

Establish a Research Plan

Research Plan

What are the key concepts and terms related to the topic? (For example, research on abstract art would be concerned with biomorphic art, geometric abstraction, and abstract expressionism.) Use the sources in "Step 1: Ideas" to expand your list.

What facts (i.e. dates of specific events, names of people involved, geographic centers of activity, etc.) do you know about the topic?

What groups, organizations, or individuals are involved in the subject-matter? (For example, safe sexual practices involve single individuals, parents, school counselors, health professionals, religious organizations, etc.) Think as broadly as you can about interested parties and groups affected by the concern.

What are the problems/challenges faced by individuals involved in this field?

Are there any conflicting views of the subject? List below those points-of-view about your subject which you can identify. (For example, one of the sources you used in Step 1 or 2 may claim that the cancers attributed to tobacco use are really caused by the pesticides used in growing tobacco. Another example, one source may cite a specific musician as the first important jazz artist while another source credits even earlier performers.)

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Congratulations! With a refined topic and an initial information search plan in hand you are ready to begin working with a research librarian to locate the documents, studies, reports, and opinion pieces you will need to complete your research project. Research librarians are available for one-on-one working sessions during which you can identify relevant research sources and build a searching strategy. Contact a research librarian now at [Ask A Librarian](#).