


# Research Steps Worksheet

## 1. Select a Topic:

**Example:**  
Parental rights and  
teen abortion



If you do not have a topic, choose one from one of these links on the right. 

[Hot Topics](#)  
[Idea Generator](#)  
[Research Questions](#)

## 2. Focus on/Review Your Topic

Write definitions  
and a short script  
about your topic

Include keywords, important dates, events, people/organization and places that are relevant to the topic.

[Dictionaries](#)  
[Encyclopedias](#)  
[Library](#)

## 3. State Your Topic as a Working Thesis

Example: Parents  
have a right to know  
when their teenage  
daughters are  
having an abortion

**4. Create Search Keywords/ Phrases**

Example: Parental rights, teenagers, abortion, parents

Write keywords you will use to search.  
Use thesaurus to find alternative words.

[Thesaurus](#)

**5. Refine Search Statements**

Example: Parental consent AND Abortion

Join keywords/search terms with special words (AND, OR, NOT). These will help you to search successfully for information.

**6. Decide the Resource to Search**

Example: College library, or Internet

Primary, secondary or scholarly sources. The library is a good place to start. Use either the catalog or the online databases.

[Library / Google](#)

**7. Revise your Topic and Search**

- Use the AND to add relevant terms to the search.
- Use the NOT to eliminate unwanted terms from the search.
- Use phrase searching, if available to define your search terms.
- Use vocabulary that is more specific.
- Choose a narrower category of a major topic.



Make sure that your keywords are not vague, too broad or unrelated to your topic.

**Notes:**

Please use the addresses in the list below to access the online resources in the  
Research Steps Worksheet

### Resources for the Research Steps Worksheet

1. Hot Topics - <http://library.sau.edu/bestinfo/Hot/hotindex.htm>
2. Idea Generator - <http://www.lib.odu.edu/libassist/idea/index.php>
3. Research Questions - <http://valencia.cc.fl.us/lrcwest/kaysmith.html>
4. Dictionaries - <http://www.ipl.org/div/subject/browse/ref28.05.00/>
5. Encyclopedias - <http://www.bartleby.com/61/>
6. Library - <http://www.mdc.edu/north/library/>
7. Thesaurus - <http://www.m-w.com/mw/thesaurus.htm>
8. Google - [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)