Stepping Up Your Scholarly Research Skills:
Searching Databases

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Graduate Online Success Series
Sarah Hughes and Kathleen Turner
Drexel University Libraries

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Welcome

Kathleen Turner, MLS

kt32@drexel.edu

Sarah Hughes, MSLIS, MA

sh3675@drexel.edu

Agenda

- ✓ Research process and preparing to search
- ✓ Access and use Library's Dragon Search
- ✓ Conduct keyword and subject searches in library databases
- ✓ Apply database search limiters
- ✓ Use Boolean operators, truncation and phrase searching in databases
- ✓ Cited Reference Searching in Web of Science

How confident do you feel about conducting research and searching for scholarly sources using library resources and databases?
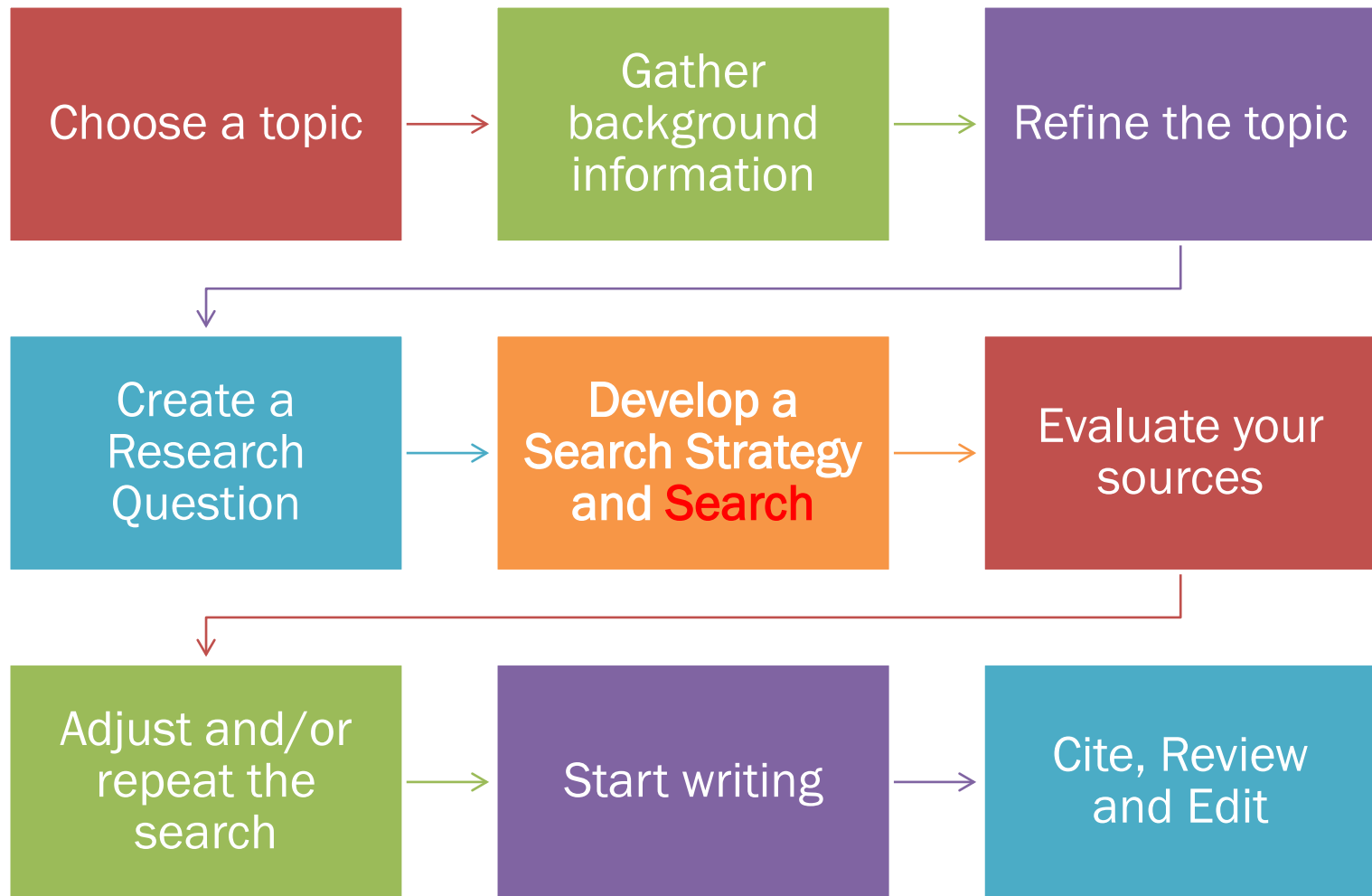
Research process

- A *research strategy* will help
  - focus the topic
  - organize the search
  - manage time efficiently
  - progress from general to specific resources
  - understand if the topic has been examined thoroughly enough
  - ID knowledge gaps on the topic

- The process takes *time* and *effort*.
  - You should not expect to complete all steps in a single sitting

- By thoughtfully approaching your topic you will be able to research the topic in an organized fashion and compose a thorough scholarly paper.
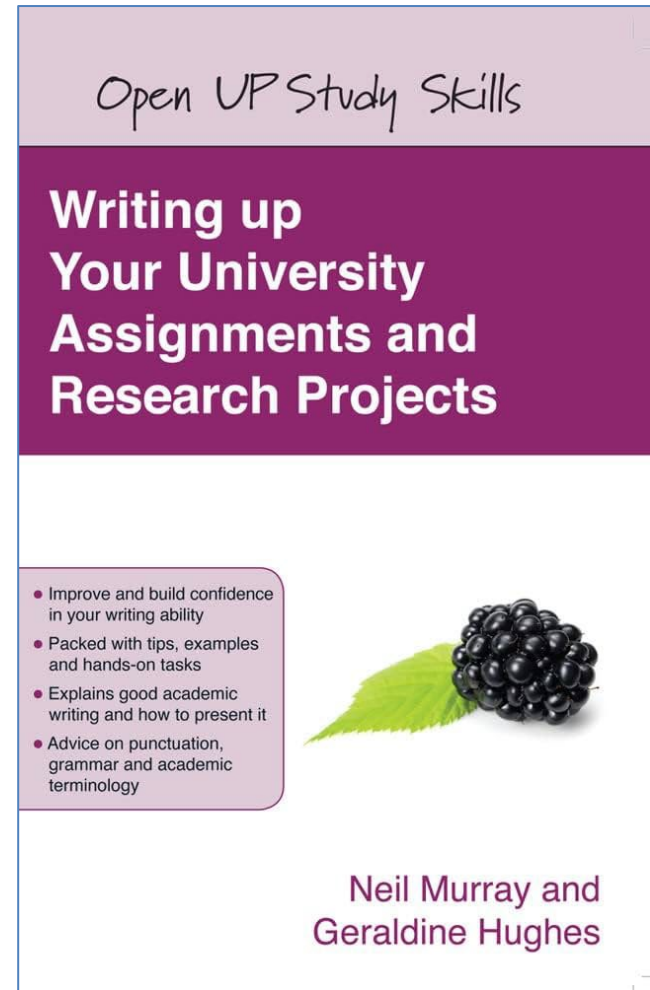
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Research process

Choose a topic → Gather background information → Refine the topic

Create a Research Question → Develop a Search Strategy and **Search** → Evaluate your sources

Adjust and/or repeat the search → Start writing → Cite, Review and Edit

Suggested reading

- *[Writing up Your University Assignments and Research Projects](...)* by Neil Murray & Geraldine Hughes

- "Academic writing can be a daunting prospect for new undergraduates and postgraduates alike. This accessible book provides students with all they need to know to produce excellent written work."

Open UP Study Skills

Writing up Your University Assignments and Research Projects

- Improve and build confidence in your writing ability
- Packed with tips, examples and hands-on tasks
- Explains good academic writing and how to present it
- Advice on punctuation, grammar and academic terminology

Neil Murray and Geraldine Hughes

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Choosing a topic and gathering background information

- Aim for a happy medium
  - Topic not too broad but also not too narrow in scope.
  - Who, what, where, when, and why.
- Gather background info
  - Consult news articles, books, encyclopedia and internet searching to gather information to start.
  - **Dragon Search** can be helpful.

Using Google

- Locate credible professional associations, organizations and government pages.
  - limit results to sites with specific domains, such as .org, .edu, .mil, or .gov.
- Type in your search terms + site:.edu.

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Where to search?

- Dragon Search (Library Homepage)
  - Very broad, searches across library catalog
- Databases A to Z
  - Listing of all library databases
- Subject and course guides with database links
  - Will contain links to suggested databases based on subject and discipline

Constructing a Search Strategy

- Define your search question/topic

- Identify the separate concepts in your question

- For each concept, think of appropriate search terms, including synonyms and related terms

- Map out how to connect your search terms

Define your question:

What is the effect of video games on empathy in teenagers?

Identify the separate concepts in your question:

What is the effect of ==video games== on ==empathy== in ==teenagers==?

Think of appropriate search terms, including synonyms and related terms:

Video Games	Empathy	Teenagers

Think of appropriate search terms, including synonyms and related terms:

Video Games	Empathy	Teenagers
Gaming	sympathy	Teens
Virtual reality	compassion	Adolescents (or adolescence)
Computer games		Youths
		[database age filters]

If the database(s) you're using has a thesaurus or listing of subject terms (controlled vocabulary), look there for equivalent or related terms.

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Combining Search Terms: Boolean Operators

- ## OR
  - **broadens** a search by telling the database that *any* **of the words it connects are acceptable.**

- ## AND
  - **narrows** a search by telling the database that **ALL keywords used must be found** in an article in order for it to appear in your results list.

Combine synomyms or related terms with OR:

Teenagers

OR

Adolescen*

OR

Youth

OR

Youths

Combine separate concepts with AND:
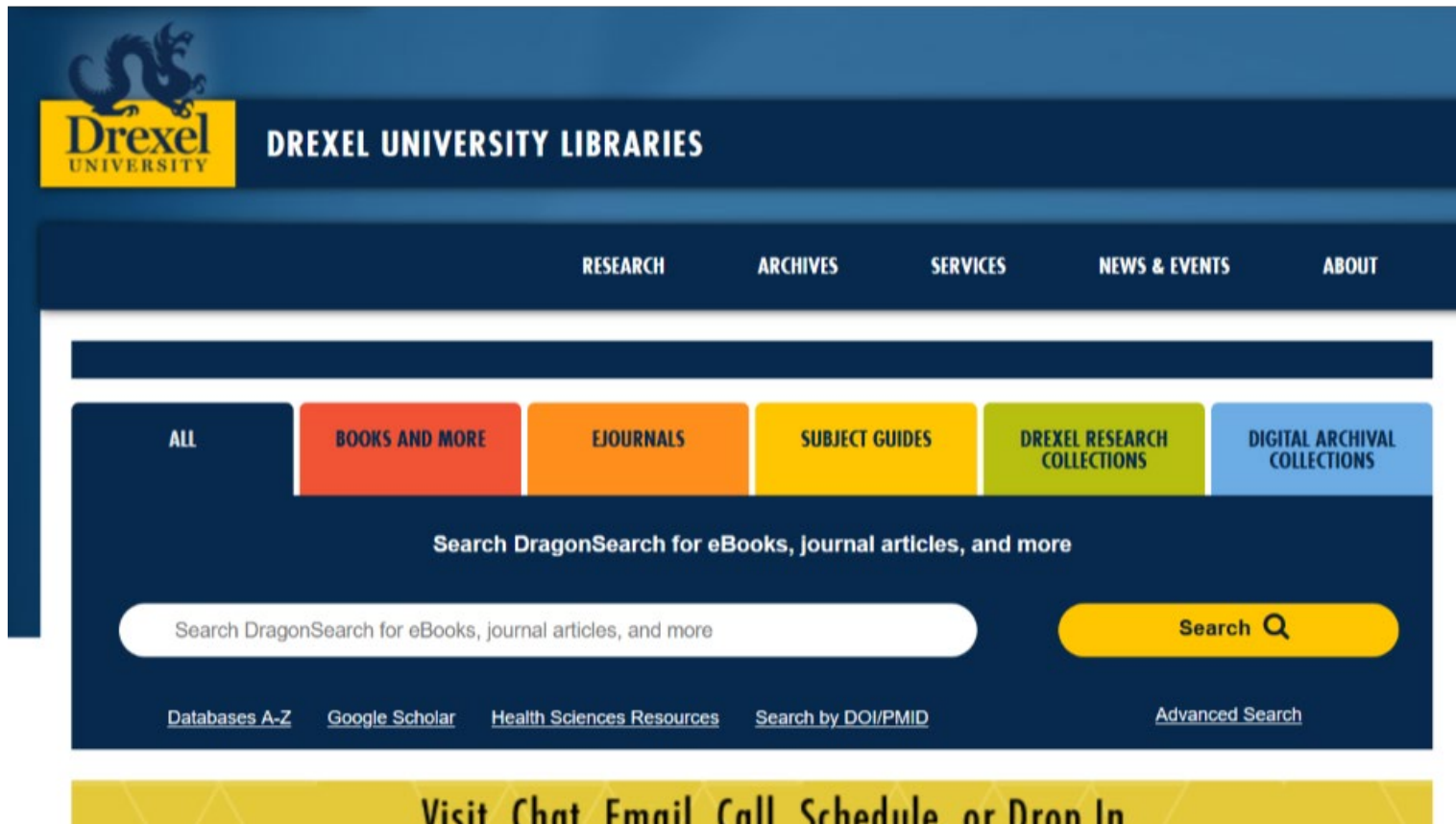
Video Games		Empathy		Teenagers
OR		OR		OR
Gaming		Sympathy		Adolescen*
OR	AND	OR	AND	OR
Computer Games		Compassion		Youth
OR				OR
Virtual Reality				Youths

Dragon Search Demo

ProQuest One Academic Demo

Web of Science Demo

When beginning your Library research, it is always a good idea to:

Which of the following would move you forward in time to locate recent articles that reference your original article?

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Leadership AND motivation would return search results with:

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.