Creating a Search Strategy

STEP 1: SUMMARIZE TOPIC

Clearly state your topic in one or two sentences. Be as specific as possible.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________________

I want to examine the technology of biofuels, including the technology’s history, uses, controversies, and future applications.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY CONCEPTS

Underline or number the main concepts represented in the topic summary completed above. Concepts are the different ideas which make up each unique search topic. Most topics can be broken down into two or three main concepts.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

I want to examine the technology of biofuels, including the technology’s history, uses, controversies, and future applications.

STEP 3: LIST CONCEPTS

List concepts below with alternative spelling, initials spelled out, and other words with similar meanings listed next to the concepts:

Examples:

biofuel, biomass, ethanol, methane gas, wood

Technology, science

Controversy, debate

History, past, origins

Uses, applications
STEP 4: SEARCH ACADEMIC SEARCH ULTIMATE

Now go to Academic Search Ultimate and, following the steps outlined on the video, look for articles on your own topic. When you’ve located at least two useful articles, answer the following questions about your search process.

1. Which keywords and Boolean operators ("AND," "OR," or "NOT") did you use?

2. How many results did you get?

3. Using some of the limiting techniques discussed in the video (date, periodical type), limit your results. Discuss which techniques you used to narrow down your search results.

4. From your limited results, select two articles that discuss your topic. Provide citation information for each article and describe in two to three sentences why these articles are useful.