

# Where do I Begin My Research?

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## READ the assignment

Did you read the assignment *closely*? Do you know what your goals are? Do you know what your teacher wants to see when you're done? How about what you want to see?

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## ASK questions

### HOW much information do I need?

Enough for an in-depth report? Basic facts for a poster, or a bit more for a brochure or presentation? Do I need both facts and opinions? Do I need data to back up claims?

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### WHAT do I know already?

Almost nothing? Start with a **book, encyclopedia, or topic overview** to get a broad picture. A little? Same thing. A lot? Organize what you know to see where the holes are then use **journals, magazines, and/or books** to get more details.

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### WHAT is my search strategy?

List all the terms and phrases you can think of that cover the topic. Think about words that focus on your theme and the supporting issues. Read to see what terminology others use. Use database tools to focus by date, subject, etc.

As you search, use the information you're finding to update or revise what you need. The more you know about your topic, the better your questions will be and, as you read more and ask new questions, you'll develop better terminology to find more targeted information.

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## REVIEW & REVISE