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| Objective*What exactly do you want to know?** Make your research objective focused and specific.
* Your objective can be in the form of a research question – who, what, when, where, how?
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| Known facts*What do you already know, or what have you already found out from previous research?** Write down the information you already have and the records you’ve already searched, if any.
* Use concise statements to summarise this information.
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| Working hypothesis*What is a possible or likely answer to your research question or objective?** Based on what you know, write down what you think the answer to your research question could be.
* This is an educated guess that you will prove or disprove through your research.
* Don’t worry if you can’t think of anything – your research will hopefully provide the real answer!
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| Identified sources*Where could you find out what you want to know?** Identify archival records and other sources that might contain the information you need to answer your research question.
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| Research strategy*Where can you access the sources you’ve identified? What do you hope to find out from them?** List your sources starting with the most likely to answer your question or most easily accessed.
* Write down where to access each of the sources – online, local library, state library, by ordering copies, archives, etc.?
* Write down your goal for looking at each source.
* Work through the sources methodically, recording the information you find on a Research Log and/or Note-taking Form.
* Record clues and ideas for future research.
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| Evaluation*Did you meet your research objective?** Analyse the information you’ve found.
* Work out if you met your research objective or not.
* If not, look for other records, get some help or conclude that you’ve reached a dead end!
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