

Articulating Your Topic

1. What is your topic? _____
2. What specific issue(s) or subtopic(s) do you want to focus on? _____

Understanding The Debate

3. What are the “sides” of your issue? (Your issue must have at least two sides but may have more.)

To help identify sides, ask yourself:

- What perspective or bias are they bringing to the issue?
- What part of the issue is each side focusing on?
- What action or resolution to does each side want?

Side A

- Position on issue: _____
- Perspective and/or focus: _____
- Desired action, method, or solution: _____
- Groups of people on this side: _____

Side B

- Position on issue: _____
- Perspective and/or focus: _____
- Desired action, method, or solution: _____
- Groups of people on this side: _____

Side C

- Position on issue: _____
- Perspective and/or focus: _____
- Desired action, method, or solution: _____
- Groups of people on this side: _____

Side D

- Position on issue: _____
- Perspective and/or focus: _____
- Desired action, method, or solution: _____
- Groups of people on this side: _____

Preparing to Search for Sources: Keywords

Look at the words you used in the first two sections of this worksheet to describe your topic, its sides, associated groups, etc. and write the most important – or key – words in the box below. Next, write synonyms for these – including more formal terms – and related terms to use in your database searches.

Keyword Brainstorm: