Brainstorming for Keywords and Search Strategies

Once you’ve selected your topic, the next step is to create a list of keywords that can be used to search the library catalog, databases and/or the Web to find information on your topic.

- Start by writing down your research topic as a statement or question: Do tobacco advertisements encourage teens to start smoking?

1.

2. Circle your keywords (important words) in your statement/question above.
3. Write the circled keywords on the first line of the chart below.
4. Then write any synonyms underneath the keywords in the chart.
5. Don’t forget to enclose essential phrases in “quotation marks” and to truncate (*) words if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tobacco</th>
<th>advertisements</th>
<th>teens</th>
<th>smoking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cigarettes</td>
<td>ads</td>
<td>teen* = teens, teenagers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>billboards</td>
<td>adolescents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commercials</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Now, put your keywords together in various search strings in the chart below. Ask for assistance if needed.

- tobacco advertisements teens smoking
- cigarettes ads teen* smoking
- Cigarettes commercials teen* smoking