

Information Research

Name: Environment Sample

For explanations and assistance see <http://info-skills.lib.vt.edu> Module 3: Developing Search Strategies

1. Write a research idea. Refine this into a clear, one sentence statement of the premise you will be investigating.
 - a. **Research idea:**
Nuclear waste management
 - b. **Focused Topic statement (thesis statement):**
The social and environmental impacts of nuclear waste management (i.e.: Yucca Mtn) require more comprehensive regulation.
2. Identify the essential concepts in your topic statement and complete the keyword table below. Remember that keywords do not include articles (a, an, the) or prepositions. Enter your essential concepts in the Concept Categories cells below – most important first. Use as many as necessary. Enter your keywords (subject headings*, synonyms, & related terms) for each concept in the columns below each concept category. *You will find subject headings in class that you can add to this table.

CONCEPT TABLE

Concept Categories	Primary Concept	Secondary Concepts			
		1	2	3	4
Keywords OR Synonyms OR Related Terms OR Subject Headings*	nuclear waste industrial by-products radioactive waste	people society social impacts	landfills waste disposal sites containment	yucca mountain (other examples found in #2)	environmental policies waste disposal policies laws regulations
	A N D		A N D		A N D

3. Using terms from the keyword table, write one or more search strategy statements for your topic. Use Boolean operators as needed: Use **OR** to combine terms *down a column*. Use **AND** to combine terms *across columns*. Use the best term for your primary concept first, then add terms from your secondary concepts in order of importance. Search statements and terms used will vary with each access tool.

Some search tools allow the use of *wild cards* or *truncation symbols*, like ? or *. Use these symbols to account for plural forms or other variations of your search term (see the help screen for each particular tool for the correct symbol on its use). For example, **appalachia*** will also find **appalachian** and **appalachians**. Sometimes you will need to search all forms of a term: **woman** and **women**: **wom?n**. You may need to write several versions of each statement.

Write enough statements to cover all of the information you need to find.

a. First Search statement:

nuclear waste and regulation
industrial by-products and regulation
nuclear waste and people
nuclear waste and society

b. Second Search statement:

(nuclear waste or industrial by-product or radioactive waste) and (regulation or policies or laws)

c. Third Search statement:

(nuclear waste or radioactive waste) and (people or society) and impact

d. Fourth Search statement:

yucca mountain and (regulation or laws or policies)