

Preparing Your Search Strategy: Identify Key Concepts

Topic: What is the effect of television violence on children?

Step 1: Circle the main ideas (terms) of your topic.

Step 2: Write each term in a separate concept column. Sometimes you will only need two columns; sometimes you will need four.

Step 3: Think of words that mean the same as that term (synonyms) and write them in the correct column.

Step 4: Think of multiple endings for your term and “truncate” it so that you remember to search this way.

Truncating Tip: Find the root word. Add an asterisk to get multiple endings. Teen* = teen, teens, teenager, teenagers, teenaged

Concept 1		Concept 2		Concept 3		Concept 4
television		violen*		children		
OR	A	OR	A	OR	A	OR
	N		N		N	
TV	D	aggression		teen*		
OR		OR		OR		OR
media	A	aggressive	A	preschooler*	A	
OR	N	OR	N	OR	D	OR
	D					

NOTE: You can also try searching by using the entire phrase “television violence” -- though you will get more results by entering television AND violence