Research Strategy & Search Terms

As you begin to research your topic, keeping a research journal will help you to track your progress and serve as a record of your search history. This is very useful in understanding the journey you’ll take as you plan, search, read and extract information to use in your paper. Remember, research is an iterative process, and you’ll follow the steps many times to get to the best information sources. The research journal is a record of your questions about the materials and your tentative answers to those questions.

My Research Question:

A. **List** the keywords you used to find information on your topic: (first iteration – plan, search, read, extract)

   Keywords Used: _____________________________________________________________

   Subject-heading used: ______________________________________________________

   Searches formula used: _____________________________________________________

   **For each** subject-heading you used to locate information, which article did you find which was relevant or pertinent to your topic? (1st iteration – plan – search – read – extract)

   Resources Used:

   Title /Author of books/articles retrieved:

   ______________________________________________________________________________

   Name of database used (if applicable) __________________________________________

   **Reflection**: What did you become more curious about through searching, browsing, and selecting these scholarly sources related to your topic after this activity?

B. **List** the keywords you used to find information on your topic: (second iteration – e.g. after you completed one cycle of plan, search, read, extract) What new keywords did you discover and try out?

   Keywords Used: _____________________________________________________________

   Subject-heading used: ______________________________________________________

   Searches formula used: _____________________________________________________
For each subject-heading you used to locate information, which article did you find which was relevant or pertinent to your topic? (2nd iteration – plan – search – read – extract)

Resources Used:

Title /Author of books/articles retrieved:
____________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Name of database used (if applicable) ________________________________

Reflection: In several sentences, sum up anything have you learned so far about the scholarly conversation out there about your topic

C. List keywords you used during a third iteration (3 times around!) What did you discover worked well?

Keywords Used: _________________________________________________

Subject-heading used: _____________________________________________

Searches formula used: __________________________________________

For each subject-heading you used to locate information, which article did you find which was relevant or pertinent to your topic? (3rd iteration - plan – search – read – extract)

Resources Used:

Title /Author of books/articles retrieved:
_______________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Name of database used (if applicable) ________________________________

Reflection: Which keyword(s) did you find was the most helpful in locating relevant sources to answer your research question? In several sentences, sum up how the understanding of your topic and the scholarly conversation about it has changed from all the above activities.

Revised Research Question (if applicable):