

## Worksheet: Build a Complex Search Expression

### Research Question

### Step 1: Identify keywords/concepts

Concept/Keyword 1:

Concept/Keyword 2:

Concept/Keyword 3:

**Use the table below to enter the Concepts/Keywords from your research question and brainstorm at least three synonyms for each:**

Concept 1			Concept 2			Concept 3		
Synonyms			Synonyms			Synonyms		
OR ↓	AND →		OR ↓	AND →		OR↓	AND →	
OR ↓	AND →		OR ↓	AND →		OR↓	AND →	
OR ↓	AND →		OR ↓	AND →		OR↓	AND →	

## Step 2: Use boolean operators to compose complex search expressions

**2.1.** Connect keyword concepts and their synonyms together using the OR boolean operator:

Concept/Keyword 1 & Synonyms:	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>
Concept/Keyword 2 & Synonyms:	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>
Concept/Keyword 3 & Synonyms:	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>

**2.2.** Use the “AND” boolean operator to connect your keyword concepts and their synonyms with other concepts:

(Concept/keywords 1 with synonyms	) <b>AND</b>
(Concept/keywords 2 with synonyms	) <b>AND</b>
(Concept/keywords 3 with synonyms	)

**2.3.** Use the blanks below to compose your complex search expression:

(	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>	) <b>AND</b>
(	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>	) <b>AND</b>
(	<b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b>	)

## Step 3: Enter your complex search expressions into a database search

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

ProQuest

Basic Search **Advanced Search** Publications Browse Databases (113)

Advanced Search Command Line Thesaurus Field codes Search tips

Anywhere

AND

Anywhere

AND

Anywhere

+ Add a row - Remove a row

Limit to:  Full text  Peer reviewed ⓘ

## Step 4: Revise your terms and search strategy based on the database results

Revised search terms as necessary and run a new search (continue this iterative process until you retrieve the resources relevant to your topic):

**'Old'** Concept/Keyword 1 & Synonyms:

OR

OR

**'New'** Concept/Keyword 1 & Synonyms:

OR

OR

**'Old'** Concept/Keyword **2** & Synonyms:

**OR**

**OR**

**'New'** Concept/Keyword **2** & Synonyms:

**OR**

**OR**

**'Old'** Concept/Keyword **3** & Synonyms:

**OR**

**OR**

**'New'** Concept/Keyword **3** & Synonyms:

**OR**

**OR**

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