

Narrowing a Research Topic Using Concept Map

Directions: Using the EBSCO Concept Map feature, complete the accompanying graphic organizer. Do not use breadcrumbs or the back arrow!

Recommended search terms to start with*

Issue	Research	Industry	Pollution	Privacy
Problem	Topic	Justice	Technology	Rights



1. In the left navigation panel of the home screen, click the **Concept map** link.
2. Choose a word from the box above and type it in the Concept map search box. Then select a more specific search term from the drop-down menu. (For example, I type *issue* and select *social issue*.)
3. Once inside the Concept map; select three (3) related concepts from the word web. Write them on the interest lines under Concept #1 in the graphic organizer.

For example, for Concept #1, these interests relate to social issue:
 - cycle of poverty
 - substance abuse
 - homelessness
4. Repeat steps 2–3 for Concept #2.
5. Apply the **Research Checklist 1** questions and respond to the Quick Write.
6. Of the two Concepts, choose one interest. Write it in the **Focus** box (e.g., cycle of poverty).
7. Go back to Concept map. Click on your topic choice, and then click the **Explore concept** button.
8. Change the view from **Map** to **Grid**. Group by **Domains** (instead of default Relationships) and scroll through the possibilities. Record in the **Focus** box the domains that are most interesting to you. (Hint: If you have fewer than three domains, you may want to reconsider your topic.)
9. In the **Topic & Domain** box, write your general topic and then choose a domain. Will this combination work?
10. In the **Tentative Thesis Box**, write your tentative thesis statement. Apply the **Research Checklist 2** questions. Will your thesis work? If not, revise it!

Remember, research is an iterative process, meaning you may need to rework your topic and revise your thesis several times before it fits your needs.

* These are suggested search terms only. Students can also use other search terms as they explore research topics.

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Concept #1	Research Checklist 1	Focus	Topic & Domain
<p>Interest #1 _____</p> <p>Interest #2 _____</p> <p>Interest #3 _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does it fit the assignment?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is it interesting to me?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Can I find quality research articles?</p> <p>Quick Write: Which Concept would most likely work for your research project/prompt/assignment. Why? Is it interesting to you? Is it researchable? Explain.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Domain #1 _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Domain #2 _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Domain #3 _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Topic _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Domain _____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Concept #2</p> <p>Interest #1 _____</p> <p>Interest #2 _____</p> <p>Interest #3 _____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Research Checklist 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does your topic contain multiple viewpoints (not a statement of fact)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is it narrowed (cupcake vs. wedding cake)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Can the reader tell what you are saying about the topic?</p>	<p>Tentative Thesis</p> <p>What <i>about</i> the topic and domain?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

