

Literature Searching Worksheet

Example provided: Effects of marginalization on equity of access to health

Your Own Research Topic/ Question:

1. Identify Key Concepts

Example research question:

How does marginalization affect a patient's access to health in New Zealand?

Key concepts:

- marginalization or marginalisation
- health
- access or equity
- New Zealand

2. Generate Keywords and Synonyms

List as many keywords and their synonyms as possible:

marginalisation
marginalization
health
access
equity
Zealand

3. Keyword Searching

Record three keyword searches and number of results.

a. _____ number results: _____

b. _____ number results: _____

c. _____ number results: _____

4. Phrase Searching

Example: "Health equity"

Write **one exact phrase** you think authors would use in a title or abstract.

Phrase searched:

" _____ "

Number of results: _____

- Results were more focused than keyword searching
- Results were too narrow
- Results excluded useful papers

5. Truncation and Wildcards

Example: marginal → marginalised, marginalized, marginalisation, marginalization*

Choose **one word** from your topic that may have multiple endings.

Truncation / wildcard used:

This helped me find:

- More results
- Different spellings (UK/US)
- Broader concepts
- No meaningful change

6. Boolean Operators

Example: (Zealand OR Australia) AND "health equity"

Write **one Boolean search string** related to your topic using **AND, OR, NOT**

Search string:

Number of results: _____

Reflection:

Did using Boolean operators make your search:

Too broad Too narrow More focused

One small change you could make to improve this search:

7. Subject Headings

Database used (e.g. CINAHL headings or PubMed MeSH headings): *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion*

Subject headings found:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Compare:

Keyword used by *you*: _____

Subject heading used by *database*: _____

- Subject headings found articles I missed
- Subject headings were too broad
- I would use both together

8. Citation Searching

Key article identified:

Title: _____

Year: _____

What did citation search lead to?

- Newer research
- Different clinical applications
- Review articles
- No relevant results

One article worth saving for later:
