

1- Preparing your research

Principle : Going from the general to the particular

- It is a matter of questioning the subject in all its dimensions, formulating it in a short sentence, selecting important concepts and looking for synonyms.
- This step allows you to set the issue, identify documentary needs and select the key concepts/words in order to question your sources.

1.1. Define the topic

- Choose the topic

Your prior knowledge and personal interests in the subject and its relevance to the teaching to which it relates are fundamental elements that should guide your choice.

First documentary approach

To clarify the subject and to understand it in a comprehensive way, there are several materials that give you an overview of the issue.

What types of items?

At this stage, your sources will mainly include dictionaries and encyclopedias (paper or online), manuals or review articles.

Recommendations

It may be useful to make a list of the different aspects of the issue that emerge in the course of this initial research, as well as a list of points on which you already have ideas

2. - Identifying the subject Use the QQQOCP (3QOCP) method:

This is a mnemonic for retaining a set of simple questions that will be used to identify, clarify and expand on a topic:

Use the **QQQOCP (3QOCP) method:**

Who? = Who are the actors, the people involved?

What? = What aspects are of interest for my work?

When? = What is the period in question?

Where? = Is the subject limited to a specific geographical area?

How? = What approaches or points of view should be considered?
(historical, sociological, economic, political, etc.).

Why? = What is the importance of the subject in the current context?

Parentheses

Parentheses can serve two different functions. Traditionally, they are used to separate elements in a query. For example: "apple* AND (scab OR preservation OR mold*)" is equivalent to "(apple* AND scab) OR (apple* AND preservation) OR (apple* AND mold*)". With certain tools, terms within parentheses are considered to be linked with the "OR" operator, while those outside are linked with the "AND" operator. For example, the query above can be translated as: "apple* (scab preservation mold*)".

Our subject: Sport and women

Let's apply the different stages of documentary research on this subject

A. First ask yourself the questions emanating from the subject.

Use the “who, when, what, where, how, why?” method. » to be sure of don't forget any research leads.

Who ? Women as athletes or as supporters?

What ? Are we targeting a particular sporting area? Or are we interested in all of the sports?

When ? The integration of women in sport from a historical point of view?

How ? From the point of view of sporting diversity? From the point of view of sexism to which women face?

For what ? Why are there still difficulties integrating women in certain sports disciplines?

B. Then delimit the subject

- Identify the essential terms contained in the subject (the key words), underline them.

Women and sport

-Associate them to define the main idea emanating from the subject

Ex: here the relationships between **women and sport**, which excludes the exclusive relationship between **men and sport** OR issues of sexism outside of sport.

3. Formulating the topic

A short sentence

The topic should be expressed in a short sentence, if possible in the form of a question and using meaningful terms. The search statement should be as specific as possible.

Key Concepts

Each term in the statement is important and will correspond to key concepts/words that are used to develop the research equations.

A selection of terms

It is advisable for each concept to search for one or more synonyms or associated terms and their translation into English (or other languages depending on your subject)

2.3. Exact Phrases and Proximity Operators

When searching for documents about the "greenhouse effect," you can ask the question: "effect AND greenhouse." The results will include documents about the "greenhouse effect," but also documents about the "effect of continuous watering on greenhouse growth," which does not match the original question.

Two tools are available to refine the query: **exact phrases** and **proximity operators**.

An exact phrase is represented in documentary language by the use of quotation marks. You can enforce a multi-term search simply by using quotation marks, for example: "greenhouse effect." This operator works with nearly all existing tools.

Proximity operators allow for more precise searching within a text (title, abstract, etc.). They are only available in certain bibliographic databases. There are two groups of commands: commands that impose a specific order of appearance of terms and those that do not consider the order of appearance. Some common commands you may encounter include "ADJ," "W," "WITHIN," "NEAR," "SAME," or "N," followed by an optional number.

"ADJ": Stands for adjacent. It requires that the terms appear next to each other in the specified order.

"W" or **"WITHIN"**: Specifies that the terms should appear within a certain range of each other.

"NEAR": Requires the terms to be in close proximity, but it is more flexible than "ADJ" or "W."

2.5. Types of resources

- **Library catalogs:** from municipal or university libraries, they are full of working documents that are useful to students. They also offer the possibility of being able to consult certain content from home.
- **Databases:** These are collections of information that themselves create, store and update data. They are made up of a set of bibliographical references which touch on a specific subject or field. There are several types of databases (news, legal, academic press, business directory, etc.)
- **Web resources:** They are in the form of standard search engines (ex: Google) or specialized (ex: Google Scholar), scientific or thematic portals (ex: online university) or even directories of sites (ex : the BNF bookmarks)

6. Evaluate the quality of the document

In any research work, it is important to be able to rely on reliable data, whether electronic or printed. Critical judgment is required to assess the relevance and reliability of a document. For this we can apply several evaluation criteria:

- **The author / publisher:** is he specialized in the field? has he written / published any other material on the subject? what is its visibility in literature?

- **The relevance of the content of the document:** does it address the subject to be covered? is it academic level? To get a quick idea, you can look at: the title, summary, keywords, introduction and conclusion, table of contents and section titles.

- **The objectivity of the information:** the more scientific the author's approach, the more objective the statement will be. The information should also be compared to other sources dealing with the same subject.

- **Document's date**