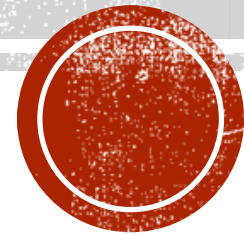


CONDUCTING GRADUATE LEVEL RESEARCH: CONCEPTUAL AND PRACTICAL OVERVIEWS



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Libraries and Cultural Resources

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A CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

THE RESEARCH MINDSET

- Aristotle wrote of virtues (or character traits) that enable a moral agent to live a flourishing life.
- Similarly, there are traits and mindsets that successful, flourishing researchers possess.
- These will not only make research easier, but also grad school generally (hopefully) more enjoyable!



THE 3 VIRTUES (MINDSETS)

- **Be Playful**
 - Have fun! Love your research! Be intrigued by it!
- **Be Organized**
 - Track your journey! (be systematic about it)
- **Be Social**
 - Don't forget your support network!



BE PLAYFUL



FUN CAN BE CHALLENGING

- Keep in mind that research is always a bit chaotic!
- After all, if there is already a clean, definitive answer to your research question out there, then there is no reason for you to engage with the research!



FUN CAN BE CHALLENGING

- All good research questions are going to:
 1. Have you stumble through the dark a bit
 2. Have you scratching your head a lot
 3. (Sometimes) Keep you up at night
 - But that's what it's supposed to feel like!
 - So enjoy it!!
- ... and choose a research question you're really interested in!



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

- Be willing to play with ideas, resources, etc.
- Don't be afraid to explore and take risks
- Be creative ... have fun!



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

- Playfulness is how you enter into your research question. Ask yourself:
 1. What is my research question? What do I find interesting? What excites me?
 2. Next, write out your research question (as fully and in as much detail as you can) ... it can take some time to get to this point



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

- ... in the meantime ... read adventurously since you never know what treasures you might stumble across!
- 3. Once you have your research question written out in detail, analyze it and digest it into searchable concepts and related synonyms



RESOURCES ON CREATING A STARTER SEARCH STRATEGY

- Developing Search Terms:

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/c.php?g=715125&p=5098714>

- Getting Started with Research in Education:

<https://yuja.ucalgary.ca/V/Video?v=246314&a=802077586>



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

- At this point, you will have your starter search strategy!
- But remember: this isn't your final search
 - It's the first step to refining both the search and your research question



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

4. Collect literature

- As you collect your literature, look up keywords and subject headings and add the relevant ones to your search while deleting those that tend to produce “noise” (irrelevant results)



TIPS ON “BEING PLAYFUL”

5. Read what you collect

- As you are reading through the literature you’ve collected, think about how you might refocus your research question
- This will, in turn, reshape your search strategy
- This can be an intellectually turbulent, but also very satisfying process
- **NOTE:** This process is also iterative



RESOURCES FOR A CONCEPTUAL INTRODUCTION TO CONDUCTING RESEARCH

- Effective Searching for Your Research in Education:

<https://yuja.ucalgary.ca/V/Video?v=246318&a=1222450073>



BE ORGANIZED



TIPS ON “BEING ORGANIZED”

- Once your research question is somewhat focused, your level of content expertise will also be deeper
- At this stage in the process, you’re leaving what I call the “reading adventurously” stage and embarking on what I like to think of as the “I’m in the secret club” phase
 - At this point, you will have become familiar with the jargon used to describe your topic



TIPS ON “BEING ORGANIZED”

- At this stage of the process, you will have collected several highly relevant papers and you will have a better idea about what precisely you’re looking for
6. Gather your highly relevant papers and analyze them for keywords and subject headings
- Keep track of these! They are your KEY to finding other highly relevant papers
 - The idea is to create a search strategy that will discover those highly relevant papers (and others like them)



TIPS ON “BEING ORGANIZED”

7. Run your refined and focused search in the databases you're working with
 - Keep track of your searches
 - If you need help figuring out which databases are useful for your topic, contact your subject librarian!



RESOURCES FOR USING DATABASES

- Databases for Your Research in Education:

<https://yuja.ucalgary.ca/V/Video?v=246316&a=1246393848>



BE SOCIAL



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

- When you face starting your research, the prospect may be quite daunting, but the first thing you need to remember is that you are not alone!
- So remember that you have a support network!
 - It’s actually much wider than you think!
- I like to think of this as the “*I know people in all the right places*” mindset!



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

8. Remember that: you have a supervisor, instructor, or academic coordinator who is there to guide you (they are content experts you already have access to)



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

9. Remember that: there are other content experts out there.
 - When you're stuck, one strategies is to reach out to authors of highly relevant papers you already discovered
 - Remember: they're all human and quite likely will be thrilled to hear from young scholars working on their topics



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

10. Remember that: librarians can help you digest your research question and organize it into a starter search strategy
 - they might ask you to provide things such as (1) more details on your project, (2) search terms you’ve already used, (3) any highly relevant articles you might have already found



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

11. Remember that: you have peers. Get to know them!
- If someone is working on a related topic, a conversation might be the breakthrough you were looking for!



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

12. Don't forget about those who came before you.

- While they may not be a part of your network, their theses and dissertations are part of your scholarly ecosystem. Don't forget to explore them!
- If you can find a thesis or dissertation that is relevant to your topic, you will have discovered a gold mine of relevant citations



TIPS ON “BEING SOCIAL”

- **AND** don't forget to cite them and all the literature you've collected!



RESOURCES ON CITING USING APA 7

- Citing Your Research in Education:

<https://yuja.ucalgary.ca/V/Video?v=246312&a=1459208429>

- APA 7 Research Guide:

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/guides/education-apa>



A PRACTICAL OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

- Developing a Search Strategy
- Searching in ERIC



SEARCHING FOR LITERATURE

Great starting places to begin searching for relevant scholarship are:

- **Databases**
 - **ERIC**
 - **Education Research Complete**
 - **Academic Search Complete**
 - **APA PsycInfo (for Educational Psychology)**



DEVELOPING A SEARCH STRATEGY

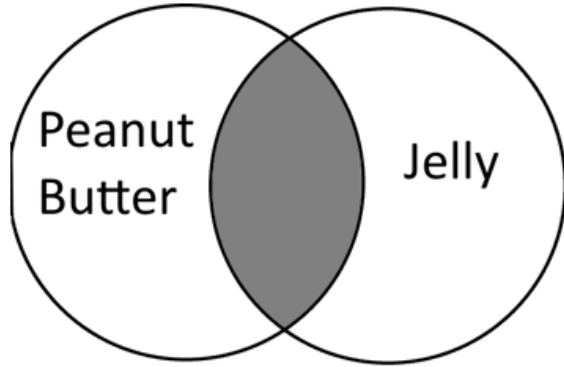
Example Research Question: “How does the positive psychology movement contribute to teacher well-being?”

There are 3 main concepts in this question: positive psychology, teacher, & well-being, but these key concepts will generate several useful search terms.

Key Concept	positive psychology	teacher	well-being
Synonym 1	positive emotions	educator	happiness
Synonym 2	resilience	instructor	flourishing
Synonym 3		professor	mental health
Synonym 4			eudaemonia
etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.



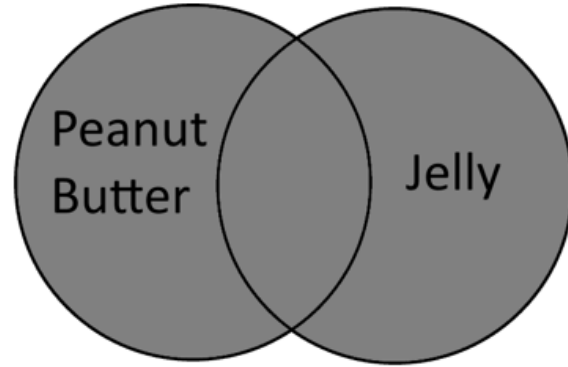
BOOLEAN OPERATORS



AND

Using AND, this search would only retrieve results with Peanut Butter and Jelly.

All



OR

Using OR, this search would retrieve results with peanut butter, with jelly, and with both.

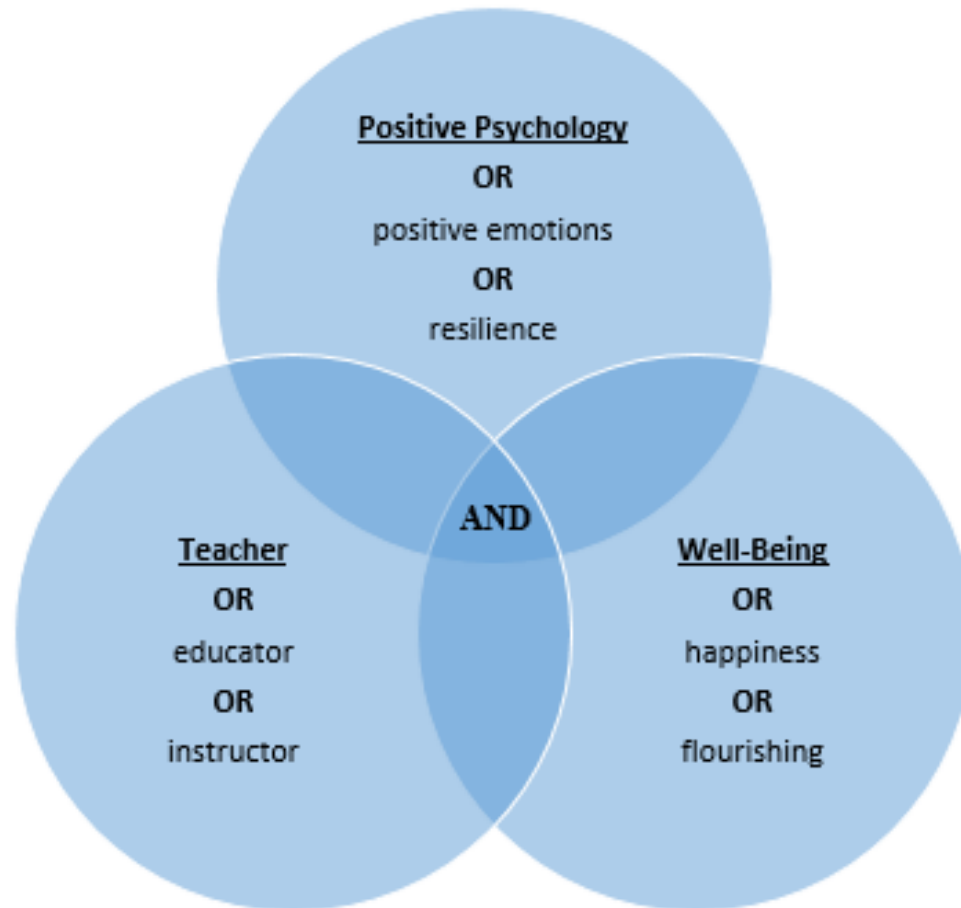
At Least One

OR: helps you find at least one of the expressions of your concept

AND: helps you find items that contain **ALL** your concepts



DEVELOPING A SEARCH STRATEGY



Choosing Databases



Search Library Resources

Search for books, articles and more...



[Reserves](#) [Advanced Search](#)

**Walled Off. The Politics of
Containment Exhibition**

Guides



Databases



Journals



Bookings



Workshops



Technology



Databases

All Subjects

All Database Types

All A B C D E F G H I J K L

789 Databases found

A

AAPG Datapages combined publications database

[more...](#)

ABI / Business Premium Collection

[more...](#)

Academic OneFile

[more...](#)

Academic Press Dictionary of Science and Technology

[more...](#)

All Subjects

All Subjects

Subjects

- Alumni (9)
- Anthropology (17)
- Archaeology (10)
- Architecture & Design (30)
- Art (31)
- Asian Studies (12)
- Biological Sciences (20)
- Business (62)
- Canadian Studies (23)
- Chemistry (11)
- Chinese Language and literature (8)
- Communication Studies (17)
- Computer Science (22)
- Dance (9)
- Development Studies (12)
- Drama (21)
- Economics (23)
- Education (12)
- Engineering (10)
- English (34)
- Environmental Design (22)

Databases

Search by database name or use filters to help find what you are looking for

Education (12) ▾

All Database Types ▾

All Vendors / Providers ▾

Search for Databases **Go**

All A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z #

12 Databases found for Education [Clear Filters/Browse All Databases](#)

Best Bets!



ERIC (EBSCO) [🔗](#) [📄](#) [🔍](#)
[more...](#)

Google Scholar [🔗](#) [🔍](#)
To set up Google Scholar to detect UofC subscribed resources, refer to [Google Scholar](#)
[more...](#)

Research Starters - Education [🔗](#) [🔍](#)
[more...](#)

A



Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) [🔗](#) [📄](#) [🔍](#)
[more...](#)



APA PsycInfo [🔗](#) [🔍](#)
[more...](#)

B

Bibliography of Native North Americans [🔗](#) [📄](#) [🔍](#)
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ERICSM

Education Resources Information Center



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