Advanced Web Searching

What is your research topic or question? _____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

What are the key words or phrases? ____________________________ _______________________

Related Words? ______________ _______________ _________________

Boolean: This search strategy involves using more than one term to narrow or expand your result and combining the terms with Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT). Go to this site for an introduction: http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/boolean.html

AND: Limits Search
Most of the time, you will want to limit your results to make them more manageable and of higher quality. By adding AND (or using + in some search engines) between terms, you are limiting your search to only those items described by all the terms you list. Some search engines (e.g., Google) use an implied AND, so that they automatically search for the combination of the words you enter in a string.

Type in your key terms and write down the number of results. _________

Now, add other search terms to make your search more specific. (e.g., Amazon rainforest destruction rate). Write down the number of results. _________

What search string did you type in? ________________________________________________

Why is there a difference? ______________________

OR: Expands Search
If you have a very specific keyword, you may not be getting enough results or the type of information that you want. Sometimes, it is better to increase the range of your results by adding OR between terms.

Type in your key terms and write down the number of results. _________

Now, type in OR and add another search term (e.g., death penalty OR capital punishment). Write down the number of results. ______________

What did you type in? ________________________________

Why is there a difference? ________________________________
Exact Phrase
This type of searching involves putting quotation marks “ “ around a phrase or group or words so they will always be found next to each other.

For example, type in Brazil Rainforest. How many results? __________

Now, type in “Brazil Rainforest” and press enter. How many results? __________

Why is there a difference? __________________________________________

Do this type of search with your own topic and print out a result.

Title Search
This search strategy limits your search to only those results with the key term in the title. Use the following link to learn how to do a Title Search in Google:
http://www.learnwebskills.com/search/googlesearch25.html

Now try it for yourself. [Remember: several search engines and databases give you the option to search only by Title.]

Why is it a useful technique? ________________________________

Print out one of your results.

Not/Excluding Terms
Sometimes, you will want to exclude certain terms if they interfere with the results that you want. For example, if you are doing research in forensics (as in debating), NOT forensic science, you will likely want any words relating to the former omitted: science, crime, blood, DNA, investigation, etc. Click on the following link to learn how to omit certain terms for your search when using Google:

Use one of your own keywords and exclude terms that would give you results you did not like.

What did you type in? ____________________________________________________________

What did you exclude? _____________________

Final Search String
Based on the results of these searches, determine the most effective combination of terms for gathering information on your topic. List the search string(s) below that you plan to use in your research, combining your key terms with appropriate Boolean operators and punctuation:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________