

# Basic Steps in Library Research

## Step 1:

Use encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, textbooks, or other general works to provide background information and perhaps a beginning subject bibliography.

## Step 2:

Use the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) to find books relating to your topic. Use Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) to identify appropriate subject search terms.

## Step 3:

Use sources to find other sources. Find bibliographies in books on your topic. Use bibliographies from encyclopedia articles found in Step 1 as a beginning source for book titles, expert authors and periodical articles

## Step 4:

Use the periodical indexes (both hard copy and computerized) to find articles relating to your topic.

## Step 5:

Use online research tools like FirstSearch and the Internet to find additional information relating to your topic.

## Step 6:

Evaluate all resources for relevancy to your information need. Consider the purpose of the material; the authority and expertise of the source (author/producer); the accuracy, comprehensiveness and currency of the content.