

Articulating Your Topic Ask yourself these questions to help articulate your topic:		
1.	What is your topic?	
2.	What specific issue(s) or subtopic(s) do you want to focus on?	
3.	Why is this topic Relevant to you?	
4.	Why might others care about your topic?	
5.	What do you already know about this topic?	
6.	What questions are you starting out with?	
7.	What are the aspects/areas of your topic that you need to explore to find information for your questions or topic?	

Understanding Your Topic

No two brains are the same. Therefore, different people focus on and talk about different aspects of every issue. When developing a research topic, it is helpful to think about all the different ways different people talk about those aspects.

8. What are the "sides" of your topic?

To help identify sides, ask yourself:

- What perspective or bias are they bringing to the issue?
- How do they talk about the issue? What words do they use?
- What action or resolution to does each side want?

Side A

- Position/Perspective on issue: ____
- Words used to discuss issue:
- Perspective/Focus and desired action/solution: ____
- Groups of people on this side:

Side B

- Position/Perspective on issue: ______
- Words used to discuss issue: ____
- Perspective/Focus and desired action/solution: ______
- Groups of people on this side: ______

Side C

- Position/Perspective on issue: ______
- Words used to discuss issue: _____
- Perspective/Focus and desired action/solution: _____
- Groups of people on this side: _____

Your topic might have more than 3 sides to explore. This was just a starting point. Continue this list on another page, if needed!

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.

Keywords	Synonyms