Brainstorming alternative keywords

Different authors use different words in order to discuss similar or related topics. For example, Greek Art may be referred to in different ways depending on the time period it came from (Attic, Archaic, etc.) What are some other words or phrases that could be used to discuss your topic? (Hint: Use an online thesaurus or the thesaurus tool in Word.)

Thinking about the scope of your topic

Usually a topic spans several disciplines or fields of study. For example, “Ancient Art” could be discussed in literature, religion, or philosophy classes. Click on the “Find Articles” tab on the Library’s website and look at the list of disciplines under “Locate Databases Grouped by Subject.” Which ones might be relevant to your topic?

Evaluating your resources

Who?     Who is the author?  
What degrees or experience does the author have?  
Is the author an expert in the field?  
Is the author affiliated with a particular institution?

What?    Is the article or journal scholarly/peer-reviewed?  
(Scholarly/peer-reviewed means that the article has been reviewed by other experts in the same field.)  
Does the author cite his/her sources?  
If yes, are they credible sources?

When?    When was the article published?  
Is currency important for this topic?

Why?     Did the author publish this source with a particular agenda?  
Based on the author’s word choice, does he/she have any bias?

Will you be connecting from off-campus?  No problem! Just search as you normally do, click on the link to full-text, log in with your Pitt email login and password, and you’re good to go for your entire searching session! Access will work best if you stay in the same browser.
Advanced Methods of Finding Books

I’ve searched PITTCat, and I’ve determined that the Millstein Library doesn’t have the book that I need for my paper. What should I do next?

Have you searched all of the Pitt libraries using PITTCat?

If you limited your search to the Millstein Library/Greensburg campus, it’s possible that the book you need can be found in one of the other Pitt libraries. If it is available at another Pitt library, use the “Get It!” feature in PITTCat to have the book sent here. (Tip: Don’t forget to choose “Greensburg Lending” as the pickup location.)

I cannot find the book in PITTCat, do I have any other options?

Yes! From the ULS website (http://www.library.pitt.edu), click on the “Find Books & More” tab. Scroll down until you see the heading, “If you don’t find the material you need in PITTCat+.” Under the “For Books” heading, you will see a link for “E-ZBorrow.” Click on this link, and then click on the E-ZBorrow logo. In the “Patron ID” field, enter the 2P number located on your campus ID, then click on the “LOGIN” button. In the search box, enter the title of the book you are trying to find (omitting initial a, an, the articles when necessary), then click “Search.” When you get your results list, scroll down to find the correct title. When you’ve located it, click on the title; depending on how many libraries own that item, you may need to wait a minute or two for the next page to load. Once the Request box comes up, choose your pickup location (typically “Greensburg Lending” if you want to pick the item up here), and then click the Request box.

I searched in E-ZBorrow, and I couldn’t find the book or none of the libraries were willing to let me borrow their copies…am I out of luck?

No, you are not out of luck! Go back to the “Find Books & More” page on the ULS website. Under the “For Books” heading, click on the second link, “Requests From Other Libraries (Interlibrary Loan).” Login with your Pitt username and password, which should be the same as your my.pitt.edu login. Click on the “Submit a NEW request” button. For a book, click on the “LOAN” button and fill out the form as completely as possible.

Tip: To request the full test of an article that cannot be retrieved in our databases, complete the same steps. Click on the “COPY” button instead of the “LOAN” button.