Before you begin...

RGO Library & Learning Commons (LLC) e-resources require a login for off-campus access.

Student logins are automatically set to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USERNAME</th>
<th>Student ID number preceded by “BVC,” for example: BVC123456</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PASSWORD</td>
<td>Last 4 digits of the phone number on file with the Registrar’s Office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is your password not working?

Contact the LLC to have it reset by:

- email at circulation@bowvalleycollege.ca
- phone at 403-410-1647 or 403-410-1756
- the LLC’s webchat service, Chat with Us!

Step by Step Guide to Library Research

Have a research project or essay assignment?

Not sure where to start?

This handout will guide you through the research process from start to finish!
**STEP 1: Understand the Assignment**

Read the question carefully (at least twice):
- What is the length?
- Are there specific topics you need to include?
- What resources are required or not allowed?

For example:
Write a 3-page essay on a controversial medical topic: Use peer-reviewed journal articles and do not use books or websites.

**STEP 2: Find Background Information**

- Look up introductory information in one of the LLC’s reference databases, such as Credo Reference Centre
- Search in encyclopedias and dictionaries
- Note the main concepts and words used to describe the topic

For example:
Read the entry on abortion in The New Harvard Guide to Women’s Health

**STEP 3: Form a Research Question**

- Narrow or broaden the topic by adding or removing a time period, place, person, event or subtopic
- Then, try to restate it using "who, what, where, why, when, and how" questions

For example:
Why do young women in Canada support pro-choice abortion policies?

**STEP 4: Pick Keywords for Searching**

- Write down key phrases and words used to describe the topic
- Brainstorm or use a thesaurus to find synonyms and related

For example:
- Abortion
  - Termination of pregnancy
  - Embryo
  - Fetus
  - Birth control
  - Contraception
  - Pro-life
  - Pro-choice
  - Roe vs. Wade (1973)

- Aboriginal Rights
  - First Nations
  - Treaty
  - Reserve
  - Human rights
  - Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
  - Residential schools

**STEP 5: Search the Library Catalogue & Databases**

- Go to the LLC website at www.bowvalleycollege.ca/library
- On the main page, there is a search box for the library catalogue, which is the "search engine" for all LLC resources — from print or eBooks to journal articles and other database content
- Type one or two keywords and click Search

**STEP 6: Modify Search Results**

Change the Keywords
- Browse the search results for words used to describe the topic
- Use one of those words as a keyword to add or replace your search terms

Use Limiters
- In the left-hand column of the search results page, select one or more relevant limiters

- A limiter is an option to narrow and improve the accuracy of a search by removing certain results. Options include format, subject, language, date, library database, and more...

Use “AND,” “OR” and “NOT”
- Place these operators between keywords to narrow or broaden search results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Retrieves results with BOTH words</td>
<td>abortion AND “contraception”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Retrieves results with ONE or BOTH words</td>
<td>Aboriginal OR First Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT</td>
<td>Retrieves results that have ONE word and NOT the second word</td>
<td>depression NOT economic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>