



HOW TO BEGIN RESEARCH

7 Steps for Keyano College Students



Review your assignment carefully

- Highlight the required length, citation style, and the types of permitted sources
- Identify potential ideas that meet your assignment's research requirements



Customize your research topic/thesis

- Ask who, what, where, when, why, and how to focus your topic of research
- Use the answers to the above questions to help define what types of sources of information are likely to be best bets for your research



Get familiar with your chosen topic/thesis

- Begin by reviewing general sources (e.g., Wikipedia, newspapers, YouTube)
- Using your new understanding, seek more discipline-specific and detailed sources (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, eBooks, books)



Identify relevant key concepts/keywords

- Take your topic and identify the main terms - these terms will be the key concepts or keywords (make sure to exclude prepositions, articles, and adjectives)
- For example, the following topic's keywords are in bold: Among **premature infants**, what is the effectiveness of **music therapy** in reducing **stress** levels?



Consider your gathered sources

- The sources you select will determine what information you find
- Evaluate each source to determine if it suits your need
- Look for a variety of sources (e.g., different authors or journals) that report on the same or similar topics to help compare and assess your selected sources



Keep track of your research

- Research doesn't happen in just one sitting. Use a research template to note keywords, search strategies, and databases that have retrieved results
- Save/download all the sources you think you may use



Make adjustments

- Research is an iterative process and will involve some trial and error
- As you engage in different steps of the research process, you may need to adjust the focus of your topic, keywords, or research scope to meet your research needs and assignment expectations