Why Use A Research Guide?
This step by step guide has been developed by the librarian to save you time and help you produce a better research paper. It will guide you through the library research process and will inform you of the best resources for your topic. If you need assistance at any point, please ask for help at a reference desk or contact your subject librarian.

A. Getting Started:
1. Select a topic
   Select a broad topic of interest to you, possibly in your major. You will refine and narrow your topic as you go. The following resource can assist you in deciding on a beginning broad topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CQ Researcher</th>
<th>1. On the library homepage under the Find Articles Browse Databases A-Z link click on the “C”.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Scroll down to CQ Researcher and click on the link to connect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. In the Quick Search box on the left enter a general term like “education” and click go.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Various reports will come up, click on the titles to look at the reports of interest.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Pay special attention to the different sections linked across the top, especially the pro/con section and the bibliography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Some of the sections start with a question. These questions can be easily used for your research.</td>
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2. Locate Background Information
Do a brief background search using encyclopedias, general and specialized, and other reference sources to gain a basic understanding of your topic. Look for relevant terminology, how a subject is subdivided, and any useful bibliographies or names of important works/scholars in the field. Names that repeatedly appear in your articles are most likely authorities. Paying attention to their ideas will be very helpful. Be sure to use the index volume to locate the various volumes and pages where articles on the different aspects of your topic can be found. As you read, be alert to questions and issues being discussed and how you might begin to narrow your topic. You may find the following resources helpful to you as you do background research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encyclopedias</th>
<th>The following are some important encyclopedic sources in Education. Use the call number to find the items in the Social Science Reference Collection on level one.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✔ International Encyclopedia of Education (Social Science Ref LB 15 .I569 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✔ Encyclopedia of Educational Research (Social Science Ref LB 15 .E48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✔ Encyclopedia of Special Education (Social Science Ref LC 4007 .E53 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✔ Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education (Social Science Ref LC 3707 .E53 1997)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Handbooks     | A handbook is a small compendium of information usually on a specific topic, compiled in a book for easy reference. Here are some topical handbooks you might find useful. |
✓ Handbook of Research on The
  Education of Young Children (Soc

✓ Handbook of Academic Learning:
  Construction of Knowledge (Social
  Science Ref LB 1060 .H3456 1997)

✓ Handbook of School Psychology
  (Social Science Ref LB 1051
  .H2356 1998)

✓ Literacy: An International
  Handbook (Social Science Ref LC
  149 .L4956 1999)

Other Reference Materials

You can find other encyclopedias or
handbooks by browsing the reference
shelves (labeled curr. & ref. coll. on the
map) in the “L” call number on level one.
3. Focus Your Topic and Form an Issue Question

After you have spent some time studying your topic in the sources cited above, you should be aware of the various issues and sub-divisions of your topic. This allows you to narrow your scope by forming an "issue question" which you can research. For example:

"Do inclusive schools better serve the needs of the handicapped students in elementary schools?"

Remember that most research questions need to be very narrow. This makes the research easier and it also helps you write a better paper because you can more easily cover a narrow topic.

Handicapped students is too broad --- "Do inclusive schools better serve the needs of the handicapped students?" is a sufficiently narrow topic.

To determine if your question is narrow enough ask yourself:

Who? -- Who am I taking about? What types of people are involved?

What? -- What am I going to talk about? What particular aspect of this topic am I interested in?

When? -- When does my topic take place? Am I going to look at historical items or just current ones?

Where? -- Where does my topic take place? Is there a certain location I am going to look at?

Why? -- Why am I trying to answer this question? Why does this question need an answer?

How? -- How am I going to focus my topic? Am I writing a persuasive paper or just looking at a topic?

The answers to these questions will help you focus in on a specific topic.

4. Organize your topic into Concepts

Since many research resources are computerized, prepare to do an electronic search by, first, underlining the main or key words in your issue question.
"Do inclusive schools better serve the needs of the handicapped students in elementary schools?"

Using the following chart, place the keywords in separate concept boxes. Add additional synonymous terms from your terminology list within each concept box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>AND</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
<th>AND</th>
<th>Concept 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Schools</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Mild Mental Retardation</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Elementary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Physical Disabilities</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Exceptional Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When researching a topic, it is important to use correct terms. As you look through the specialized encyclopedias, and handbooks you used to locate background information you will be encountering the terminology used in the discipline. As you search in BYU's Library Catalog, you will be encountering official Library of Congress Subject Headings (See Books, under "Finding Research Materials"). These can be useful as you search for more material. ERIC, The Education Resources Information Center, has produced a Thesaurus of Descriptors (terms) that is available at the Social Science Reference Desk and in the ERIC database (See Journal Articles, under "Finding Research Materials"). Use these sources and your own experience to identify terms. Add new terms to your concept chart so that you can use them as you search. Don't be discouraged if you can't find information using the words that you have identified. Keep trying until you find the right ones, or go to the reference desk or contact the subject librarian for help.

B. Finding Research Materials

1. Books
   With over two million volumes in the Lee Library, there is a good chance that you will find books containing information on your topic. When searching the library catalog:

   ✓ Use the terms from your concept box as keywords, and link them with AND or NOT.
   ✓ Truncate terms that may have variants, with $ (for multiple characters) or ? (for single character).
✓ If using more than one term, nest the terms using parentheses.

(Inclusive Schools OR Mainstreaming) AND (Physical Disabilities OR Exceptional Children)

You might want to start with a more general search before introducing new concepts when searching the Library Catalog. Note the difference between subject and keyword searches! Keyword searches are more flexible and come from any field in the record (title, author, subject heading, notes, publisher, etc.) You may want to start with keywords, look at the subject headings found in the records, and then click on the subject heading link to get a more specific group of materials with that subject heading. Many of these subject headings are official Library of Congress Subject Headings and will coincide with terminology you may have already discovered.

Some of the general subject headings that may be useful when looking for educational research include:

- Classroom Management
- Education -- Aims and Objectives
- Educational Law and Legislation
- Mathematics -- Study and Teaching
- Reading
- Special Education

- Curriculum Planning
- Education -- Women -- United States
- Higher Education
- Multicultural Education
- Science -- Study and Teaching
- Vocational Education

2. Journal Articles

Periodical indexes give the researcher an opportunity to find articles published in magazines/journals. They can be searched in much the same manner as has been previously discussed. The indexes or databases that contain citations for articles in education have been assembled under the Article Indexes tab on the Library's home page. From this point, select Education from the Specific Subjects box. From this menu, you will have a number of indexes to choose from. Those indexes that are recommended most for Education are ERIC (EBSCO) and Education Full Text (Wilson Web). Databases have changed over time. Many now include full text articles that you can print or download. However, the majority of references you retrieve will still be citations to an article. For that reason, it is important that you either copy or print the full bibliographic reference so you can find the journal that contains the article. You can find out if BYU has the journal by doing a Search for Journals on the BYU Library Catalog. If BYU does not have the journal you want, you can order the article through Interlibrary Loan.
3. Internet Resources

There are literally hundreds of education sites on the web. Finding good quality information can be problematic when searching a typical web search engine. One possible strategy is to search through a "megasite" or "portal site." These are sites that pull together links from many sites throughout the web. Some of these are listed on the Education Subject page discussed above.

4. Additional Resources

There may be additional resources that could be used to expand your research.

1. Subject Bibliographies: These sources may contain many references. An example of an Education bibliography is *Education: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources (Social Science Ref LB 15 .X1 047 2000)*

2. Citation Indexes: Additional material can be found by looking for who has cited the articles and books you consider of value. For Education you can use the *Social Science Citation Index - (Social Science Reference Area)*.

C. Evaluating Resources

Researchers are often required to use "scholarly" or "peer reviewed" journals. These have a higher editorial or selection standard than "popular" journals. The Internet offers amazing access to volumes of information. However, it is almost as easy to "publish" on the web as it is to access information. For this reason it is important to evaluate your information before you use it.

D. Citing Resources

Cite your resources using the writing style manual recommended by your instructor. The following style manuals can be found at various reference desks:

Gibaldi, Joseph.
PN 147 .G444 1998

Turabian, Kate L.
*A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.*
LB 2369 .T8 1996

Troyka, Lynn Quitman.
*Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers.*
PE 1408 .T696 1996

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.*
BF 76.7 .P82 1994

*The Chicago Manual of Style.*
Z 253 .U69 1993

Online versions of these manuals are available at the Library Home Page from the e-Reference Collection under Style Manuals.

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The library also offers free access to RefWorks. This is a Web-based bibliography and database manager that allows you to create your own personal database by importing references from text files or online databases or typing in references by hand. You can use these references in writing your papers and automatically format the paper and the bibliography in any one of the styles listed above in seconds. You can access RefWorks by going to the library homepage clicking on services and the clicking on Bibliography Generators.