WONG: ENGL
B1A: CRIMINAL
JUSTICE IN THE
UNITED STATES

Sondra Keckley
Professor, Reference Librarian
**Research Proposal Assignment**

- At least five to seven (5-7) academic sources
- Up to two (2) newspaper or magazine articles.
- No more than one (1) article from CQ Researcher or Gale Opposing Viewpoints.

[Diagram: Problem = Solution]

https://sites.google.com/a/g.coppellisd.com/types-of-expository-writing/problem-solution
THE RESEARCH PROCESS
First Step: Get a Working Knowledge

“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.

• Gives overview or background info on a topic.

• Can help you figure out or narrow down your topic.

• Quick access to facts.

• Not read cover to cover.

• Can’t be checked out.

• Found in bookcases with green labels.
Keep Going!

- As you learn more, you should be asking more questions.
- Pick one of your questions to explore in depth.
- This should help you focus in and narrow down your topic.

Let’s Recap…

• Pre-research and narrowing down your topic.

Pre-Research Video
Research Proposal Thesis Statement

• Once you have determined your guiding question you will need to answer it in the form of a thesis statement.
• Your proposal needs a working thesis statement.
• You may use the Three-Step Formula to generate a thesis statement:
  – **Topic**: I am studying __________
  – **Question**: because I want to find out what/why/how __________,
  – **Significance**: in order to help my reader understand __________.
I Have a Thesis…Now What?

• To defend your thesis, you need research to back up your reasons (supporting arguments).
IT'S TIME FOR MORE RESEARCH!

https://www.flickr.com/photos/mcmscience/17664002728
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
Subject Headings

• 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!

To the library catalog!
**eBooks**

- Some search results for BC Library Catalog = eBooks (single user)
- Use BC eBook Collection for over 170,000 eBooks (multi-user) not accessible by Library Catalog
What Are Databases?
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.
How to Talk to Databases

• Find **key words or phrases** in your guiding question.
  – The word or words that the question is about.
  – The important words in the question.

  – 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?
How to Talk to Databases

• 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
How to Talk to Databases

• But what if the author uses colleges or universities?

• Truncation
  – Truncate = to shorten or take off at the end
  – Use * (Shift 8)

  college and colleges -------------- college*
  university and universities --------- universit*
**Boolean Operators**

**AND**
- Finds information about both terms
- Narrows your search
- Makes your search more relevant

**OR**
- Finds information about either term
- Broadens your search

**NOT**
- Excludes information from your search
**Recommended Databases**

- Academic Search Complete
- MasterFILE Complete
- Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection
- Newspaper Source Plus
- Military & Government Collection
- America: History & Life

No more than one article from either:
Getting to the Databases
From Home

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

To the Databases!
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.
- “ENGL B1A: Criminal Justice”
Now it’s your turn to research!