

Database Search Strategy Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____ Reference Librarian _____

Please fill out this form to help the Reference Librarians assist you in determining the best databases and search strategy for your topic.

I. State your research topic (in complete sentence).

Example: How has the relationship between Blacks and Jews historically been portrayed in the popular media?

II. List any limitations such as language, period of time, periodical title, etc.

III. Concept terms you think might be useful in searching your topic.

Use another sheet of paper if your search has more than three concepts.

Note: Terms within the same columns are connected by the Boolean operator "OR" and are called a "set." Sets are connected by the operator "AND."

Sources for relevant terms :

- natural language; that is, familiar words you know
- database thesaurus (see if one is available for the specific database you are using)
- subject headings & descriptors in relevant citations records you find
- terms from encyclopedias, textbooks, coursework, etc.

Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
Example: Blacks African-Americans Afro-Americans Negroes	Jews Jewish	Mass Media Broadcasting Radio Television Film Movies Newspapers

AND

AND

Search statement example: (black* or African American*) and Jew* and (mass media or broadcast* or televis* or film*)

The asterisk (*) symbol in this statement is used to truncate. Truncation symbols vary among databases. Look in the database help sections to find which symbol is used.