



## Finding journal articles

Use this worksheet to help you plan & carry out an effective database search

### Step 1: Define your topic

Write your search question below. Don't choose a topic that is too broad or too narrow.

### Step 2: Choose your keywords

Look at your question - what are the keywords, ie the **main ideas**? Write your keywords below:

### Step 3: Identify alternative keywords

Remember, databases only look for **the exact words you put into the search**.

Different authors may describe the same topic in different words.

For each of your keywords from Step 2, write down below some **alternative words** to describe that idea.

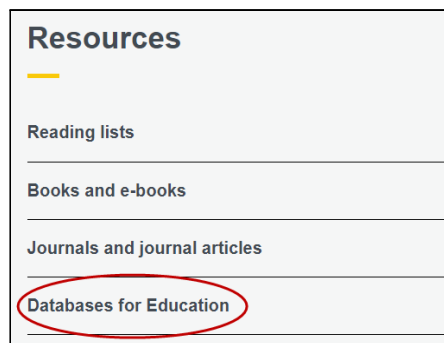
Think about synonyms, abbreviations (eg KS1 for Key Stage 1) and US/UK spellings eg behavio(u)r.

## Step 4: Choose your databases

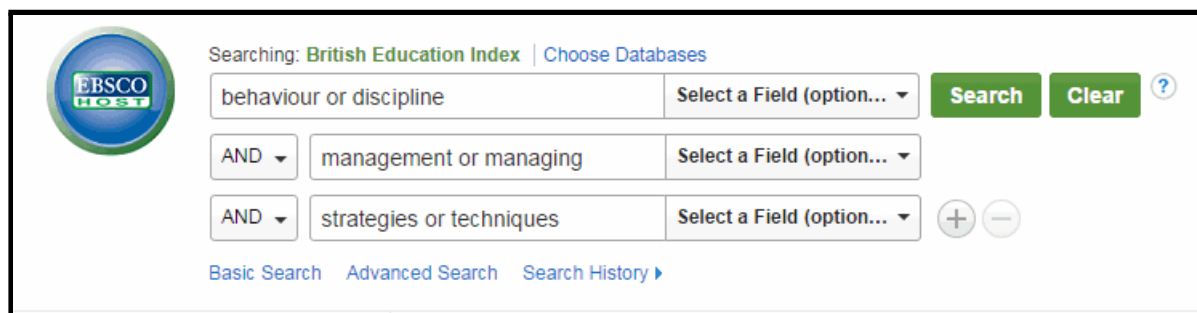
Go to the Library's **Course Resource Help** page for Education (or Early Childhood) from the Library home page. Open up the **Databases** section (under Resources).

Read the descriptions and decide which is the best database for you to search.

You can use the **one-stop search** link at the top if you want to search all the Education databases in one go – bear in mind that if you do this, you will be including the American database ERIC, so you will get a lot of US results which you may need to filter out.



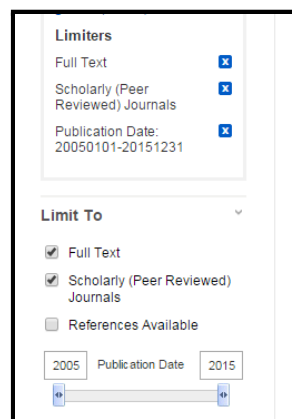
Step 5: Put your groups of alternative keywords into the search boxes like this:



- One **idea** per search box
- All alternative words for that idea in that box, linked with **or**
- The database automatically puts AND between the boxes (groups of keywords) for you.
- Then hit **Search** !

## Step 6: Evaluate your search results

- How many results have you got? Are they (judging by the titles/abstracts of the first few) what you want?
- If you have **too few** results, perhaps your search topic is too specific – or you need **more alternative keywords** for each idea.
- If you have **too many** results, perhaps your search topic is too broad. If not, you can **limit** your search by Date, to Full Text articles only, and to articles from only **peer reviewed** (academic) journals. (Limit menu on the left.)



## Step 7: Choose the articles you want and print, save or email them

- Print, save or email individual articles using the buttons on each article
- Or add a selection of articles to the Folder & then print/save/email them all at once
- Or Export them directly to EndNote Web, our referencing software (<http://bit.ly/BrookesLibraryEndNote>)



For more advice or help, please contact Hazel Rothera or Charlotte Olehnovics, your Education Librarians: [educationlibrarians@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:educationlibrarians@brookes.ac.uk) or watch our video: <https://bit.ly/educsearch21>