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| Title | **The Research Plan** |
| **Due Date** | **Due Tuesday; Responses to two classmates by Wednesday** |
| Where to Post | Click on "New Post" button above and type your response in the space provided below.  Click Save. |
| Subject | Your Name / Research Plan |
| Points | 10 |
| Criteria | * On time, posted in correct place with correct subject line. Correct grammar, spelling, and usage * Each element of the research plan is completed with relevant information * Elements of the research plan reflect your thoughtful consideration of the topic * Analyzes and critically respond to your classmates' work (100 words) |
| Objective | Develop a plan for research that serves as a starting point for exploring research tools using keywords, subjects, classification systems, and other information tools. |

#### **Reading: Analyze Your Research Plan (Go to the list of Week 5 assignments and look for this reading or use the link below.)**

#### **Step One:**

Read "[Analyze Your Research Plan](http://angel.whatcom.ctc.edu/Permalink/Permalink.aspx?permalinkId=a25ab8f6-e513-4c5c-9724-af2d9aa49ff9&permalinkType=0)." Next, it's's time to apply what you have learned about selecting and analyzing a good research topic. Note that every topic is unique in terms of types of information resources available. Every topic has some aspects that pose a challenge for a researcher. What is challenging for one topic may be quite easy for someone else's topic.

For example, a student doing research on the International Court of Justice may find that the library reference collection has excellent resources with information on his topic; but the same student may not be able to find many periodical articles that give an overview of how it serves the world community. On the other hand, a different student, researching the global impact of the 2011 tsunami in Japan, for example, may find little in reference, but may be overwhelmed by the large number of periodical articles available. Because you are sure to meet some challenges, it is important that you have lots of "tricks in your bag" or, search strategies.

Remember, the basis of a successful search strategy is knowing as much about your topic as is possible. This assignment is geared to just this purpose. Please create your "Research Plan " by describing your research topic in the ways listed below. Your plan should include the same headings that you see below. This plan will evolve as you learn more about your topic. Several sections of a revised version of the plan will be included in your Pathfinder.

#### **Title**

Give your project a title which is a *concise statement defining your topic*. You may later decide to change this title.

#### **Topic Statement/Question**

A topic statement or question should clearly and succinctly describe exactly what you plan to cover in your research. For this assignment, write a topic QUESTION.

**For example: What is the impact of climate change on coral reefs in Indonesia and Australia?**

Keep in mind that you need to be specific. Clarify the aspect on which you are focusing such as political, social, scientific, etc. The question above on climate change would relate to science but could also relate to social and political issues. If coral reefs are being damaged, should coral still be harvested for sale? You may want to refer back to the reading and work you did in Week Two on developing a topic. In Week 7, you will revise this research plan in preparation for the Pathfinder.

#### **Scope**

Describe your project carefully, explaining what you intend it to cover. Include ideas, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, taken from earlier assignments and the information you found in the Encyclopedia assignment (Britannica Online or other). Please identify the encyclopedia article you are using with title of article, title of encyclopedia, author of article, if given, and date of publication. If you have not yet used Britannica, I recommend using it now.

#### **Outline**

Make a **brief** outline of the main facets of your topic that you have identified so far. This outline will help you see what kinds of information you'll want to pursue in your research. Read about creating [outlines for research projects](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/outline.html) at the Purdue University's Online Writing Lab.

#### **Academic Disciplines**

List the subject areas (academic disciplines) which would be most likely to contain information on your topic. Think in terms of what kinds of experts would be interested in your research topic. (See the [list of academic disciplines](http://angel.whatcom.ctc.edu/Permalink/Permalink.aspx?permalinkId=70672a20-4f1d-4dab-9286-b4ba9aa21dec&permalinkType=0). Examples of academic disciplines: Psychology, Education, Chemistry, History, etc.)

#### **Key Terms**

Make a list of important words and phrases to use in your searches. Consider synonyms and variations in spelling that you might need to keep in mind. You should also include names of people, places, organizations associated with your topic. Feel free to consult encyclopedias and dictionaries to help you develop this list. As you learn more about your topic, this list of key terms will grow.

#### **Nature of Topic**

Think about the kind of information you will need to complete your project. At this time, list the kinds of resources you think will be most likely to have the information you need.

Tip: Think about whether you will need to rely more heavily on current information, or historical information. About who would be interested in researching your topic. Economists? Environmentalists? Psychologists? Artists? Politicians? Medical or Physical Science researchers?

#### **Library of Congress Classification (LC) Areas**

Books and many other library materials in most academic libraries are shelved in order of the Library of Congress Classification system. (Most public libraries use the Dewey Decimal Classification System. The LC call number is the location of the book just as an address is the location of a house. Because call numbers group books together by subject, if you know the call number (e.g. ML has books on music) you can go to that area and browse for similar books on your subject.

Look at the Outline of the Library of Congress Classification: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html> and try to figure out which call number areas would be best for finding information on your topic. Don't just stop at the "top level" such as "K" for Law or "Q" for Science. Try to find actual letter/number spans. For example, if you were researching the International Court, the call number area KZ1165-1208 (trials in international law) would probably be very helpful. The more detailed you get the more impressed I will be.

Here are some examples:

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| HQ | Women's studies | GN | Anthropology | HQ 1101-2030 | Women, Feminism |
| K | Law | JX | International relations |  |  |

#### **Step Two:**

Write your own Research Plan using the guidelines above. Label each section according to the headings in the text above. Post your Research Plan to the Discussion Forum.

#### **Step Three:**

Examine and make comments on the Research Plan of two of your classmates a minimum of 50 words each. Try to make sure that everyone receives feedback.

#### **Step Four:**

Post your Research Plan (including your research QUESTION) below.