Welcome

This site contains everything you need to successfully complete your research.

But remember, if at any point you're not sure what to do or where to go next, you can always ask a librarian!

Developing Your Research Topic

Whether you've selected your own research topic or your instructor has provided you with one, you will likely find yourself modifying it as you write and gather information.

Most of the time, we hear great topics from students. Sometimes these topics are so unique and brilliant that data has not yet been compiled and published about them. So, if you are searching and searching and can't find the data you need, it's possible that data doesn't exist. Be sure to ask a librarian before you decide the data doesn't exist. If this is the case, be flexible. Take a look at what you are finding and tweak your topic to address data that does exist.

(And, save that topic! When you start doing original research, you'll already have a great research question ready to go.)

Keyword Development

Good keywords are essential to good research. So it is a good idea to come up with a list of keywords before you even start researching.

Two simple questions can get you started:
1. What do I know about my topic?
2. What do I want to know about my topic?

List out the answers to those questions using single words or simple phrases. These will become your keywords.

Be prepared that this may all change as you learn more information through your research.

Articles and Databases

Professional Organization Resources

Association for Career and Technical Education
The largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers.

**Child Life Council**

The Child Life Council represents a group of trained professionals with expertise in helping children and their families overcome life’s most challenging events.

**National Council on Family Relations**

Provides an educational forum for family researchers, educators, and practitioners to share in the development and dissemination of knowledge about families and family relationships, establishes professional standards, and works to promote family well-being.

**American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences**

Provide leadership and support for professionals whose work assists individuals, families, and communities in making informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life.

**American Geriatrics Association**

Committed to advancing academic geriatrics programs and supporting academic geriatrics program directors in order to benefit and aid patient care, research, and teaching programs in geriatric medicine within accredited medical schools located in the United States.

**National Association of Social Workers**

Promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers; and Seek to enhance the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

**Popular and Scholarly Articles**

**Academic OneFile**

This is a good starting place for finding journal articles on almost any topic. Full-text and/or scanned pdfs are included for many of the articles it indexes.

**CQ (Congressional Quarterly) Researcher Plus Archive**

Publication Dates Covered: 1923 - present Paid for by K-State Libraries

Single-themed reports on current issues from Congressional Quarterly Press dating back to 1923. Topics include social trends, health concerns, the economy, education, and technology. Reports provide overview, background, pro/con arguments, chronologies, current situation, and bibliographies of additional sources.

**Diversity Database Suite**
Provides a combined search for Ethnic NewsWatch and Ethnic NewsWatch History which feature newspapers, magazines, and journals of ethnic and minority presses; GenderWatch which features historical and current perspectives of gender roles; and Alt-Press Watch which showcases some of the nation’s most respected and cited grassroots newspapers, magazines, and journals.

**Expanded Academic ASAP**

This is a good starting place for finding journal articles on almost any topic. Full-text and/or scanned pdfs are included for many of the articles it indexes.

**Health and Wellness Resource Center**

Health and medical information for lay research from periodicals, reference books, and pamphlet sources.

**Health Reference Center**

Use this database to find articles on: Fitness, Pregnancy, Medicine, Nutrition, Diseases, Public Health, Occupational Health and Safety, Alcohol and Drug abuse, HMOs, Prescription Drugs, etc.

**ProQuest Research Library**

ProQuest is great for finding popular articles and scholarly articles on almost any topic.

**PsycINFO**

Includes citations to journal articles from more than 1900 journal titles, technical reports, and dissertations of psychological relevance from more than 50 countries.

**Social Services Abstracts**

Provides bibliographic coverage of research focused on social work, human services, and related areas, including social welfare, social policy, and community development. This database abstracts and indexes over 1,304 serials publications and includes abstracts of journal articles and dissertations, and citations to book reviews.

**Sociological Abstracts**

Indexes and abstracts international literature in sociology and related disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences. The database provides abstracts of journal articles and citations to book reviews drawn from over 1,809 serials publications, and also provides abstracts of books, book chapters, dissertations, and conference papers.

**Statistics Databases**

**CQ Researcher** is a collection of reports created for congress. These reports are filled with statistical data.
We also have a much longer list of sources for statistical data here.

Evaluating Sources

How to Evaluate During Reading

After you have asked yourself some questions about the source and determined that it's worth your time to find and read that source, you can evaluate the material in the source as you read through it.

1. Read the preface—What does the author want to accomplish? Browse through the table of contents and the index. This will give you an overview of the source. Is your topic covered in enough depth to be helpful? If you don't find your topic discussed, try searching for some synonyms in the index.

2. Check for a list of references or other citations that look as if they will lead you to related material that would be good sources.

3. Determine the intended audience. Are you the intended audience? Consider the tone, style, level of information, and assumptions the author makes about the reader. Are they appropriate for your needs?

4. Try to determine if the content of the source is fact, opinion, or propaganda. If you think the source is offering facts, are the sources for those facts clearly indicated?

5. Do you think there's enough evidence offered? Is the coverage comprehensive? (As you learn more and more about your topic, you will notice that this gets easier as you become more of an expert.)

6. Is the language objective or emotional?

7. Are there broad generalizations that overstate or oversimplify the matter?

8. Does the author use a good mix of primary and secondary sources for information?

9. If the source is opinion, does the author offer sound reasons for adopting that stance? (Consider again those questions about the author. Is this person reputable?)

10. Check for accuracy.

11. How timely is the source? Is the source twenty years out of date? Some information becomes dated when new research is available, but other older sources of information can be quite sound fifty or a hundred years later.

12. Do some cross-checking. Can you find some of the same information given elsewhere?

13. How credible is the author? If the document is anonymous, what do you know about the organization?
14. Are there vague or sweeping generalizations that aren't backed up with evidence?

15. Are arguments very one-sided with no acknowledgement of other viewpoints?

Source: "Evaluation During Reading"

Evaluation Checklist

Video link here.

Transcript follows:

Currency: The timeliness of the information.

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work as well?
- Are the links functional?

Relevance: The importance of the information for your needs.

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information at an appropriate level (i.e. not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
- Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is one you will use?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

Authority: The source of the information.

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source?

Accuracy: The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.

- Where does the information come from?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
- Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar or typographical errors?

**Purpose:** The reason the information exists.
- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?

**Bias**

Is an organization mentioned in relation to an article? Think tanks, associations, and other organizations usually exist for a reason. Learn more about the organization to identify potential biases by:

- Going to the organization's website and looking for information about their Mission
- Searching for news articles about the organizations that indicate their political leaning.

Are all biases bad? NO. But being aware of them helps contextualize the information presented.

**Fact Checking**

Curious about the facts presented? Are the numbers accurate? Was someone quoted correctly? There are a few things you can do:

- Look for the source of facts yourself. A good author will give you some indication of where they found the information. For example, if an article references a recent Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report, go to the CBO's site to locate the report.
LexisNexis Academic has a section under News for TV & Radio Transcripts. You may be able to find the transcript of an interview, or the text of a public statement here.

Politifact focuses on political statements. Researchers at the Tampa Bay Time fact check speeches, ads, and more. PolitiFact references their sources, making it relatively easy for readers to retrace their steps.

FactCheck.org also focuses on political statements, this project from the Annenberg Public Policy center fact checks speeches, ads, and more. FactCheck.org references their sources, making it relatively easy for readers to retrace their steps.

APA Citation Guide

APA Basics

Welcome

In this guide, you will find information about how to cite in correct APA format and links to resources to make citation easier.

As of Fall 2014, all courses on our campus have required APA citation style. If you still have questions after viewing this guide, please meet with your professor, a librarian, or the Writing Center.

For more information on K-State's Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy, please view this document.

APA Tools

The following are suggested tools to help you build better APA citations.

- Purdue Owl - APA
- EasyBib
  - Remember, no tool is perfect, so be sure to check your citations with a style guide!
- Refworks

APA Books

ISBN: 1433805618
This manual is available on Reserve at the library front desk, as well as in the Writing Center.

An Easy Guide to APA Style
ISBN: 9781412991247
This guide is available to be checked out from Hale Library under the call number: BF76.7 .S39 2012.

This manual is available on Reserve at the K-State Polytechnic Library front desk, as well as in the Writing Center.

**APA Style Simplified: Writing in Psychology, Education, Nursing, and Sociology.**

ISBN:9780470671238

This guide is available to be checked out from Hale Library under the call number: BF76.7 .B447 2012.

This manual is available on Reserve at the K-State Polytechnic Library front desk, as well as in the Writing Center.

**APA Formatting Tips**

*Paraphrasing*

If you are paraphrasing a thought, put an in-text reference that states the last name of the author, year, and page number.

Example - I am typing a sentence (Author, 2014, p. 1).

*Direct Quotes*

If you are directly quoting an author you will need to put the year of the publication after the author in parentheses, and also put the page number at the end of the thought.

Example - According to Jones (2017), “K-State Polytechnic Students are the best” (p. 1).

*Direct Quotes (40 words or longer)*

If you are including a longer direct quote, it must be indented ½ inward from the left margin.

For more information look at [Purdue Owl’s APA site](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/style-guides). (Link will open in new tab).

**Reference Formatting Tips**
When creating your Reference page for a paper or project:

- Label the Reference section as "References" (NOT "Works Cited" etc) in top and center of the page.
- Order your references alphabetically.
- Double space between each source.
- If the source citation requires more than one line, the following lines must be indented.
- It is important that you only capitalize the first word of the title and the first word of a subtitle.

### APA Resources

#### Citing in APA

*Links open in a new tab.*

APA (American Psychological Association) is the most common style to cite with in the social sciences.

Here are some good resources for citing sources in personal communication such as email, letters, interviews, and conversations:

- Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) other non-print sources - interviews, email, and other personal communication
- EasyBib How to cite a personal interview in APA
- APA Style How do you cite an interview?
Basics of APA Style Tutorial

There are two (2) copies of the APA Citation Manual located in Reserves. Please ask at the library's front desk.

Citation Example:


[Image: an example APA citation with elements labelled]


Databases with Citation Features

These are some databases you can search for scholarly sources in that also have citation features.

- CQ Researcher (look for "CiteNow!")
- Expanded Academic ASAP (look for "Citation Tools")
- ProQuest Research Library (look for "Cite")

Refworks Tools

Creating an Account

Creating a RefWorks account at K-State is very easy.

1. From the RefWorks sign in page, click on "Sign Up for a New Account"
2. Enter your email, create a login name and password. On the next screen, you will enter basic information about yourself.

You can have multiple RefWorks accounts. This is helpful if you want to keep your personal research citations separate from a research team that you work with. Simply create a new username and password for each new account. If you are working with a group, share the username and password with other members and they will be able to access the account, too.
3. Ta-Da! Now you have a RefWorks account.

As long as K-State subscribes to RefWorks, K-State faculty, staff, students and alumni will have access to RefWorks. Just be sure you update your email address in your account information when you graduate!

**Write-N-Cite**

Write-N-Cite is built into Microsoft Word. With Write-N-Cite, you can insert citations in your Word documents as you're writing, and then generate a reference list based upon those citations.

**DOWNLOAD Write-N-Cite**

- In RefWorks, click on Tools / Write-N-Cite
- A window will pop-up and will identify your computer's operating system.
- Follow the download instructions.

For Mac users Write-N-Cite 2.5 is not compatible with Mac OSX Lion (version 10.7). Mac users with OSX Lion or newer will need to use Write-N-Cite 4.

Whichever version of Write-N-Cite you download, you can always uninstall it and download a different version.

**Creating Bibliographies**

RefWorks creates bibliographies, or reference lists, based upon the references you have in your account. You can create a bibliography using all of your references, or just those in a specific folder.

1. Click on the Create Bibliography button

   ![Image: RefWorks top toolbar with the Create Bibliography button highlighted]

2. Select your Output Style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago, IEEE)
3. Select a File Type. Word or Rich Text usually work best
4. Click on Create Bibliography.

5. Depending on what format you selected, RefWorks may open a web page (html), a Word document, or your text editor with your reference list.

Getting Started

When you first create your RefWorks account it is empty. That is because you have to add the citations relevant to your research.

[Image: Landing page of RefWorks showing the “adding references” step, with the “no references found error” highlighted]

Fortunately, most of our databases talk with RefWorks and make it fairly easy to send (or export or download) citations into your RefWorks account.

In most databases, you will select the books or articles that you want to save into RefWorks by checking a box or otherwise saying, "I want this."

Once you have marked the records you want, you will have some kind of option to Send, Export, or Download the citations. RefWorks provides instructions for saving references from databases into RefWorks.

Other Features

When you view a record in RefWorks, some information is fairly easy to identify. You can usually locate the author, title, source, and other information fairly quickly. There are other, useful features to note when looking at records in RefWorks.
1. What folder you are currently viewing.
2. Changing the view. RefWorks defaults to Standard View, but you can look at a Full Record (which will include the abstract, if available) or the references formatted in styles like APA, MLA, and others.
3. The Get It button appears in RefWorks. This means that current K-State students, faculty, and staff and link to or request the full text of articles and other documents from inside RefWorks.
4. You can edit any record in RefWorks at any time.
5. The type of source RefWorks thinks the record is. This can affect how the reference is formatted by RefWorks and if it is incorrect, you can edit it when you edit the record.

Manage Your Output Styles

If you cannot locate your output style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago, IEEE) from the list of options offered when you create a new bibliography, you can add that style to your list of favorites.

1. Click on Create Bibliography
2. From the bibliography window that pops up, click on Manage Output Styles

3. In the output style manager, search or scroll through the options (there are several hundred) until you find yours.
4. Use the arrows in between the Output Styles box and the Favorites box to move the style you want over to Favorites.

RefWorks Video Tutorial

https://www.youtube.com/user/ProQuestRefWorks/featured