Getting the Information You Need


Step 1: Topic development

1) Have your topic or subject that you will be writing about.

2) Come up with a thesis statement, some kind of argument that you will defend. If you need to, you can change it later.

3) Now, you need to find all the information on the topic related to your thesis, including background information and any recent updates. You need broad information.

Step 2: Search the catalog (LINCCWeb Catalog)

1) Books: books usually offer a broad but thorough analysis of a given topic.

2) Media materials: sometimes a DVD video, a streaming video, or a realistic movie can give insight into your topic.

Two things to remember about books:

A) Even the most recently published book on a topic will be at least six months to a year behind on the most current information; printing a book takes time.

B) Books cover large subjects, something that can be talked about in three hundred or more pages. The number of books on a given topic depends on the general interest in the topic.

Step 3: Search the Databases (you will need your library card / student I.D.)

3) Broad topic databases: Some databases can give background information by means of large reports and essays. This can supplement books.

After reading everything, it is now time to find specific information to back up your arguments. You will need to come up with enough smaller arguments to strengthen your main argument or thesis. Furthermore, you need to find experts and professional information that will support your perspective.

Step 4: Search the Databases

4) Journal articles: in every academic field and business sector, there are experts. These experts write short articles that are published in various professional and academic publications or journals. Journal articles supplement your research and can help you to defend your arguments.

5) News articles: depending on your project, a news article on your topic may lend support to your claims.

6) Reference materials: Reference materials include things like encyclopedias, special publications on statistics and facts, and special information for a given topic that can help you to back up your claims.

7) Open Internet resources: Search engines lead you to websites. However, not all websites are reliable for research information. If possible, try to use government sites (.gov), educational sites (.edu), and special organizations (.org) for your information. Remember, you are looking for expert opinions and professional information.