THE RESEARCH PROCESS

**TOPIC**
What are you researching?

**GENERATE QUESTIONS**
What are all the questions you need answered to completely understand your topic?

**DETERMINE THE KEYWORDS**
What are the important words that would appear in the answers to the questions you thought of?

**USE THE NYM WORDS TO EXCHANGE AND REFINE YOUR KEYWORDS**
- Synonyms: words that mean the same
- Hypernyms: words that are really broad categories and general concepts
- Hyponyms: words that describe more specifically

**BUILD YOUR QUERY (SEARCH PHRASE)**
The words you will type into your search bar; typically should NOT be a question, but will be comprised of your keywords

**GET RID OF CLUTTER WORDS**
Articles such as “the” and “a” which are not definitive keywords

**SPELL CHECK**
Make sure your keywords are spelled correctly

**USE BOOLEAN OPERATORS**
A Boolean Search can generate a wider and more constructive results. These magic operators are “and,” “or,” as well as “not.”

**ANALYZE EACH RESULT**
Was there a source with the information you need? If not, try adjusting your keywords and query.

Look at each source of the information. Run through the Believability Checklist.
**THE BELIEVABILITY CHECKLIST:**

**EVALUATING INFORMATIONAL SOURCES**

**Who Says**
- Who is the author?
  - Are they an expert in the topic?
  - Is the author or organization getting something in return for your belief?

**What It Says**
- What information actually applies to your project?
  - Does the information sound logical?

**When It Said It**
- When was it published?
  - Is it out of date? Are the statistics referenced older than five years? Were revisions made when new information came out?

**Where Found**
- Online: Database .GOV .EDU .ORG .COM .NET
- Print Materials: Encyclopedia Journal Book Newspaper Magazine

**Why Written**
- What is the motivation of the source? Look for evidence of bias!
  - Informing
  - Persuading
  - Warning / Recommending
  - Exposing
  - Presenting for Evaluation

**How Is It Presented**
- Language Used:
  - Professional Language
  - Everyday, Respectful
  - Slang
  - Inappropriate

- Punctuation, Grammar and Spelling Mistakes
  - 0 Mistakes
  - 1-2 Mistakes
  - 3-5 Mistakes
  - Over 5 Mistakes

- Advertisements Present:
  - Non-Profit Organizations
  - TV Shows/Games
  - Selling
  - Adult Material
  - 0 1 2 3 4 5

- Citations/Footnotes
  - Present
  - There but links broken
  - None present

- Photographs/Charts
  - Present & Helpful
  - Present & Extra
  - Present but Pixelated/Hard to Read

**Source Rating**

---

\[ \text{Source Rating} \]