**Research Resources for All Research Projects**

**BASIC RESEARCH TIPS:**

**Here are some fantastic resources and tips on how to use them to their fullest extent:**

* Librarian/Digital Media Specialist/Teacher

– Tell one of these people your research topic and ask them to point you towards useful sources. Chances are that they know more about what’s available about your particular topic than you do. Depending on the size of your school, you may have a subject area librarian for the particular type of research you are doing. Some universities, for instance, have specialist librarians for topics like music, art, and humanities.

Tip: When asking your librarian or teacher, just be sure to be tactful. Remember: librarians are there to help, but they won’t do all your research for you.

* Academic journals

– These journals are a great way to find cutting edge research on your topic. Academic journals add credibility and professionalism to a paper. They work well for both humanities and scientific papers. Most schools/universities have a subscription to a large database of academic journals. Some commonly used databases are JSTOR and EBSCO Host. If you don’t know what types of services your school subscribes to, ask your teacher/librarian about them.

Another great way to access academic papers is **Google Scholar**. It is a search tool that finds scholarly articles–academic journals, patents, theses, court proceedings, and more. Google Scholar displays how many times an academic piece of literature was cited, which is a rough numerical indicator of how influential the research was. Google Scholar also has link under each posting to help you find related articles.

Microsoft has a competitor to Google Scholar that is very similar, **Microsoft Academic Search**. Microsoft’s tool works particularly well for technical papers in fields such as physics, mathematics, biology, and engineering.

* Books

– Books are still one of the best ways to find credible information about a source. Some fields such as the humanities prefer their students use books for sources rather than websites, since books typically contain more detailed information (and perhaps more in-depth thinking) than websites do. Books can be found on your school or public library website. Type in keywords related to your topic in the search field, and see what kinds of literature comes up. Write down the call number of the book so that you can find it within your library. Ask your librarian for help if you’re not sure how your library is organized.

Google has another service, **Google Books**, that will help you find books related to your topic. Just type your research topic into the field and Google Books will provide you with a list of relevant books. Once you click on a book you like, Google Books will give you a preview of the book and information related to buying the book or finding it in your library.

* Websites

– Websites are sources you should approach with caution. Some experts publish great information on the Internet, but there’s a lot of bad information out there as well. The trick is to weed out the unreliable information. The section entitled “Evaluating sources for credibility” is all about that process. Here, we’ll discuss some great resources that will help you find good information.

Tip: Multipurpose search engines (Google, Bing, and Yahoo) aren’t necessarily trying to provide you with the best academic results. They help people with a lot of things (shopping, searching for flights, comparing restaurants). You don’t want all of these sorts of results to get mixed up in your research!

**SEARCH ENGINGES TO USE FOR RESEARCH:**

**Here are some tools that help you find information for a particular field of interest:**

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| Subject Name of tool | Description/Comments |
| Medical - PubMed | Searchable database of academic medical literature; managed by the US National Library of Medicine. |
| Medical - GoPubMed | A feature-rich compilation of academic medical literature. |
| Medical - Medline Plus | Easy-to-read guides and videos; not as technical as other medical search engines; managed by the National Institutes of Health, |
| Humanities - JURN | A curated search engine for humanities researchers. |
| Humanities - Project Muse | A database of over 200 non-profit publishers. |
| Economics - NBER | National Bureau of Economic Research Searchable database of economic papers. |
| Crime - National Criminal Justice Reference Services | A database of articles about issues pertaining to the justice system, including court cases, crime prevention, drugs, etc. |
| General - OAIster | Feature-rich search tool for a variety of different sources; managed by the OCLC. |
| General - Refseek | A powerful, general-purpose search engine that finds websites, academic papers, books, newspapers, and more. The site has a variety of features that help you narrow down your search. |
| General - Sweet Search | A search engine crafted specifically for students. Every website that shows up as search result has been hand-picked by research experts. |
| General - iSeek | An education-focused general search engine with helpful tools to narrow down your search |
| General - ipl2 | The site contains a search engine and an index of helpful, credible sites arranged by topic. |
| General - EasyBib Research (Beta) | EasyBIb research makes the bibliographies on our site searchable, so you can look at sources about your topic that other students are using. |
| Chemistry - PubChem | Contains academic chemistry information; managed by the National Center for Biotechnology Information. |
| Philosophy - PhilPapers | A database of academic papers related to philosophy. |
| Science - Science.gov | A resource of scientific papers and information; overseen by the US government. |
| Science - Scirus | A search engine geared towards scientific information. |
| Science - Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) | A database of scholarly scientific information. |
| Statistics - US Census Bureau | Statistics in the US, arranged topically (Education, Business, Agriculture, etc.). |
| Statistics - CIA World Factbook | Statistics, reports, maps, history, and other information about 267 countries. |

**APPs TO USE FOR RESEARCH:**

* [GoodReader](http://www.goodreader.com/)
  + Costs $$ (Apple only)

PDF Reader with the ability to annotate, transfer, manage and sync files

* [Evernote](http://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/evernote/id281796108?mt=8)

Create text, photo and audio notes  
● Auto-synchronize your notes to your Mac, PC, and Web  
● Magically makes text within snapshots searchable  
● All notes include geo-location information for mapping and search  
[See Our Evernote Guide](http://mcla.libguides.com/content.php?pid=371280&sid=3041708)

* [Instapaper](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/instapaper/id288545208?mt=8%3FpartnerId%3D30)
  + Costs $$

Save web pages for later offline reading, optimized for readability on your screen [See Our Instapaper Guide](http://mcla.libguides.com/content.php?pid=371280&sid=3041707)

* [Dropbox](https://www.dropbox.com/)

Dropbox is a free service that lets you bring your photos, docs, and videos anywhere and share them easily.

* [TED Mobile](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/ted/id376183339?mt=8)

TED Mobile allows you to watch the latest TED videos based on Themes, Talks and Tags.

* [Wolfram Alpha](http://products.wolframalpha.com/mobile/)
  + Costs $$

An online service that answers factual queries directly by computing the answer from structured data, rather than providing a list of documents or web pages that might contain the answer as a search engine might.

* [Xodo PDF Reader & Editor](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.xodo.pdf.reader&hl=en)
* (Android only)

Xodo is an all-in-one PDF reader and PDF editor. With Xodo, you can read, annotate, sign, and share PDFs and fill in PDF forms, open .docx/.pptx as PDFs, plus sync with Google Drive, Dropbox and OneDrive.

* [Evernote](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.evernote&feature=search_result#?t=W251bGwsMSwxLDEsImNvbS5ldmVybm90ZSJd)

Create text, photo and audio notes  
● Auto-synchronize your notes to your Mac, PC, and Web  
● Magically makes text within snapshots searchable  
● All notes include geo-location information for mapping and search

* [Portable Scanner](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.silkenmermaid.portablescanner&feature=more_from_developer#?t=W251bGwsMSwxLDEwMiwiY29tLnNpbGtlbm1lcm1haWQucG9ydGFibGVzY2FubmVyIl0.)
  + Costs $$

Scan documents using your phone into PDF files. Scan documents using your phone into the ubiquitous PDF files. Image sharpening techniques used by Portable Scanner almost always result in a clear scan ideal for on computer viewing as well as printing. An ideal tool for on the go scanning.

* Easybib

EasyBib is the world's best and most accurate citation generator. With over 10+ years of citation generation and billions of citations generated to date, we guarantee the most accurate bibliography.

* Questia Library

(Only on Apple)

Scholarly Sources for Writing Research Papers, Essays and Homework on the App Store.

**How to Create a search strategy**

After a topic is chosen, you’ll need to form a search strategy. This step can help you effectively do your library research.

1. Formulate a search question or thesis statement based on the topic you select.
2. Identify the main ideas in the question or statement.
3. Brainstorm alternative terms or synonyms for your main ideas.
4. When searching, combine and use the best terms rather than typing in your original question or phrase.

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| **Example:**  You are required to write a paper on global warming and some aspect of agriculture or food production.   1. Ask a question: “*How does global warming affect the fishing industry in the United States?*” 2. Identify the main ideas: global warming, fishing industry, and United States 3. Brainstorm alternative terms:    * Global warming or climate change, greenhouse effect, carbon emissions    * Fishing industry or fishing, fisheries, oceans, marine biology, lobsters, salmon, food prices, etc.    * United States or New England, Northeast, Pacific Northwest, Florida, Alaska 4. Combine the best terms to search: (global warming OR climate change) AND (fishing OR oceans) AND United States |