Benedictine University Library
Research Basics: Literature

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Help and Additional Information

For more research guidance, please consult the Research Guides available on the Library web page.

Select the Research Guides & Help tab. Then select All Research Guides A-Z and scroll down the list to locate the guide for WRIT102: Literature.

Helpful Research Guides:

- Research Specifics-Literature
  researchguides.ben.edu/ResearchLit

- Research Basics
  researchguides.ben.edu/research

- Spanish Language and Literature
  researchguides.ben.edu/Spanish

If you have any questions about any of the items in this document, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor or one of the Benedictine librarians for help.
Getting Started

The research process takes time. You'll need time for researching, drafting, revising, and documenting your project in the style recommended by your instructor. As you begin a research project, you may wish to use our Research Project Calculator to help you set a realistic schedule of deadlines and to guide you through all the steps of the process.

The link to the Research Project Calculator is under the Research Guides & Help tab.
Choosing a Research Topic

For many students, one of the most difficult things about writing a research paper is finding a topic. Be sure to spend enough time selecting a topic. Here are some things to consider:

- Read the assignment carefully. Be sure the topic is appropriate for the assignment. If you are not sure or have questions, speak to your instructor.

- Select a topic that won’t be too difficult to research or write about. Remember that a university library contains a wealth of scholarly books and journal articles written on serious topics, but may not support research in popular culture - contemporary sports figures, romance novels, etc.

- Familiarize yourself with the topic. Read abstracts of articles to become comfortable with the subject matter.

- Be sure the topic you select isn’t too broad or too narrow. You need to be able to write well about the topic within the page constraints of the assignment. Feel welcome to consult with one of the University Librarians.

- Select a topic that interests you or that is important to you.
  
  - Are you an expert in an area that might be turning into an interesting term paper topic?
  
  - Is there something you feel strongly about?
  
  - Is there something you’d like to know more about?
  
  - Is there a current international, national, local or campus issue you find interesting and important?
  
  - Ask your friends or family members for suggestions and ideas.

- Try to be creative. You want your paper to be interesting to write as well as interesting for your instructor to read.
What is your research topic?

If you have selected a topic from a list provided by your instructor, please enter it in the space provided below.

If you have the option to choose your own topic, please see the Topics Library Guide ([researchguides.ben.edu/topics](http://researchguides.ben.edu/topics)) for help or inspiration in locating a strong research topic.

**What is your research topic?** In one or two sentences, summarize your search topic in your own words. Try to state your topic in the form of a question you want to answer.*

* Stating your topic in the form of a question will provide you with direction in your research and writing. Since you will need to answer this question with a persuasive argument, it will guide you in your search for relevant information in important source materials.
**Keywords / Search Terms / Subject Headings**

The keywords you collect in this step will help you to combine terms to develop your search strategy.

Use your research question to compile a list of keywords for easy and effective database searching.

Help in locating keywords is available in the Search Techniques Library Guide:

[researchguides.ben.edu/SearchTechniques](researchguides.ben.edu/SearchTechniques)

The keywords you collect in this guide will help you to combine terms to develop your search strategy.

Example:

**What influence did Thomas Merton have on American Christian poetry?**

Merton, Thomas **and** Poetry

Merton, Thomas **and** Criticism and Interpretation

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<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
<th>Concept 3</th>
<th>Concept 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merton, Thomas</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>Christian poetry, American</td>
<td>Religion in Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merton, Thomas, 1915-1968</td>
<td>Criticism and Interpretation</td>
<td></td>
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A good review of combining concepts (**Boolean Searching**) is available on the Library of Congress site:

[http://catalog.loc.gov/help/boolean.htm](http://catalog.loc.gov/help/boolean.htm)
Suggestion: Begin to construct a list of the main subject headings or keywords that relate to your topic.

a) **What is your research topic?**

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b) **Circle or highlight key concept words.**

c) Enter the key concept words or phrases into the chart below. Then add related terms and/or synonyms.

This will be an ongoing project since you will discover new terms as you explore various library databases. This will be helpful in composing advanced search strategies where you will be asked to combine terms.

Please add additional rows or columns as needed. 
It is not necessary to fill in every box.
Refining keyword searches

Although command terms and characters vary among electronic databases and search engines here are of the most commonly used functions:

- Use quotation marks around words that are part of a phrase: “climate change”.
- Use AND to connect words that must appear in a document: Ireland AND peace. Some search engines require a plus sign instead: Ireland +peace.
- Use NOT in front of words that must not appear in a document: Titanic NOT movie. Some search engines require a minus sign (hyphen) instead: Titanic -movie.
- Use OR if only one of the terms must appear in a document: “mountain lion” OR cougar.
- Use an asterisk as a substitute for letters that might vary: “marine biolog*” (to find marine biology or marine biologist, for example).
- Use parentheses to group a search expression and combine it with another: (cigarettes OR tobacco OR smok*) AND lawsuits.

Consult the database or search engine help screens for specific tips in composing your search strategy.

Some of the examples above are from Bedford -St. Martin’s Writer’s Help Handbook

For additional tips, techniques and strategies to help you identify, develop and locate relevant resources on your research topic, see our Search Techniques Library Guide:

researchguides.ben.edu/SearchTechniques
Locating Books and E-books

Go to the library web page (and select the Books & Videos tab.)

Compose your search:

Let’s look for materials ABOUT your author in our online catalog by entering his or her name as a SUBJECT SEARCH:

Enter your author’s name – last name first!

Suggestion:
If you think you might want to request materials on Interlibrary Loan, you may wish to Login to your I-Share account before you begin to search.

Go to the library web page (and select the Books & Videos tab.)

Open the Books & Videos tab.

Select Subject then Go
Here are some of the results of this search:

You may also Sort by Newest First.

Click on a title to view additional information about a book.

This link may help in citing this book.

Click on a subject heading to locate additional information on a topic.

Click to open the eBook.

You may wish to use the links in the sidebar to refine your search.
Open the eBooks tab in your Research Guide for additional information on eBook access and use.

Use the search feature to locate information on your topic within the eBook.

and Frederic’s baby dies in her womb before he can be born. The baby in “Indian Camp,” like the story itself, is extracted before it can “go bad.”

Hemingway also had to attend to other family relationships. Before leaving for France he was obliged to pay a call on his parents in their Chicago suburb of Oak Park. His father had sent him a check to help out with Hadley’s hospital expenses and had mentioned that Ernest’s Uncle George, whom Hemingway disliked, had recently been on a hunting trip. Hemingway thanked his father for the check and complained that he himself had not the time to go hunting. On the day before Christmas, he paid a brief visit home, by himself, and gave his sister Marcelline a copy of his first book, Three Stories and Ten Poems, knowing that she would be repulsed by the rape in “Up in Michigan.” He told her not to read it until after she left Oak Park because he did not want his parents to know about the offensive story. But when he got back to Toronto he arranged to have his publisher send his parents an order form for his second book, the recently published...
Interlibrary Loan

There are 77 items about Ernest Hemingway in the Benedictine Library collection. Do you need additional material?

Use the library catalog to locate books in our library as well as in 80 other Illinois academic libraries.

Select **All I-Share Libraries** to expand your search to look for materials you can borrow from 80 Illinois academic libraries.

Now you have over 1000 items to explore.

Note: You may **not** borrow ebooks, films and sound recordings on interlibrary loan, so you may wish to hide some of these resources.
You also have more options to help you focus your search.
Click on a title for additional information or to borrow the book.

For example, open the Table of Contents to see if the book contains information on your topic.

Borrowing a book.

You may go to one of these locations to borrow this book with your Benedictine ID card or click on Request 1st Available to request the book on Interlibrary Loan.

(continued on next page)
The book will be delivered to your campus library.

You will need to register for an account the first time you use this service.

Use these links if you need to create a new account or if you have forgotten your password.

Go to the library web page and click on Interlibrary Loan to learn how to create an I-Share account.
Part II: Locating Journal Articles

Academic Search Complete

Use the Academic Search Complete database to locate both popular and scholarly articles on your topic.

To access go to the library web page and open the Find Articles tab.

If you are off campus, you will be prompted to login – the same way you would log into a campus computer.
Compose your search

In this example we are looking for materials on Cormac McCarthy’s “The Road”

Here are some of the results of this search.

To further refine your search, you may wish to sort by relevance

Click on the HTML or PDF links to read the article.

Find Full Text

Click on the red button to see if the article is available in another database.

Click on the link to view this article in the Sage database.
Click on a title for more information about an article.

Be sure to check the citation they provide for errors.

For example, click on **Cite** for citation help.

Link to more citation help from the library home page.
Locate Journal Articles: MLA International Bibliography

The MLA International Bibliography is arguably the single most important resource in the areas of literature and language. Produced by the Modern Language Association, the database indexes articles, books, book chapters, dissertations and more on the subjects of literature, language, linguistics, and folklore.

**Begin your search on the library web page:** [http://www.ben.edu/library](http://www.ben.edu/library)

**Library**

Under the **Articles** tab click on **All Databases A-Z**

- All Databases A-Z
- Journals & Newspapers by Title

Search for the MLA International Bibliography
You can also continue the search you started in Academic Search Complete by using the **Choose Database** feature.

Let's search MLA for information on *Sula* by Toni Morrison.

Here are some of the results of the MLA search.
How to locate books identified by the MLA bibliography

Open the Find Books & Videos tab on the library home page to search the online catalog for this book.

Since the book is not in the Benedictine Library collection, expand your search to include All I-Share Libraries to see if we can request it on Interlibrary Loan.

Search All I-Share Libraries if the book is not available in the Benedictine Collection.

This chapter on *Sula* appears on pages 175-191 in the book Toni Morrison and the Bible: Contested Intertextualities by Shirley A. Stave.
Click on the title to check on the availability of the book.

Click on the Request 1st Available tab to request a book.
(See page 14 for more information on borrowing materials on Interlibrary Loan.)
Google Scholar & Interlibrary Loan for Journal Articles

Some articles are not available in the Benedictine Library Collection.

You can request them on interlibrary loan ....

... first check to see if it might available free of charge through Google Scholar.

To access them, you’ll need to adjust the settings.

Select Settings
Select Library Links

Click on the title to see if the article is available free of charge. If there are charges, request it (at no charge) via interlibrary loan.
Interlibrary Loan

There is a charge to view this article, so your best option is to request it on interlibrary loan.

Login to ILLiad the same way you would a campus computer:

The article will be e-mailed to you free of charge.

Learn more about ILLiad by clicking on Interlibrary Loan on the library home page.
Locate Journal Articles: Literary Reference Center

This database provides information on thousands of authors and their works across literary disciplines and timeframes. Includes work overviews, literary criticism, biographies, author interviews, book reviews, and classic novels and short stories.

Compose your search.  In this example we are looking for materials on God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy:

Refine the results of your search.

In this example, we limited our search to Plot Summaries.
You can also limit your search to Literary Criticism in Scholarly Journals

Locate Journal Articles: JSTOR

Use JSTOR to locate scholarly articles on your topic.
Here are some of the results of this search:

Streaming Videos: Locate a streaming video on your author.

Open the **Books & Videos** tab
Search for and select Films On Demand

Search Results For: ibsen doll's house

Ibsen's "A Doll's House" 09:25
(SEGMENT) From Title: Henrik Ibsen: The Master Playwright
Ibsen's career can be divided into four periods. "A Doll's House" is written in the third period and...
© 1987 Digital Classics Distribution
Share Add to

Citation help

Part III: Evaluate Your Information

Use the links on the WRIT102 Literature home page (researchguides.ben.edu/WRIT102Lit) to help you to

- Determine if a resource is scholarly, academic and/or peer-reviewed: researchguides.ben.edu/PopularScholarly
- Determine if a resource is primary or secondary: researchguides.ben.edu/primarysources

Evaluate the books, journal articles, and websites you locate: researchguides.ben.edu/CriticalEvaluation

Part IV. Cite Your Sources

A. See the Citation Guides & Style Manuals Guide: researchguides.ben.edu/citation
B. RefWorks

**RefWorks** is a “citation manager” that reformats the citations you locate in various databases into any of the major bibliographic styles – APA, MLA, etc.

Access **RefWorks** from the **Frequently Used Databases** under the **Find Articles** tab on the library home page.

Select the **New Version**.

See the RefWorks Library Guide ([researchguides.ben.edu/refworks](http://researchguides.ben.edu/refworks)) to register for RefWorks or to learn more about how to use this tool.
How to export a citation to RefWorks: from *Academic Search Complete*, *Literary Research Center*, or *MLA*:

You should now see the **Folder Contents** screen. Select the citations you wish to export to RefWorks.

Click on the blue folder icon to select the citations you wish to export to RefWorks.

When you have finished marking the citations for export go to the right sidebar and click on **folder view**.

You should now see the **Folder Contents** screen. Select the citations you wish to export to RefWorks.

Click on **Export**

V the citations you wish to export
You should now see the **Export Manager** screen.

![Export Manager screenshot]

Select **Direct Export to RefWorks** then **Save**

The citations will be exported to **RefWorks**.

![RefWorks Export screen]

Select the **New RefWorks**.

When you select **New RefWorks**, you should see a screen that looks like this:

![New RefWorks import screen]

Select the **Last Imported** folder.
How to Create a Bibliography

Click on the citation icon.

Select Your Citation Style

For this class, it will probably be **MLA**, but always check with your instructor to be sure.
The citations in the folder will be formatted in MLA style.

IMPORTANT:
Be sure to proof-read your citations to be sure *RefWorks* composed them correctly!

Learn more about this valuable tool in the RefWorks Research Guide: [researchguides.ben.edu/refworks](researchguides.ben.edu/refworks)
Additional citation help is available from his link on the library home page.

RefWorks Folders

If you are going to be using RefWorks for several projects, you may wish to store your search results in separate folders.

For more information on how to incorporate RefWorks into the production of your research paper, please see: researchguides.ben.edu/refworks
JSTOR: how to export citations to *RefWorks*.

1. Select the citations you wish to export to *RefWorks*.

2. Select Export to *RefWorks*

For more information on how to incorporate *RefWorks* into the production of your research paper, please see: [researchguides.ben.edu/refworks](researchguides.ben.edu/refworks)
Books from the I-Share catalog

Step 1: Log into RefWorks

Step 2: Under the **Search Databases** tab select **I-Share**

Step 3: Search for the citation(s) you wish to import.
Step 4:

Select the citation and click on **Import**