Example Topic: Fake news and facts

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 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

- **Truncation**: Truncation can be used to find words with the same stem, therefore including plurals and other variations of a word. Truncation symbols vary for different databases, two common ones are the asterisk * and the question mark ?.

  - Search for Mission* will find Mission, Missions and Missionaries.

- **Phrase searching**: Some search engines and databases require you to use quotes to search for a phrase.

  - A search for “Zhou Enlai” will find articles anywhere the word Zhou is followed immediately by the word Enlai.

- **Parentheses**: Parentheses are used to group portions of Boolean queries tighter for more complicated queries.

  - A search for (“Treaty of Waitangi” OR Aotearoa) AND “Hone Heke” will return results of any of the terms in brackets and Hone Heke.

Search discipline-specific databases to get better results faster

- **Informit** (Australian content): (indigenous OR aboriginal) australia "stolen generation" missions
- **JSTOR**: China (“great leap forward” OR “five year plan”) (“Mao Zedong” OR “Mao Tse Dong”)
- **ProQuest**: Museum (“computer aided design” OR interactive)

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**

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**One Search – try:**
- France enlightenment (encyclopedia OR "denis diderot")
- (Greece OR Hellenism) philosoph* plato
- Malay* independ* “post world war”

**Google Scholar – try:**
- All of the words: indigenous minority
- Exact phrase: “Latin America”
- At least one word: “social media” OR internet

**Google – try:**
1. (university OR “higher education”) policy "21st century" site:.gov.au
2. Narrow by looking for United Kingdom educational or government sites (e.g. site:.gov.uk)

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**One Search Tips:**
- Limit to scholarly/ peer reviewed
- Save articles and then email using APA format
- Narrow your search by including specific subject terms
- Select a date range to narrow your results

**Google Scholar Tips:**
- Use Google Scholar advanced search
- Narrow the search by limiting by date
- If needed, narrow your search by searching only in the title
- Use the Google Scholar link on your LibGuide to get fulltext content available at JCU

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**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 look at the authority, currency, bias, accuracy and presentation
- How does it tie in with *time, truth and the human condition*?

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**THINK ABOUT:**

**HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR SOURCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>For lay people; to inform and entertain</th>
<th>For professionals, academics, researchers, and graduate students; to present and report on original research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</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>Author affiliation</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>Language</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>Bibliography / References</td>
<td>None or very few</td>
<td>Extensive reference list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</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>

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**Not suitable**

**Credible & reliable**

**Popular Journals**

**Scholarly Journals**

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*Updated Claire Ovaska – JCU Library 03/2018*