LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT

Level Three
RESEARCH IN A SUBJECT AREA

Austin Community College
Produced by Library Services and Developmental Reading

Name

Date due

January 2015, Teresa Ashley
1. CHOOSE A TOPIC

Begin on the library home page on the computer. If you are in the library, this page will open automatically.

Complete the short **Choosing a Topic** tutorial to prepare for your research.

To get to the tutorial:

Under **GET VIRTUAL HELP 24/7**, click on **Choosing a Topic** in the list of tutorials.

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Write your topic here: ____________________________

Now write a sentence describing your topic:

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

What word or words will you use to search for information on this topic? These will be the **keywords** you will use to search for information.

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

After you have narrowed your topic, try thinking of different ways to approach it.

Do you want to simply define and describe an issue?

*Example:* "the problem of personal Internet use in the workplace."

Do you want to explain how the issue has been addressed?

*Example:* "Techniques for monitoring personal Internet use in the workplace."

Do you want to argue for a position on the topic?

*Example:* "Monitoring Internet use in the workplace violates employee privacy."

**Ask yourself:**

What do I already know about the topic?

What interests me most about it?

What are the issues?

Do I have specific ideas or opinions on the issues involved?

Get help from a librarian if you need it.
2. FIND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Complete the short Finding Background Information tutorial. Click on Finding Background Information in the list of tutorials under GET VIRTUAL HELP 24/7 on the library homepage.

After completing the tutorial, answer these questions:

Do I need background information on my topic? __ yes ___ no
Do I already know a lot about it and just need specifics to fill in gaps? __ yes ___ no
Do I need hard facts, such as statistics and definitions of terms? __ yes ___ no
Do I need an in-depth or historic treatment of the subject? __ yes ___ no
Do I need opinions on this topic? __ yes ___ no

Depending on how you answered these questions, there are different places to concentrate your research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For background on a topic, hard facts and statistics</th>
<th>Use reference works: encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, atlases, handbooks, etc. as a starting point.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For more in depth discussion of a topic</td>
<td>Find books. Books, arranged in chapters, can provide a historical or in depth treatment of a topic. Some books argue opinions; others provide discussion based on facts. Remember, you don't need to read an entire book on your topic. You can just use parts of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For specific and current information</td>
<td>Find articles in magazines and journals. Articles are also the best place to find the latest information on a topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For opinions</td>
<td>Use articles in magazines and newspapers, some websites, opinion databases. Books may also be useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. USE REFERENCE WORKS

Ask the librarian to help you select a reference work for your topic. There are many different ones, in print and online. The librarians know the collection and can get you headed in the right direction. Once you have found background information on your topic, fill in the following:

Author(s) (if given) ___________________________________________________________________________
Name of source _________________________________________________________________________________
Article, entry, or chapter title __________________________________________________________________
Publisher _____________________________________________________________________________________
City of publication ______________________________________________________________________________
Date published ______________ Volume number __________ Page numbers ______________
4. FIND A BOOK ON A TOPIC

Go to the Find Books, Articles, Videos search box in the middle of the page. Select the Library Catalog Only button.

Use Keyword search to locate a book on a topic of your choice. (This is the first option you will see on the search page.)

Type your search terms in the search box and click Search or press Enter to get results. Ask a librarian for help, if necessary.

Search hints:

If you type more than one word, those words will usually be treated as a phrase. Use AND between words to combine two or more concepts: "teenagers AND alcohol." Use OR between words to expand your search, with words that are similar in meaning (synonyms): "teenagers OR adolescents" or between related concepts where you want to find information on any or all of them: "drugs OR alcohol OR addiction."

Click on one of the underlined titles in your Result List. You may need to scroll down and go to the next page to see all the items found.

5. FIND AN ARTICLE IN A MAGAZINE OR JOURNAL

Academic Search Complete is a good place to begin your search for articles on your topic. This database provides articles on a wide variety of subjects and includes magazines, academic journals and other sources. Many articles are full text and can be printed, emailed or saved.

Go to the Find Books, Articles, Videos search box in the middle of the page. Select the A-Z List of All Databases option.

Click on A in the Alphabetical list of e-resources, then select Academic Search Complete.

Type words describing your topic into the search box and click Search or press Enter.

You may need to try different words for your search if the ones you first use do not get you the results you want.
Look at your Result List. You’ll find two types of full text articles: HTML Full Text and PDF Full Text.

PDF Full Text is a graphic, like a photocopy. These articles must be opened and printed with Adobe Reader software, which is on all the library computers.

Click on the hyperlinked article title to view the article and its abstract (summary).

Use the Print tools to print HTML Full Text.

Use the PDF print tools for PDF Full Text articles. Attach the printout to this packet. Ask the librarian for help if you need it. Fill in the following for your article:

Author(s) (if given): ____________________________
Name of magazine: ____________________________
Article title: ____________________________
Date published? ___________ Volume number _________ Page numbers _________

6. FIND AN INTERNET RESOURCE

Start with a search engine, such as Google.com, to locate resources that are useful for college research.

Type this URL (address): http://www.google.com in the browser search box.

Use your search terms to find information.
Look at the results.
Are there good information sources here?

Yes _____ No _____

Use the Advanced Search Icon in the upper right corner of the page.
Limit the search to a particular domain. Try .edu (for colleges and universities) .org (for organizations) .gov (for state or federal government pages).

Ask a librarian for assistance if needed.

Once you have found a good source of information, fill in the following:
7. CITING YOUR SOURCES

Write your four sources in bibliographic form. When you use ideas or words from a source you must cite or document where these came from. There are many ways to do this. Ask librarians for help in using the particular citation style your professor prefers (example: MLA, APA, Turabian). For this exercise follow the examples given below. Be sure to include commas, colons, periods, quotation marks, and underlining where the examples do.

Reference Work:
Last name of author, First name of author. "Title of Article." Title of reference source. Vol. number. City where published: Name of Publisher, year published.

Book:
Last name of author, First name of author. Title of book. City where published: Name of Publisher, year published.

Example for books:

Article (either from actual paper magazines or from a database online):
Last name of author, First name of author. "Title of Article." Name of Magazine Vol. number, Date of issue: page numbers. If using a database, add: Name of database. Web. Date you accessed the article.

Example for articles (from full text articles from a database online):

Internet resource
Last name of author, First name of author (if given). "Title of Page." Name of web site sponsor. Copyright or date of last update. <URL> Date of access.

Example for web pages (first date is from the web page, the second is date you visited it):