Search Tips & Exercises for BA1001

Once you have your topic, identify the main concepts or keywords in the question. Do this by picking out the main terms - or subjects - used in your questions.

Develop a list of synonyms or related terms. This will provide you with extra keywords to use when searching for information. It may also suggest ways to broaden or narrow your topic.

Example topic: Fake News and Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword 1</th>
<th>Keyword 2</th>
<th>Keyword 3</th>
<th>Keyword 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fake news</td>
<td>News media</td>
<td>Hoaxes</td>
<td>Post-truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fake facts</td>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Misinformation</td>
<td>Public opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propaganda</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Disinformation</td>
<td>24hr news cycle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Search Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truncation</th>
<th>Truncation can be used to find words with the same stem, therefore including plurals and other variations of a word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase searching</td>
<td>Some search engines and databases require you to use quotes to search for a phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parentheses</td>
<td>Parentheses are used to group portions of Boolean queries tighter for more complicated queries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Truncation symbols vary for different databases, two common ones are the asterisk * and the question mark ?

Search for Fossil* will find Fossil, Fossilised and Fossilisation.

Phrase searching symbols are quotation marks “…”

A search for “Torres Strait” will find articles anywhere the word Torres is followed immediately by the word Strait.

Parentheses are used to

A search for (“Solomon Islands” OR “Isla Salomón”) AND Europeans will return results of any of the terms in brackets and Europeans.

Use brackets ( ) for nested searching

Discipline-specific databases return better results faster – try:

- **Informit** (Australian content): (Indigenous OR Aboriginal) Australia "protest movement"
- **JSTOR**: Burial AND jars AND Laos
- **ProQuest**: Singlish AND culture AND Singapore

What is peer-reviewed?

- Your lecturers will often ask you to use **scholarly, academic or peer-reviewed** papers in your assignments.
- Peer-review (also known as refereeing) is the process journal editors use to ensure the articles they publish meet the standards of good scholarship. Academic papers (journal articles, research papers etc) are examined by a panel of other scholars in the field (the author’s peers). The panel may decide to accept the paper, recommend revision or reject it completely.
- Any resource that passes the peer-review process can be considered to have the highest level of academic credibility - although of course you still need to consider other elements such as age, relevance etc.
- Not all journals use peer-review. Some lecturers may specify that only peer reviewed resources are to be used in assignments.
Search Tips & Exercises for BA1001

One Search Tips:
- Limit to scholarly/peer reviewed
- Save articles and then email using APA format
- Narrow your search by limiting by discipline
- Select a date range to narrow your results.

Google Tips:
- Google Scholar: Use advanced search
- Google Scholar: Limit by date
- Google Scholar: Set your preferences to also return JCU Library full-text results
- Google: Search with site search to quickly return credible results (e.g. site:.qld.gov.au)

One Search – try:
- (society OR culture) AND Bali AND "religious beliefs"
- Limit by: Full Text Online, Scholarly & Peer Review and Journal Article
- Limit by discipline: Anthropology

Google Scholar Advanced Search – try:
- All of the words: archaeology “Cape York”
- Exact phrase: Shell middens
- At least one word: Aboriginals OR Indigenous OR "Torres Strait Islanders"

It is important to evaluate what you find
- Make sure it isn’t a book review, book reviews may appear in scholarly publications but are not suitable for your annotated bibliography
- Is it a scholarly article (see table below)?
- Is the content relevant to your chosen topic?
- For websites, YouTube documentaries or podcasts - look at the authority, currency, bias, accuracy and presentation to determine quality
- Does it tie in with caring for the tropical world?

**THINK ABOUT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR SOURCES</th>
<th>Not suitable</th>
<th>Credible &amp; reliable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>For lay people; to inform and entertain</td>
<td>For professionals, academics, researchers, and graduate students; to present and report on original research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
<td>Often colourful and attractive; short and/or superficial articles</td>
<td>Likely to showcase data in tables or charts and graphs, with few if any colour photographs; usually features an abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author affiliation</strong></td>
<td>Author/s may not have qualifications giving them authority in the field; their credentials are not provided</td>
<td>Author’s credentials are established (e.g. institutional affiliation, qualifications, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Written in everyday language</td>
<td>Academic writing and discipline-specific language/jargon which requires the reader to be in touch with other research in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bibliography/References</strong></td>
<td>None or very few</td>
<td>Extensive reference list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>The author is often a reporter; he or she will have done research for the article, but not “original” research</td>
<td>Usually based on original research or new applications of other’s research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>