



**Selkirk
College
Library**

Name: _____

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Instructor: _____

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Important: Read This

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Library Research: A Workbook

Library research is an important skill for student success. This assignment will take you step-by-step through the research process.

In completing this workbook you will learn how to find books and articles that you can use in writing a research paper for English 110 or for another course.

FYI: Sections marked FYI are “for your information.”

A Librarian from Selkirk College will be evaluating your completed assignment.

Contact Us

Selkirk College Librarians are available to help you with your research. We can assist you by email, by phone, or in person at the Castlegar campus.

- Email: reference@selkirk.ca
- Phone: 1-888-953-1133 ext. 21229 (or ask for the Library)
- Phone: (250) 365-1229 (local call)
- Online: <http://library.selkirk.ca/>

Step 1: The Search Plan

Have a plan before beginning your research. A good plan includes:

- a) picking a topic *that interests you*
- b) writing a research question
- c) identifying search terms

Sample Search Plan

- a) **Topic:** legalizing marijuana
- b) **Research question:** Should **Canada** **legalize** the use of **marijuana**?
- c) Identify the **main concepts:** *These will become our search terms.*

Tips: Choosing Search Terms

- Use nouns. These may be words or phrases.
- Avoid biased words
 - *search terms such as “positive” or “negative” or “good” or “bad” bias your results*
- Start with broad concepts
 - *use “law” rather than “legalize”*

► The Search Plan is used to find information on a topic in library databases.

Search Plan					
<i>Use the main concepts from your research question to plan your first search. Write two or three search terms.</i>					
1	marijuana	AND	law	AND	Canada
<i>Think of alternate terms (or synonyms) for these search terms.</i>					
2	cannabis	AND	policy	AND	
<i>Write down any new search terms you discover over the course of your research.</i>					
3	medical marijuana		legalization		law & legislation

Step 1: My Search Plan

Make a plan before beginning your research. Write your search plan out here:

a) **Topic**

b) **Research Question**

c) **Search Terms**

Identify the main concepts of your research question. *Tip: circle or highlight them.*

- Use nouns. These may be words or phrases.
- Avoid biased words *such as “positive” or “negative” or “good” or “bad.”*

► Use your Search Plan to find information on your topic in library databases.

Search Plan					
<i>Use the main concepts from your research question to plan your first search. Write two or three search terms.</i>					
1		AND		AND	
<i>Think of alternate terms (or synonyms) for these search terms.</i>					
2		AND		AND	
<i>Write down any new search terms you discover over the course of your research.</i>					
3					

Step 2: The Library Catalogue

Search for Books & eBooks

The library catalogue is a database of books and ebooks (electronic books) that can be borrowed from the Selkirk College Library. Use your research skills to find library books on your topic.

Choosing Your Search Terms

- Use your Search Plan (page 3) to choose your search terms

Tips: *Our Library catalogue is a small database.
One or two search terms should be sufficient.*

1st search term: _____

AND

2nd search term (optional): _____

Searching the Library Catalogue

- Go to the Library home page > <http://library.selkirk.ca>
- Type your search request into the **Catalogue Quick Search** box. Click **search**.

Example: **marijuana** AND **law**

Tips: *Remember to combine search terms using **AND**
You can also choose Find > [Books & Media](#) to search the catalogue*

- Scan one or two screens of results.

Search Results

Are some of these items relevant to your research question?

Yes

No

Important: *It is not wrong to answer no.*

Not every search yields useful results. That is part of the learning process.
You will have a chance to try again.

Evaluating Your Search

It's great when you find what you want on the first try, but it doesn't always happen. You have the power to improve your search results!

- How might you increase your satisfaction with your search results?
 - correcting a spelling error
 - trying different search terms
 - asking a librarian for help
 - none of the above, I got good enough results on the first try

► If you found a relevant title go to the activity "Choosing a Title"

Revising Your Search

- If you did not get useful results the first time try another search

Tips: *Change one or both of your search terms.*

Not enough titles? Simplify your search. Use fewer search terms.

Too many titles? Add another search term.

1st search term: _____

AND

2nd search term (optional): _____

Choosing a Title

Choose a title from your search results that you think will be useful for your topic.

Tip: *Click on the **Title** to see the full record*

- **Call number**

Tip: *You use the call number to find the book in the library*

Look at the full record to see all of the data elements needed to create a citation for this title. Record the citation elements below.

Tip: *Choose the **Catalog Record** link*

- **Author(s) / Editor(s)**

Name(s): _____

- **Title**

Full title: _____

- **Publication Information**

Place of publication: _____

Name of publisher: _____

Date of publication: _____

Tip: *If you need current information a recent publication date is important*

FYI: Citations

A citation is all of the information needed to identify a source such as a book or article. Common elements for a book citation include: author(s), title, place of publication, name of publisher, and date of publication.

Sample Book Citation: APA Style

Boyd, S. C., & Carter, I. C. (2014). *Killer weed: Marijuana grow ops, media, and justice*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Using Subject Terms to Find More Resources

Subjects terms describe what a book is about.

Tip: *Scroll to the bottom of the record to see the subject terms*

Item Information Catalog Record
Killer weed : marijuana grow ops, media, and justice
Subject term: Marijuana--Government policy--Canada
Subject term: Marijuana--Law and legislation--Canada
Subject term: Drug control--Canada--History
Subject term: Cannabis

Subject terms are excellent search terms. Use a subject term from the title you chose (page 6) to find more books.

Tip: *You can also add this subject term to your Search Plan (page 3)*

- Write down a subject term from the title you chose that best describes your topic:

- Click on the subject term to run a new search

Search results: How many titles were found? _____

- Write down the **title** of another book that looks relevant to your topic.

Call number _____

▶ **If you found a useful title** *go to the “Using Call Numbers” activity (page 8)*

▶ **If you did not find a useful title** *do a revised search (see below)*

Revised Search

Help! I did not find more titles on my topic.

This can happen when a subject heading has many parts and so is too specific.

Example: Fur trade--British Columbia--History--19th century

Solution: Run a new basic search using one or two subject terms

New search: Fur trade AND British Columbia

- Run a new basic search using one or two of the terms in the subject heading.

Write down the **title** of an item that looks relevant to your topic:

- Write down the **call number**

Using Call Numbers to Find More Resources

You can also use call numbers to find more books on your topic.

- Note the **call number** of the book you found to be most useful for your topic (see pages 5, 7 or 8)
- Notice that the call number begins with one or two letters.

Write down the letter(s) that begin your call number:

Call Numbers and Subjects

Library material is shelved by subject. This means that the letter(s) you wrote down indicate the subject of your book.

- Use the **Library of Congress Classification System** (LCCS) outline to determine the broad subject area of your book

Tip: *The LCCS outline is posted in the Library AND is available on the web site:*

Help → Subject & Research Guides → Other Guides → Library Research
[Library of Congress Classification](#)

- Write down the **subject area**: _____

Example: FC History of Canada

Tip: *If the letters are not listed write down the broad subject area.*

Example: W Medicine

Step 3: Finding Research Articles

Using the Academic Search Complete Database

The Library subscribes to many databases that you can search to find journal and magazine articles. These databases can be accessed on campus or remotely.

Remote Access

You can access Library databases remotely using:

- Your home computer
- A wireless device on campus

Personal Login

You will be prompted to login when you try to access Library databases from a personal computer. Login using your Library account:

Username: your **student number**
Password: **last 4 digits** of your student number

Tip: *You can change your password on the Library website*

Login not working? *Contact the Library for assistance.*

Academic Search

Search the Academic Search database to find a **journal** or **magazine article** on your topic.

Step 1: Go to the Library homepage > <http://library.selkirk.ca>

 To access databases: Under FIND choose > [Research Databases](#)

Step 2: Choose **A** under **Browse Databases by Title**

Step 3: Find **Academic Search Complete** and click **Connect**

Step 4: Choose your search terms

Tip: *See your Search Plan (page 3)*

1st search term: _____
AND
 2nd search term: _____
AND
 3rd search term (optional): _____

Step 5: Type your search in the search boxes. Click **search**.

- enter 2 - 3 search terms for your topic
- combine your search terms using **AND**

- **How many articles (results) were found?** _____

HELP! I got **NO RESULTS** ...

- check your spelling
- use fewer search terms
- use alternative search terms

HELP! I've got **TOO MANY** articles ...

- If your result list is too large, add another search term to your search.

Limiting Your Results #1: Full Text Articles

Limit To ▾

Full Text

References Available

Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1990 Publication Date 2016

⏪ ⏩

Find the Full Text limiter in the left column.

Full text articles are available from the database in pdf or html format.

- **How many articles?** _____

(Optional) Limiting Your Results #2: Academic Articles

Limit To

Full Text

References Available

Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1990 Publication Date 2016

Find the Scholarly Journal limiter in the left column.

Peer reviewed articles are academic or scientific works evaluated by other professionals in the same field.

- **How many articles?** _____

Choosing an Article

Choose an article from your result list that you judge to be useful for your topic.

Tip: *Click on the title to see the full record*

- Look at the subject terms. Is the article on your topic?
- Read the abstract (summary). Will the article answer your research question?
- Look at the publication date. Is the information current enough?

Write down the citation elements for the article you chose.

- **Author / Authors**

Name(s): _____

- **Title of Article**

Full title: _____

- **Publication Information**

Title of journal or magazine (source): _____

Volume / issue number: _____

Date: _____

Pages: _____

FYI: Citations


A citation is all of the information needed to identify a source such as an article or book. Common elements for an article citation include: author(s), article title, publication title, volume & issue, page range, and date.

Sample Article Citation: APA Style

Ducatti Flister, L. (2012). The economic case for marijuana legalization in Canada. *Journal Of Alternative Perspectives In The Social Sciences*, 5(1), 96-100.

Emailing a Full Text Article

You may prefer to spend your time in the Library doing research and email articles to yourself to read at home. Here are some email tips:

1. Click on the title of an article that has full text (html or pdf)
2. Click on E-mail  Tip: *Look in the right side column*
3. Enter your email address
4. Enter a subject
5. Choose a citation format (APA, MLA etc.)
6. Click SEND

Expanding Your Search: Using Subject Terms

Tip: *If there are no subject terms in your article, choose a different article*

Step 1: Look at the **subject terms** for the article you chose.

Write down the one that you judge to be most useful for your topic.

Step 2: Search on this subject term.

Tip: Subject terms are *hyperlinks*. Click on the subject term to run a new search.

How many articles (results) did you get? _____

Step 3: Refine this search by adding another search term.

AND **Search term:** _____

How many articles (results) did you get? _____

Evaluating Your Search Results

Which statement best describes the results of your search?

- Many of the articles look very useful. I do not need to revise my search.
- A few of the articles look useful. I need to revise my search to find more articles.
- None of the articles look useful. I need to try using different search terms.

FYI: Evaluating Information Sources

Evaluating the appropriateness of the sources you use is an important step in the research process. UBC Library has an excellent guide to helping you choose credible and objective information sources: [Evaluating Information Sources](#)

Step 4: Finding More Resources Using Online Databases

Searching Another Database

The Selkirk College Library subscribes to a number of article and ebook databases. It is a good strategy to search more than one database to ensure that you are getting the most useful information for your topic.

Choosing a Database

Step 1: Go to the Library homepage > <http://library.selkirk.ca>

To access databases choose > FIND > [Research Databases](#)

Step 2: Browse databases by subject area. Choose a subject area that is relevant to your topic.

Step 3: Choose a database to search. Options include:

Business Source
CBCA
JSTOR
PsycInfo

Tip: *Do not choose Academic Search Complete*

Name of database: _____

Choosing Your Search Terms

Successful researchers learn from their experience. They learn from their successful and unsuccessful search attempts.

In choosing your search terms consider your initial search plan. Also consider search terms you have learned along the way.

1st search term: _____

AND

2nd search term: _____

AND

3rd search term (optional): _____

- Identify an article or ebook that you judge to be useful for your topic.

Title: _____

Author(s): _____

Tip: *You will need more elements to create a complete citation.*

Step 5: Citation & Style Guides

Citations

It is important to provide complete citations for all of the resources that you cite in your research paper. A citation includes all of the data elements needed to identify a resource. A list of all the sources you cited may be called “Works Cited” or “References” or “Bibliography” depending on the style guide you are using.

A style guide provides instructions for how to cite resources such as books, articles and videos. The most commonly used style guides at Selkirk College are APA, MLA and Chicago.

Help is available on the Library website: Help > [Citation & Style Guides](#)

Plagiarism

When you write a research paper you use sources such as books and articles to support your ideas. Correctly citing all of your sources is a means to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism: *“The presentation of someone else’s words or ideas as your own”*
(Haig, MacMillan, & Raikes, 2010, p. 5)

Notice how we have avoided plagiarism by citing the source of the quotation. In the reference list the citation in APA style would look like this:

Haig, J., MacMillan, V., & Raikes, G. (2010). *Cites & sources: An APA documentation guide* (3rd ed.). Toronto, ON: Nelson Education.

Test: What is Plagiarism?

Test your knowledge of plagiarism by answering the following questions:

1. You find a great idea in an article, so you use it in your paper. You don’t bother to cite the source of the idea because you’ve expressed it in your own words. Is this plagiarism?

Yes, it's plagiarism

No, it isn't

2. You copy a paragraph directly from an article you found. You cite the source, but you forget to put quotation marks. Is this plagiarism?

Yes, it's plagiarism

No, it isn't

3. You need an image for your essay. You go online and find one. You don't cite the source of your image because you got it off of the internet. Is this plagiarism?

Yes, it's plagiarism

No, it isn't

Source: Simon Fraser University Library. (2015). *Plagiarism tutorial*. Retrieved from <https://canvas.sfu.ca/courses/15986>

Learn More About Plagiarism

- Complete the full **Plagiarism Tutorial** available from Simon Fraser University Library at: <https://canvas.sfu.ca/courses/15986>
- Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty (MLA Style Center) <https://style.mla.org/plagiarism-and-academic-dishonesty/>

Taking a Moment to Reflect

Congratulations! In completing this research log you have learned essential research skills.

A few key points to remember are:

- Research takes time. *Research takes time. **Research takes time!***
- Be flexible. Learn as you go. Try new search terms (especially subject terms from databases) as you discover them through your research.
- Use **AND** (Boolean searching) to combine search terms.

Handing in your Workbook for Evaluation

Print. If you are completing this document in print, hand it in at the Main Desk of the Library.

Online. If you are completing this document online, submit it for evaluation via your Moodle course.

Questions?

Contact information for the Selkirk College Librarians is on the first page of this document. Please contact us for assistance.