Selkirk College Library

Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Instructor: _____

Date Completed: _____

Evaluation: _____

Library Research Log: TWC 151 (SEG)

Library research is an important skill for student success. This assignment will take you step-by-step through the research process.

In completing this research log you will learn how to find journal articles, government publications, and library books that you can use in writing a research paper for Technical Writing & Communications (TWC) or for another course.

You will need to find 3 primary source research papers.

Please submit your completed Research Log to the Selkirk College Library. The Librarians will evaluate your Research Log and return it to your instructor.

Contact Us

Selkirk College Librarians are available to help you with your research.
We can assist you by email, by phone, or in person at the Castlegar campus.

- ▪ Email: reference@selkirk.ca
- ▪ Phone: 1-888-953-1133 ext. 21229 (or ask for the Library)
- ▪ Phone: (250) 365-1229 (local call)
- ▪ Online: http://library.selkirk.ca/

Step 1: Planning Your Search Strategy

It is important to plan before diving into research. Here is an **example** of how to do that.

1. Our research question is:

    Does lack of <mark>sleep</mark> negatively impact the <mark>grades</mark> of <mark>college students</mark>?

2. We identified (highlighted) each word or phrase that is key to our research question.

3. We used a search planning form to come up with search terms.

Search Planning Form — You don't have to write something on every line. Not every research question has 3 rows (yours may have only 2).

- sleep or sleep disorders or sleep deprivation
- AND
- grades or success or _____
- AND
- college students or college or _____

Notice that we:

- Started each row with one of the key words or phrases
- Wrote synonyms or related words on the rest of the lines in that row

Sample Search

We will use these search terms to begin searching. In this example, our first database search would be:

         sleep   AND   grades   AND   college students

Notice that we only used one search term from each row.

Now it is time for you to begin your own research.

Step 1: Planning Your Search Strategy

Identify a research question and write it here. Make it a sentence.

_____

_____

1. Identify each word or phrase that is key to your research question.

    There are likely to be 2 or 3 important concepts. These will usually be *nouns*.

2. Use the form below to plan your search.

    - Start each row with one of the words or phrases you circled
    - Write synonyms or related words on the rest of the lines in that row
    - You may discover new search terms as you carry out your research

Search Planning Form	**Use as much space as is applicable to your research question.**

_____ **or** _____ **or** _____
concept

AND

_____ **or** _____ **or** _____
concept

AND

_____ **or** _____ **or** _____
concept

Search Terms

These are your search terms.
Use these keywords as you begin searching
Library databases
for information on your topic.

Step 2: Finding Research Articles
Using Online Databases

Search an Article Database

Step 1:   Go to the library homepage > **http://library.selkirk.ca**

To access databases choose > FIND > Research Databases

Step 2:   Browse databases by subject area

Tip: *Environment or Sciences are good choices*

Step 3:   Find **Academic Search Complete** > Click **Connect**

Remote Access

You can also access library databases using a home computer or a wireless device.

You will be prompted to login using your library account:

Username: your **student number**

Password: **last 4 digits** of your student number

Login not working? *Contact the Library for assistance.*

Step 4:   Type your search in the search boxes

▪ enter 2 - 3 search terms for your topic
▪ combine your search terms using **AND**

Search term #1:   _____

AND

Search term #2:   _____

AND

Search term (optional):   _____

- **How many articles (results) were found?**   _____

<table>
<tr>
<td>

HELP! I got **NO RESULTS** …

- check your spelling
- use fewer search terms
- use alternative search terms

</td>
<td>

HELP! I've got **TOO MANY** articles …

- If your result list is too large, add another search term to your search.

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Limiting Your Results #1: Full Text Articles

♦ Selecting for Full Text means you will be able access the article online as a pdf or html file.

The **Refine your results** box is on the left side of your screen.

Select **Full Text**

● **How many articles?**   _____

(Optional) Limiting Your Results #2: Academic Articles

♦ Peer reviewed articles are academic or scientific works evaluated by other professionals in the same field.

The **Refine your results** box is on the left side of your screen.

Select **Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals**

How many articles?   _____

Primary source articles are written by researchers and report on original findings from studies. Most commonly found in peer reviewed journals, they can also be reports from government agencies, papers presented at conferences, or full length monographs (books).

The factors that you will be considering for choosing a primary source article are:

- If there is a description of methodology

- If there is a 'results' section

- What the abstract tells you about the paper

Choose an Article

Choose an article from your result list that you judge to be strongly related to your research question. It must be a primary source document.

- **Write down the citation elements for the article you chose:**

Title of article: _____

_____

Author(s) of article: _____

Source (title of serial):   _____

Volume and issue number: _____

Date: _____

Page Numbers: _____

The Citation

The citation is important. You need the above information to create a citation for this article in the Scientific Style. The article citation is included in the "Works Cited" or "References" list for your research paper.

A guide to the Scientific Citation Style is available on the Library website:

Help   >   Citation & Style Guides   >   Sciences

Expanding Your Search: Using Subject Terms

Tip: *If there are no subject terms in your article, choose a different article*

Step 1:   Look at the **subject terms** for the article you chose.
Write down the one that you judge to be most useful for your topic.

_____

Step 2:   Search on this subject term.

Tip: *Subject terms are **hyperlinks**. Click on the subject term to run a new search.*

How many articles (results) did you get? _____

Step 3:   Refine this search by adding another search term.

AND **Search term:** _____

How many articles (results) did you get? _____

Search a Different Database

The Selkirk College Library subscribes to a number of article databases. It is a good strategy to search more than one database to get the best coverage of your topic.

Choosing a Database

Step 1:   Go to the Library homepage > **http://library.selkirk.ca**

To access databases choose > FIND > Research Databases

Step 2:   Browse databases by subject area

Tip: *Environment or Sciences are good choices*

Step 3:   Choose a database to search.

Tip: *Choose Biological & Agricultural Index Plus, CBCA Reference or JSTOR*

Name of database: _____

Choosing Your Search Terms

Successful researchers learn from their experience. They learn from their successful and from their unsuccessful search attempts.

In choosing your search terms consider your initial search plan. Also consider search terms you have learned along the way.

Search term: _____

AND Search term: _____

AND Search term (optional): _____

- Record the citation elements of a primary source article useful for your topic.

Title: _____

Author(s): _____

Source (journal title): _____

Volume & issue: _____   Date: _____

Step 3: Search for Government Reports

There is a large amount of research generated by government organizations that manage parks, fish & wildlife, forests and other natural resources. This is called 'gray literature.' Many governments now have search portals that allow access to this material.

- Go to > Research Databases > (Browse databases by subject area) > Government

- Choose one of the following databases:

  - Canadian Public Policy Collection
  - Canadian Government and Legislative Libraries Online Publications
  - US Forest Service Research Publications

Tip: *Search portals for government publications are not very sophisticated. Start with a simple keyword search. If you get too many results, look for an 'advanced' tab and limit your keywords to the title or citation.*

- Run a search on your topic.

  Record the citation elements of the document that you judge to be useful:

Title : _____

_____

Author(s): _____

Source (Government department or agency responsible):

_____

_____

Date: _____

URL (optional): _____

Step 4: The Library Catalogue
Search for Books

Now it's time to use your research skills to find library books on your topic.

Search Terms

- Use your Search Planning Form (page 3) to choose your search terms OR use new search terms you have learned over the course of your research.

  Tips: *Our library catalogue is a small database.*
  One or two search terms should be sufficient.

  Search term: _____

  AND

  (Optional) Search term: _____

Searching the Library Catalogue

- Go to the Library home page > **http://library.selkirk.ca**

- Type your search request into the **Catalogue Quick Search** box. Click **search**.

    Tips: *Remember to combine search terms using **AND***

    You can also choose Find > Books & Media to search the catalogue

- Scan one or two screens of results.

Search Results

Are some of these items relevant to your research question?

_____   **yes**   **_____**   **no**

   Important: *It is not wrong to answer no.*

Revising Your Search (Optional)

If you did not get useful results the first time try another search.

   Tips: *Change one or both of your search terms.*
   Not enough titles? Simplify your search. Use fewer search terms.
   Too many titles? Add another search term.

   Search term: _____

   AND

   (Optional) Search term: _____

Choosing a Relevant Title

Choose a title from your search results that you think will be useful for your topic.
Look at the full record to learn more about the item.

   Tips: *Click on the **Title** to see the full record*
   *Choose **Catalog Record** to answer the following questions*

Look at the different fields of the record to answer the questions below.

- **Author(s) / Editor(s)**

    Name(s): _____

    _____

- **Title**

    Full title: _____

    _____

- **Publication Information**

    Place of publication: _____

    Name of publisher: _____

    Year when the item was published: _____

    Tip: *If you need current information a recent publication date is important*

Using Call Numbers to Find More Resources

You can also use call numbers to find more books on your topic.

- Write down the **call number** of the book you found to be most useful for your topic

    Tip: *Prefer a book in the General collection*

    _____

- Notice that the call number begins with one or two letters.
    Write down the letter(s) that begin your call number: _____

Call Numbers and Subjects

Library material is shelved by subject. This means that the letter(s) you wrote down indicate the subject of your book.

- Use the **Library of Congress Classification System** (LCCS) outline to determine the broad subject area of your book

Tip: *The LCCS outline is posted around the Library*
AND is available on the Library web site:

Help → Subject & Research Guides → Other Guides →
[Library of Congress Classification System](#)

- Write down the **subject area**: _____

    Examples: FC   <u>History of Canada</u>

    WQ   <u>Medicine</u>

Finding a Book in the Library

In this exercise you will go to the General Collection in the Library to find books that you can borrow.

Use the call number of the book from the previous activity. Find the book on the shelves *or the place where it should be.*

- Write down the **call number** of the book which *comes **after*** it on the shelf.

    _____

- Browse the shelves around the book you found. Write down the title of another book (or other item) that looks useful for your research:

    _____

Step 5: Another Primary Source Document

List one (1) more document you found that is primary source research. This can be a journal article from a database, a government publication or an item from the Library catalogue.

Tip: *Not all of the following citation elements are applicable to all materials.*
Fill in the data that applies to your document.

Title of document: _____

_____

Author(s):		_____

Source:		_____

Volume and issue number:		_____

Date:	_____

Page numbers:	_____

URL:	_____

Handing in your Workbook for Evaluation

On Campus Students

Print. If you are completing this document in print, hand it in at the Main Desk of the Library.

Online. If you are completing this document online, submit it for evaluation via your Moodle course.

Questions?

Contact information for the Selkirk College Librarians is on the first page of this document. Please contact us for assistance.