“It’s not about information; it’s about what you do with it.” – Dennis Dillon

Begin researching your topic by considering the following questions:

- What do you already know about your topic? What perspectives do you bring to your topic?

Brainstorm additional keywords for your topic. Think about the relationship between the words, as well as synonyms, antonyms, narrower and broader terms:

- What does this topic mean to you, or how do you think or feel about it?

- What about your topic do you find most interesting?

- What about your topic do you find most challenging?

Next, take your research question to the library:

- Where are you looking for information?

- List additional terms you find useful here:
**Keeping Track**

Keep track of the sources you find for future reference. Good research relies on the belief that the work of others is ethically cited...practice this routinely as part of the scholarly process!

Be sure to record important information like title, author, year of publication, volume and issue, page numbers, publisher and URL. You will need this to build your bibliography.

### Possible Sources

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<th>1.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What do you understand this to be saying?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What do you understand this to be saying?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>What interests you most about this?</strong></td>
<td><strong>What interests you most about this?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>What is most/least convincing?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>What additional questions does it raise?</strong></td>
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- Book
  - Call Number:
  - Journal Article
  - Peer-Reviewed?
    - Yes
    - No
  - Newspaper Article
  - Website
  - Other (Specify)
3. What do you understand this to be saying?*

What interests you most about this?

What is most/least convincing?

What additional questions does it raise?

4. What do you understand this to be saying?*

What interests you most about this?

What is most/least convincing?

What additional questions does it raise?

5. What do you understand this to be saying?

What interests you most about this?

What is most/least convincing?

What additional questions does it raise?

6. What do you understand this to be saying?

What interests you most about this?

What is most/least convincing?

What additional questions does it raise?

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Explore New Directions for RE-search

☐ Did you find a different aspect of your topic more interesting after doing some research?

☐ How did you handle information that was unexpected or dissonant with your expectations?

☐ How did you revise or change your approach to your question as you researched?

☐ What was most challenging about the process? What was most fun?
**Key Concepts**

- **Keyword:** A word that serves as a crucial ("key") element in a usage, phrase, sentence, text, subject, concept, theory, or language.

- **Citation:** Reference to (a passage, book, or author) as evidence for or justification of an argument or statement, especially in a scholarly work.

- **Abstract:** A summary of a statement, thesis, paper, or other document, usually providing its gist (essential elements and argument).

- **Database:** A large collection of information that has been coded and stored...in such a way that it can be extracted under a number of different category headings.

- **Peer-Reviewed:** The process used by publishers and editors of academic journals to provide a chance for scholars to examine and critique a paper or monograph before it is published to help ensure its integrity and veracity.

- **Copyright:** The exclusive and assignable legal right, given to the originator for a fixed number of years, to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material.

**Source Analysis**

- **Bias:** What is the author’s stance or opinion about the topic?

- **Authorship (Sponsorship):** What are the credentials of the author? Who may have sponsored, or paid for, this information?

- **Credibility (Accuracy):** Is the information substantiated by facts? Is it confirmed by other sources?

- **Coverage (Scope):** Who is the intended audience? Does the information cover your topic in a meaningful, thorough way?

- **Purpose:** Is the information useful for your topic? Is it directly speaking to an issue you have identified?

- **Timeliness:** Is the information timely to the topic?

- **Reliability (Verifiability):** Is the information valid? Is it supported by other credible sources?

- **Impact:** How does the information compare with local knowledge, traditions and culture? What is the consequence of the information for future generations? What is its effect locally? Regionally?

**Resources**

- **Mansfield Library**
  http://www.lib.umt.edu

- **Writing Center**
  http://umontana.edu/writingcenter

- **Citation Guide**
  http://libguides.lib.umt.edu/citation

Entries from:

Adapted in part from:
Lunsford, Andrea. The Everyday Writer. 4th Ed.

Remember that research is a process that requires continual refinement and increasingly sophisticated judgment.

Your contribution to this discourse is unique and marks you as a scholar.

Be proud of your voice!