Quick Search Tips for Getting Started

Phrase Searching – " "

Hold words together with quotation marks

Example: "Global Warming"

Truncation – *

Search the beginning part of a word and get all the variations

Example: polit*

(retrieves: political, politic, politics, politico, etc) – caveat: polit* also retrieves words like polite.

Boolean – AND, OR, NOT

Combine words and phrases to create logical search queries

Example: (cat OR kitten OR feline) AND care AND feeding

→IMPORTANT: You must use parentheses to group "OR" terms together

Putting it all together – An Example

1. I want to find articles on content-area reading strategies for elementary students.

   Possible Searches:

   -- "content-area reading" AND elementary AND (strategies OR techniques)

   -- "content area" AND reading AND elementary AND (strategies OR techniques OR instruction)

   -- "content area" AND reading AND elementary AND teach* AND (instruction OR "classroom techniques")

   All of the above will return useful results at the beginning of your search process.

   FAQs

   How do I get the words or phrases to start with?

   Answer: Try experimenting in the database with the first search that comes to mind and see what suggested topics or subjects you find within records related to your topic. Use these topics or subjects in your next search and keep exploring.

   Do I have to capitalize AND, OR, NOT?

   Answer: No. Capitalizing Boolean is a useful technique that can help you quickly see what operators you're using and where they are. The longer and more complicated your search query, the more useful it is to capitalize.