The better to search with my dear...
**Search Basics**

**Keywords**
Your own natural language words

**Controlled Vocabulary**
Database Terms

**Boolean Operators**
Terms that tell the database how to conduct your search

**AND** (FEW)- connects words and narrows results

**OR** (MORE)- connects words and expands results

**NOT** (NONE)- eliminates words/terms
Boolean Operators…small but powerful!
Easier than a Rubix Cube...seriously!

Two resources to keep you out of a straight jacket:

- Search Strategy Worksheet
- Research Plan

(coffee optional)
RESEARCH PLAN

This checklist is designed to aid in the organization of the research process and keep track of completed tasks relating to a project/paper.

Course: ____________________  Assignment: ____________________  Due Date: ____________________

1. Assignment Details Complete by: ____________________
   a. How many words/pages? ____________________
   b. Type of sources allowed/required:
      - Academic/scholarly (peer reviewed) ☐
      - Popular (magazine, newspaper, etc.) ☐
      - Primary (original document/object) ☐
      - Secondary (analyze topic) ☐
      - Tertiary (compilation/encyclopedia) ☐
      - Websites, etc. ☐
   c. Format/Style: ____________________
      - MLA ☐  APA ☐  Chicago ☐
   d. Type of paper: ____________________
      - Informational ☐  Opinion ☐  Argumentative ☐

2. I want to research:
                         ____________________

3. Because (Why?):
                         ____________________
                         ____________________

4. Develop a Research Question (thesis optional) Complete by:
    Research Question:
    ____________________

5. Preliminary searching Complete by: ____________________
   a. Search engines/websites
   b. Databases

6. Targeted Research Complete by: ____________________
   a. Determine databases to use
      http://www.galileo.usg.edu/ezproxy.mga.edu/scholar/mgs/c/search/?Welcome
      ____________________
      ____________________
      ____________________
   b. Evaluate Sources Complete by:
      http://www.ciscicc.edu/len/handouts/eval_websites.pdf
      ____________________
      ____________________
   c. Revise Research Question (optional) Complete by:
      ____________________

7. Do you need assistance from a Librarian? ☐
   Appointment date: ____________________

8. Take notes on sources Complete by: ____________________

9. Write Thesis Statement Complete by: ____________________

10. Write rough draft Complete by: ____________________
    a. need help from SSC? ☐
    b. need help from Writing Lab? ☐

11. Final Draft Complete by: ____________________

12. Turn in assignment Due Date: ____________________

Additional Resources:
http://www.mga.edu/library/default.aspx
http://guides.mga.edu/
http://galileo.usg.mga-primo.hosted.avlibriargroup.com/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vid=MGA_V1
http://support.epnet.com.proxy.mga.edu/lrc/researchGuides.html
# Search Strategy Worksheet

Research Question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Topic</th>
<th>Subtopic/Concept</th>
<th>Synonyms (used as keywords in search)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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**GIL Find:**

- YES
- NO

Database(s):

List subtopics in the first row of the table below. Then in the columns below, write synonyms for those subtopics or concepts. These synonyms will be the keywords you use in your database or GIL Find search.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC / CONCEPT 1</th>
<th>TOPIC / CONCEPT 2</th>
<th>TOPIC / CONCEPT 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Boolean Operators:**

- **AND** – combines terms and narrows (reduces) search results
- **OR** – combines terms and expands (increases) search results
- **NOT** – excludes unwanted terms in search results (might eliminate relevant results)

Additional help:

- [http://snga.edu/library/](http://snga.edu/library/)
- [http://guides.snga.edu/](http://guides.snga.edu/)
- [http://snga.edu/library/ask-a-librarian.aspx](http://snga.edu/library/ask-a-librarian.aspx)
Let’s Do This!

http://www.mga.edu/library/default.aspx

GIL-Find (online catalog)

GALILEO/various databases

2. Academic Search Complete
   Articles, some peer-reviewed, all topics
http://gilfind.mga.edu/

- Use advanced search
- Search via MGA OR USG libraries
Controlled Vocab.  
(database terms)

Use if you have more than one keyword.
“Scholarship as Conversation”

• cite the contributing work of others in their own information production

• **contribute to scholarly conversation at an appropriate level**, such as local online community, guided discussion, undergraduate research journal, conference presentation/poster session

• identify barriers to entering scholarly conversation via various venues

• critically evaluate contributions made by others in participatory information environments

• identify the contribution that particular articles, books, and other scholarly pieces make to disciplinary knowledge

• summarize the changes in scholarly perspective over time on a particular topic within a specific discipline

• recognize that a given scholarly work may not represent the only - or even the majority - perspective on the issue
## Limitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Voice/Perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Published/unpublished</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Examples

History - Primary Sources (authenticity, access/is it real, can you get to it?)

Art History & visual art - Language (can you read it?)/ materials, techniques.

English/Literature- obscure texts/documents etc. (can you get to archives?)

Nursing- patient information (ethics of using info.)

Technology- scholarly information (has it been published yet?-academic journal etc.)

Religious studies (& more)- think critically without bias