

## Research Worksheet

Before beginning research for an assignment, it can be helpful to plan and outline your topic. Use this worksheet to organize information and clearly develop a search strategy for your assignment. If you need further assistance, the Library staff can help you choose an appropriate database, formulate your search statement, help you understand your search results and provide tips for searching more effectively.

Main Topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
Search Terms: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Search: \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 1: Choosing your topic

#### Understand your assignment:

- ✓ Has your professor provided a list of topics to choose from or are you free to choose?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ What is the minimum and/or maximum length of your research paper or assignment?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ What types of materials and how many resources are you required to use? (e.g. newspapers, magazines, journals, books, radio/TV transcripts, government documents, websites)

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\_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Are you limited to a certain time period or geographic region? If so, what are they?

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**Choose a topic that interests you. If you need ideas, try the following:**

- ✓ Scan articles in periodicals (newspapers, magazines or journals)
- ✓ Browse the index in your course textbook
- ✓ Check out the reliable websites listed in the Library Resource Centre's Selected Web Resources: [mylambton.ca/library/Selected\\_Web\\_Resources](http://mylambton.ca/library/Selected_Web_Resources)
- ✓ Browse industry magazines or journals in the subject you are researching

**Do a preliminary search to determine if you have chosen a researchable topic – one that is not too broad or too narrow:**

- ✓ If you return a large number of results, try narrowing down your search by adding limiters (e.g. full text, date range, geographic location)
- ✓ If you return zero or a small number of results, try broadening your search but using broader search terms or removing limiters if you used any

## Step 2: Identify the information sources that you will use

Which of the types of sources listed below do you think would be most useful for finding information on your topic?

- ✓ **Reference Sources** – e.g. encyclopedias (provide an overview of your topic and sometimes references to other sources of information), dictionaries (contain definitions of terms), statistical sources.
- ✓ **Books** – use books for in-depth coverage of topics
- ✓ **Newspapers** Local, national and global information on current events is provided. Articles are written by reporters for a general audience.
- ✓ **Popular Magazines** – These periodicals provide information on current events and issues. Articles are written by journalists, staff writers or freelance writers for a general audience.)
- ✓ **Trade Publications** – These periodicals provide information on the current trends, news, products and professional issues in a specific trade. Articles are written by industry experts
- ✓ **Scholarly Journals** – Articles report on original research or provide an in-depth analysis of specific topics. Articles are written by subject experts, researchers, professors or scholars.
- ✓ **Government Documents** – These publications are produced by a local, provincial or federal government departments or agencies. Included are official papers that record the actions or deliberations of government, informational publications or reports of research completed under government contract.
- ✓ **Web Documents** – These sources can provide the most current news and information about companies, agencies, government departments, educational institutions and non-profit organizations. However, since anyone can publish on the internet it is critically important that you evaluate the quality and reliability of the material that you find.

### Step 3: Choose the appropriate search tools to gather your information

After you have determined which types of sources you require and/or plan to use, select the appropriate search tools to find relevant information for your topic.

To search for:	Use:
<b>Books owned by Library Resource Centre</b>	LRC's Online Catalogue which is available at: <a href="http://oasis.lambtoncollege.ca">http://oasis.lambtoncollege.ca</a>
<b>e-Books</b>	Ebook Central (ProQuest), eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), Books@Ovid (Ovid). Access to these eBook collections are available at: <a href="https://www.mylambton.ca/library/ebooks/">https://www.mylambton.ca/library/ebooks/</a>
<b>Newspaper articles</b>	Canadian Periodicals Index Quarterly (Gale), Canadian Major Dailies (ProQuest), Regional Business News (EBSCOhost), InfoTrac Newsstand (Gale). Access is available from the LRC's Research Databases Page: <a href="https://www.mylambton.ca/Library/ResearchDatabases.aspx">https://www.mylambton.ca/Library/ResearchDatabases.aspx</a> <i>*Select Newspapers from the subject drop down box</i>
<b>Magazine and Journal Articles</b>	Databases are available from the LRC's Research Databases Page: <a href="https://www.mylambton.ca/Library/ResearchDatabases.aspx">https://www.mylambton.ca/Library/ResearchDatabases.aspx</a>
<b>Government documents</b>	LRC's Online Catalogue and Selected Web Resources Page available at: <a href="https://www.mylambton.ca/library/Selected_Web_Resources/">https://www.mylambton.ca/library/Selected_Web_Resources/</a>
<b>Pictures, images and maps</b>	High quality photos available at: <a href="https://unsplash.com/">https://unsplash.com/</a> and <a href="https://pixabay.com/">https://pixabay.com/</a>
<b>Internet documents and websites</b>	Reliable internet sources available at: <a href="https://www.mylambton.ca/library/Selected_Web_Resources/">https://www.mylambton.ca/library/Selected_Web_Resources/</a>

Remember to ask the LRC staff for assistance.

We can help you choose an appropriate database, formulate your search, help you understand your search results and provide tips for searching more effectively.



*Tip: Keep a record of your searches: the databases or websites you used, the words and/or phrases exactly as you entered them and the date of your searches.*