Workshop # 1
Contextualizing Your Research

July 9, 2015
Context

• What is it?
• Why is context important?
**Context**

con·text

/ˈkänˌtekst/

*noun: context; plural noun: contexts*

the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed
Context

Think about your STAR topic.

What came before?

What direction are you working towards?

What is beyond the “scope” of your work?
This is **context**.
From Gospel to Grunge

http://www.concerthotels.com/100-years-of-rock

• What does this tell us about music?
• What does it leave out?

Can you construct a complete genealogy of ideas?
The Literature Review

The purpose of a literature review is to summarize and synthesize the information surrounding the topic you have chosen to explore.
The Literature Review

• How is a literature review related to context?
• What resources can/should be used in a literature review?
• What can you learn from a literature review?
The Literature Review

[Questions to answer in a lit review]

• Is this question worth answering?
• Have others researched it?
• What conclusions have been made about this topic?
• What impact could this question have?
But where do you start?
Mind Mapping*

Mind-mapping is a brainstorming tool to visually depict connections between different topics.

Examples of mind maps

*see also - cognitive map, concept map
Mind mapping

- How does this help us place research in context?
- How can this be useful in beginning a literature review?
Break Out

In small groups, **share** your STAR topics.

Pick one group member’s topic and work together to **create a mind map** to brainstorm the different contexts and connections related to this topic.
Next Time...

Workshop # 2: Reading a Scholarly Article

Please skim/read: “Erythritol, a Non-Nutritive Sugar Alcohol Sweetener and the Main Component of Truvia(R), is a Palatable Ingested Insecticide”

http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0098949

Please bring:

- A scholarly article related to your STAR topic (preferably one that you have already read!)
- Your laptop
- And, as always, your intellectual curiosity