Activity: Brainstorming Keywords

# What are Keywords?

* Keywords are words that represent main concepts in a research topic.
* You use keywords to search for information about your research topics.
* If you search on Google, you know a thing or two about keywords!

# Types of Keywords:

* Main concepts
* Synonyms
* Related terms (broad or narrow)

1. **Write your Research Question or Thesis Statement**, then circle the words that represent the Main Concepts in your research question or statement:
2. **Fill out the table below with your main keywords, synonyms, and related terms:**

|  | Keyword/concept 1 | Keyword/concept 2 | Keyword/concept 3 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Keywords or Concepts: |  |  |  |
| Synonyms: |  |  |  |
| Related terms: |  |  |  |

Advanced Searching with Keywords

# Creating a Search

* Once you have keywords, you need to put them together to search for information.
* You can put keywords together by using Boolean Operators, which link keywords together.

| **Link terms with these words: (Boolean Operators)** | **Reason to Use:** | **Example:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| AND | NARROWS RESULTS. Searches for items that talk about both concepts together, and to decrease results. | women AND military |
| OR | INCREASES RESULTS. Searches for items that talk about either concept individually, and to broaden results. | women OR females |
| NOT | ELIMINATES TERMS. To eliminate terms and concepts and to decrease results. | women NOT men |
| **EXAMPLE SEARCH:**  **\*enter this into the search**  **box of a database** | **(Women OR females) AND (Military)** |  |

1. **Narrow Your Search** Link some of your keywords from different main concepts together with “AND” to create a search string:
2. **Expand Your Search** Link some of your synonyms for keywords together with “OR” to create a search. ***TIP:*** *You can use “OR” to link related keywords together to help you get the big picture of a topic.*