, post-secondary education
Let’s See It In Action…

Keywords Video
The library on-line catalog uses specific labels for subject headings/topics. It is expecting you to use those search terms.

If you need help figuring out the right words to use, ask a Reference Librarian!
Library Resources with 24/7 Access
Library On-line Catalog

- BC Library Catalog
- Use to find non-fiction, reference, and e-books
- Use Basic “Subject begins with” search

Let’s see it in action...To the library!
E-books

- Some search results for BC Library Catalog=e-books (single user)
- Use BC eBook Collection for over 170,000 e-books (multi-user) not accessible by Library Catalog
What Are Databases?
Review of Databases

- Databases are searchable collections of reliable, vetted resources, like encyclopedias, magazines, academic journals, and newspapers.
- Not part of the visible Internet—Google doesn’t have access to these articles.
- We pay for access to the servers that host the database search-engines.
Magazines vs. Academic Journals

- **Magazines**
  - General Audience
  - Colorful pictures/ads
  - 6th grade reading level

- **Academic Journals**
  - Selected audience
  - Higher vocabulary used, specific to that industry
  - Lots of text and graphs
  - Peer-reviewed articles

(from Trent University)
Recommended Databases

- Academic Search Complete
- MasterFILE Complete
- Health Source: Consumer Edition
- Psychology & Behavioral Sciences
- Newspaper Source Plus
- ERIC
- Military & Government Collection
- GreenFILE
- Religion & Philosophy Collection
- America: History and Life with Full Text
Getting to the Databases
From Home

Use your BC @ number, **without** the @ symbol.

To the databases!
Tip: Search your topic with site:.gov (or .edu, .org, etc.)
Bookmarked Internet Websites

- Use library’s “Search the Internet” tab for bookmarked websites already vetted—also helpful to get topic ideas.
Who put the information out there, and why should you believe them?
Give credit where credit is due!
Those weren’t your ideas!
How will I remember all this?!

- Use the Library’s navigation bar to access our LibGuides.
- In the “English” drop-down folder find “ENG B1A: A Cause Worth Fighting For”
Now it’s your turn to research...