

ENGL 1213 Online Library Session 1

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Session 1

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OSU LIBRARIES
STILLWATER



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Introduction

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Hello, and welcome!

This lesson is designed to prepare you for finding sources for your infographic assignment. In this lesson, we will focus on several different things:

1. Developing a concept map to identify search terms and create search strategies.
2. Evaluating information using infographics.
3. Using the Library Search/BOSS to locate sources for your assignment.

To get started, [download this worksheet and fill it in as instructed](#). When you are finished with the lesson, you will submit this worksheet to your instructor through Canvas (or whatever method your instructor has specified).

I. Part I: Getting started with research

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This part is designed to help you brainstorm search terms (or keywords) and develop search strategies to begin your research. It is a form of concept mapping – or mind mapping – which is a process for visualizing ideas and making connections between them.

We will use a modified process of concept mapping to focus on developing search strategies.

Make sure you have [downloaded and opened the lesson worksheet in Microsoft Word](#) to complete this part of the lesson. Instruction for the worksheet, along with an example, are provided below.

First, type your research question or thesis into the box at the top of the page.

Write your research question or thesis statement in the box below.

What is the effect of exercise on the mental health of college students?

Example research question or thesis statement.

Next, highlight or change the text color of the **most important** words or phrases in your question. Each should be only 1-2 words long. These are your **keywords**. Focus on the most unique words, and ignore common words like *the, on, effect, what, who,* etc. Try to identify at least 2-3 keywords for your question.

Write your research question or thesis statement in the box below.

What is the effect of **exercise** on the **mental health** of **college students**?

Highlighted most important words or phrases in the research question.

Now, type each **keyword** into a separate box.

Now, type each keyword into a separate box.

Exercise

Mental health

College students

Separating key words into boxes.

Finally, list alternative words or phrases for each keyword underneath it in the corresponding box. Think about direct synonyms (i.e., physical activity for exercise) and words that may make your search broader (i.e., psychology for mental health) or narrower (i.e., undergraduates for college students).

Now, type each keyword into a separate box.

Exercise

Physical activity

Sports

Fitness

Working out

Mental health

Mental wellness

Depression

Psychology

College students

Undergraduates

Young Adults

Alternative words or phrases for each keyword.

When you are finished with your concept map, move on to the next section.

2. Part II: Evaluating information

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Before we begin to search for information, let's look at some sample infographics. You will evaluate them answering a series of questions, looking at such things as who the author is, what the purpose is, who the audience is, and if the claims it makes are accurate. This will prepare you to evaluate information sources you find in your research, as well as give you an opportunity to consider how others have chosen to present information through a visual format.

Choose one of the following infographics to examine:

- [The Healing Power of Cat Purrs](#)
- [Cannabis Law: The Past, Present, and Future](#)
- [Olympic Gold Medal Winners](#)
- [Why Does Bacon Smell So Good?](#)
- [UFO Sightings](#)
- [What Makes Health Care So Expensive?](#)
- [U.S. Police Brutality](#)

Then, using your worksheet, answer the following questions:

- Who is the creator/author?
- What is the purpose?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What (if any) financial interests are at play?
- What sources are cited?
- Choose one claim the infographic makes. Can you confirm or contest this claim in another, unrelated source?

Finally, consider the design of the infographic.

- How do the images/graphics/symbols, colors, and other design choices contribute to the content and intent of the infographic?

3. Part III: Finding sources

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We're ready to start searching online. Before we begin, let's take a second to go over some quick search tips for using library databases.

Tip #1: Keep your search terms short and concise. Databases do not like long phrases or whole questions. Choose the most important words or phrases in your research question and eliminate common words like: *who, how, the, effect, on,* etc.

Tip #2: Combine multiple search terms using AND.

Examples:

- exercise AND mental health
- college students AND exercise
- exercise AND mental health AND college students

Tip #3: Use quotation marks for exact phrases

Examples:

- exercise AND "mental health"
- "college students" AND exercise
- exercise AND "mental health" AND "college students"

*Note that we're only using quotations for keywords that are more than one word long. If your keyword is only one word (like exercise), then you do not need quotation marks.

Watch the video below to learn how to effectively use the Library Search System, or BOSS, to find resources for your project.



Video: Library Search Basics

You're almost ready to start searching! Refer back to your concept map from **Part I** for potential search terms. On your worksheet, write down some ideas for combinations of search terms, following the examples above.

Access the Library Search System by visiting the library homepage: library.okstate.edu

When you're ready to start researching, use the keywords and search combinations you identified earlier. Pay attention to the filters and tools built into the database to help you refine your search. Refer back to the video above for assistance as needed. As you search, fill in details about your process on your worksheet.

Finally, find at least one good, relevant source, and record the citation on your worksheet.

Conclusion

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You have now learned the basics of using the library databases for research. When you have completed your worksheet, make sure to upload it to Canvas, or submit to your instructor according to their directions.

If you have questions about any of the information you learned in this lesson, or need help with research for your classes, please contact the Library! We have a variety of ways for you to get in touch and let us know how we can help. You even have your *own librarian* who specializes in helping students in Engl 1213 classes. (See information below!)



Holly Luetkenhaus, Engl 1213 Librarian

- Email: holly.luetkenhaus@okstate.edu
- Phone: 405-744-1974

- [1213 Library Guide](#)

Other Library Resources:

- [Online chat](#): instant message a librarian and get your questions answered
- [Library tutorials](#): Learn how to use other databases, how to evaluate information, cite your sources, and more