

Research Planning Worksheet

Topic:

Step 1: Move from a broad topic to a specific research question

Potential Research Questions

Q1:

Q2:

Q3:

What makes a good research question?

- Open-ended (no single answer)
- Rooted in your own curiosity about the topic (something you want to learn more about)
- Establishes a manageable scope of inquiry for the project at hand (not too broad, not too narrow)
- Surfaces some key terms and concepts that will help as you start searching for information

Step 2: Use your question to develop a bank of search terms

Key Terms & Concepts

Describe the 'what' of your question: start with words directly from your research question(s), then expand to synonyms and related words (broader + narrower)

Fields, Professions, Experts, Stakeholders

Identify the 'who' of your question: who cares or knows about it? Who might study it or do work related to it? Who is affected by it or may have produced information about it?

Step 3: Combine your search terms into search phrases using AND

Unlike Google, where you can enter long phrases and questions, library databases return better results when you boil your question down to a few well-chosen key terms, joined with 'AND'

Research Planning Worksheet

Topic: food waste and climate change

Step 1: Move from a broad topic to a specific research question

Potential Research Questions

Q1: What are some of the most effective **food waste reduction strategies**?

Q2: How might a less wasteful **food system** impact **agriculture** and **land use**?

Q3: How do the **climate impacts** of reducing food waste compare to the impacts of other **climate change solutions** or **adaptation** strategies?

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food waste	solutions	consumers
reduction	adaptation	household
strategies	deforestation	community
agriculture	composting	urban
land use	spoilage	rural
climate impacts	supply chain	institutional
climate change	producers	carbon

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farmers	ecology
food systems	climate science
chefs	economics
cooks	USDA
home gardeners	food rescue
food distributors	food pantries
grocery stores	

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food waste AND reduction	food waste AND consumers AND household	agriculture AND deforestation
food waste AND climate	food waste AND economics	
food waste AND agriculture	food waste AND climate AND impact	
food waste AND land use	food waste AND grocery stores AND supply chain	

