**Use this template to form a search strategy on the topic you want to research.**

**Step 1:**

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| **Write down the title of your assignment / dissertation / query.** |

**Step 2:**

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| **Now, breakdown your title into separate topics (you may have a few of these).****1.****2.****3.****4.** |

**Step 3:**

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| **Make a list of possible keywords for each of your topics. Try and think of plurals, synonyms (different words with the same meaning), and English / American spellings.** |
| **Topic 1:**1.2.3. | **Topic 2:**4.5.6. |
| **Topic 3:**7.8.9. | **Topic 4:**10.11.12. |

**Step 4:**

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| **Now, combine your keywords using Boolean operators to create a search string.** |
|  Topic 1 Topic 2 Topic 3 Topic 4 (1 OR 2 OR 3) AND ( 4 OR 5 OR 6) AND (7 OR 8 OR 9) AND (10 or 11 or 12) |
| **Conduct your search then evaluate your search results and alter your search strategy accordingly.** |
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| --- | --- |
| **Too many irrelevant matches**Limit by title, material type, date, languageUse more specific search termse.g. dog therapy instead of pet therapyAdd additional concepts to the search Check any thesaurus facility for preferred termsIdentify any resources that might be more specific to your subjectE.g. a database specific to modern art instead of using general arts, humanities database. | **Too few matches**Check that all the concepts are essential to your topic. Remove any that are not. Use broader search termse.g. pet therapy instead of dog therapyUse any citation tracing optionsEmploy truncation and wildcarding if appropriateTry a database which has broader scope e.g. one that covers the humanities and not just history.  |