

## ★ Today's Topics To-Do List:

- How to form a research question
- Where to find the information you need online
- Making the most of your online searches
- Referencing

Before we start, please reflect on your current research practice:

- ? What online resources do you currently use for academic research?
- ? Out of 10, how effective do think your online searches are?
- ? How often do you question the truthfulness of information that you see online?

# 1. How to Form a Great Research Question

06 April 2020 10:21

One of the initial parts of any research project is creating a research question or analysing a question you have been given.

How to create effective questions:

- ★ Create open ended questions
- ★ Choose your question words carefully
- ★ Key concepts and keywords

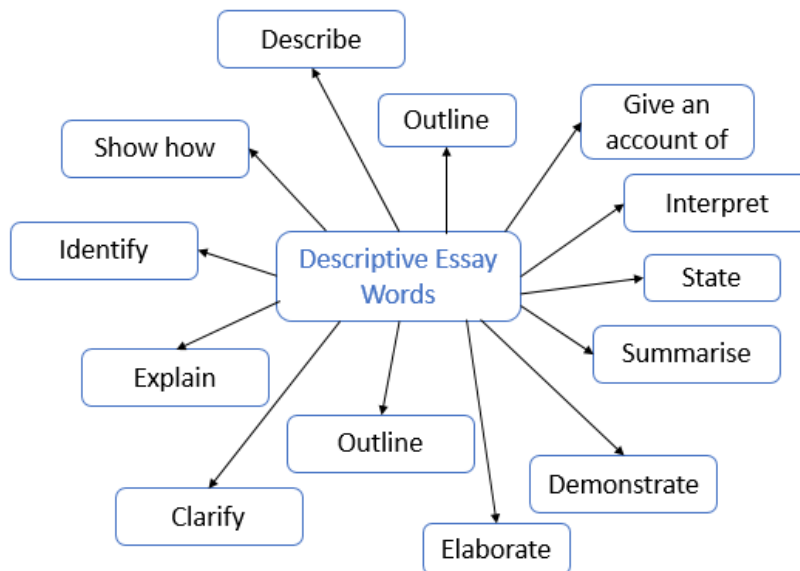
## 2. Question Words

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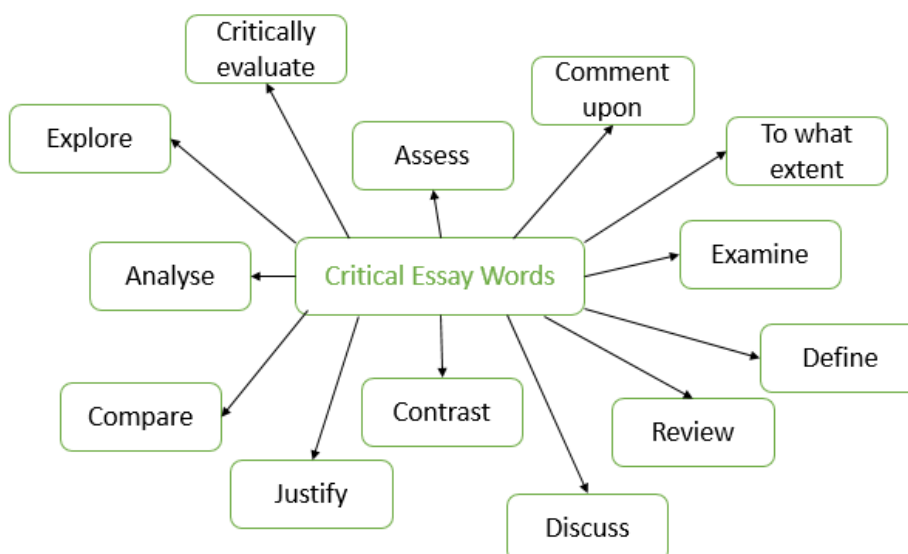
Question words are extremely helpful as they can influence both the content and structure of an essay.

Basically, how do you want to answer the question -

? Descriptively or critically?



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### 3. Key concepts and words

06 April 2020 15:31

? What are the broad areas your research topic focuses on?

These are the basic building blocks around which you will construct your search, they define the broad themes you will be looking at and you will need to accurately describe these.

Please highlight the key concepts and words in the following examples:

- ✍ To what extent has gender bias affected drug trials?
- ✍ Compare arguments on how veganism will impact the environment?
- ✍ Compare the rhetoric of the Second World War and the Coronavirus outbreak in the U.K.

! Language is powerful, so be aware of the consequences of the words you choose; for example, gendered, geographical or political language.

It's also really important to consider the phrasing and key words of your key concepts, or you may miss sources. Consider:

- 💡 Plurals
- 💡 Different spellings
- 💡 Synonyms

# What information is out there?

06 April 2020 17:57

- Monographs
- Podcasts
- Instructional videos
- Documentaries
- News articles
- Museum Artefacts
- Primary data
- Blog posts
- Websites
- Photographs
- Wiki's
- Letters
- Maps
- Interviews

★ Use a range of sources

!  [Journal articles](#)

International Journal of Educational Research and Information Science  
2015; 2(2): 10-15  
Published online July 20, 2015 (<http://www.openscienceonline.com/journal/eris>)



## A Review of Teachers' Qualifications and Its Implication on Students' Academic Achievement in Nigerian Schools

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### Abstract

The paper reviewed the controversy surrounding the teachers' qualifications and its influence on students' academic achievement. The paper measured teachers' qualification using seven indicators which are: formal education, experience, subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, duration of training, certificate/licensing and professional development. The paper reviewed different opinions on the relationship between these indicators and students' academic achievement. Though, it seems there is no consensus among the authors as regard the subject. However, there is a common opinion that subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, professional development and years of experience are imperative and positively correlated with students' academic achievement. As a new dimension to the argument, this paper conceptualized teacher qualification into two categories. The article posits that one of the categories, teacher's personal quality is more important than certification. The paper suggested some recommendations.

### Keywords

Teachers' Qualifications, Students' Academic Performance, Motivation, Personal Quality, Student Learning

### 1. Introduction

Merriam - Webster Dictionary defines 'qualification' as a special skill or type of experience or knowledge that makes someone suitable to do a particular job or activity. Therefore, teachers' qualification is a particular skill or type of experience or knowledge someone possesses to make him or her suitable to teach. Teachers' qualifications could, therefore, mean all the skills a teacher required to teach effectively. Such skills include formal education, experience, subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, duration of training, certificate/licensing and professional development [51].

Someone might have a teaching certificate at hand but without adequate knowledge of subject matter, this individual has no teaching qualifications yet. Similarly, someone without proper knowledge of pedagogy or someone who spent few years in training [15] without completing the required years does not possess teacher qualifications. Professional development and experience [43] also count for teachers' qualifications because several studies have revealed this [29]. Qualification is one of the critical factors that drive

students' academic performance [27]. [20] observed that one of the most important factors in the teaching process is a qualification of the teacher. The perspective of [32] was that teachers' qualifications can go a long way to bring about students' higher academic achievement.

Teachers' profession relates to competence in instruction and management of students and materials in the classroom [28]. Teachers' qualifications, therefore, might not only be the certificate someone is holding as erroneously conceived by some people. Teachers' qualifications are more than just holding a certificate of any institution. [51] in her study on "Teachers' qualifications and their impact on students' achievement findings from TIMMS-2003 data in Israel" ties teachers' qualifications to seven indicators that are:

- Teachers' formal education
- Teachers' education in the subject matter of teaching (in-field preparation)
- Teacher education in pedagogical studies
- Duration of the preparation period
- Certification and licensing status
- Years of experience
- Preparation in professional development activities

# 1. Where can I find material?

06 April 2020 10:22

## Ask the experts!



Archivists



Museum Professionals



Academic Librarians



Lecturers, Professors etc.

💡 One of the best way to contact experts is Twitter, but email and sites like LinkedIn can help too. Additionally, experts often use these platforms to discuss their views and announce their work. Most conferences on topics will also have hashtags and searching for tags like #twitterstorian can help you explore a topic and research, but please remember your critical thinking skills.

## 2. Open Access

06 April 2020 14:56

### ★ Databases and Search Engines.

Note on search engines:

- they rank sites on popularity
- not every website is on search engines,
- sheer quantity
- quality

### ! Open access

Open access is where research is available free of cost and other access barriers.

 [C.O.R.E. Worlds largest collection of open access full texts](#)

 [The Internet Archive](#)

 [Directory of Open Access Journal \(DOAJ\)](#)

 [Europeana- Open Access European newspapers](#)

 [Durham Research Online](#)

 [Durham Uni digitised Archive and Special Collections](#)

 [Durham e-Theses](#)

 [Discover- search engine for Durham University collections \(art, museum, archive\)](#)

### Browser plugins.

These will add on to your internet browser (for free) to help you find open access material.

💡 Unpaywall- works with Chrome and Firefox

💡 Google Scholar button - works with Chrome, Firefox and Safari. This button won't help you find free material per se but its 'versions' buttons will.

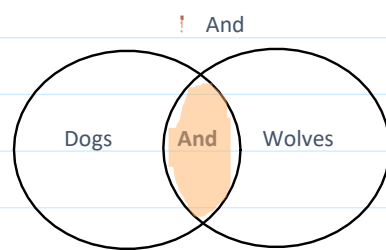
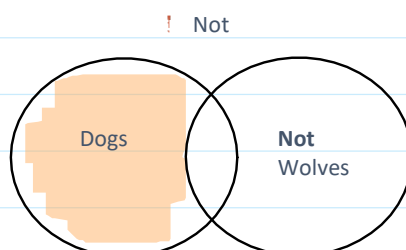
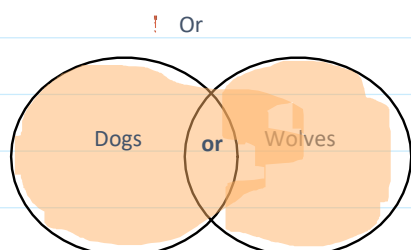
! More info on both <https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/onlineservices/plugins/>

# 1. How to optimise online searches

06 April 2020 10:22

## Boolean Operators

★ Boolean operators are simple words that search engines and databases use to get focused, more productive results. They are very powerful.





## 2. Broaden your search

06 April 2020 17:35

### Broaden your search

First, you need to "cast your net wide" to try to make sure you don't miss any potentially useful results. There are three key tools to aid you in constructing a search to do this.

The OR connector	Wild cards	Truncation tools
<b>Example:</b> butterfly OR lepidoptera	<b>Example:</b> organi?ation <b>Example:</b> labo?r <b>Example:</b> d?nut	<b>Example:</b> negligenti
Will return all results which mention the term "butterfly", or mention the term "lepidoptera", or mention both terms.	Will return results with the term spelled 'organization' or 'organisation' / 'labor' or 'labour' / 'donut' or 'doughnut'	Will return results such as: The police acted negligently The police were negligent The police acted with negligence
Used to capture all those 'alternative words', differing terminology and synonyms.  Most databases assume if you don't include the "OR" connector, you only want results where ALL of the terms entered appear.	Used to capture all those alternative spellings, especially if comprising alternate Americanised or Francophone spellings of English words.  The symbol used will vary, depending on which database or catalogue you are using.	Used to capture varying word stems, to take in to account the tense of a sentence and form of a word which could be used.  The symbol used will vary, depending on which database or catalogue you are using.

 [dur.ac.uk/library/research](http://dur.ac.uk/library/research)

### 3. Narrow your search

06 April 2020 17:35

<b>The AND connector</b>	<b>Proximity Connectors</b>	<b>Phrase searching</b>	<b>The NOT connector</b>
<b>Example:</b> polymer <b>AND</b> structure	<b>Example:</b> import <b>within 3</b> bees	<b>Example:</b> "diminished responsibility"	<b>Example:</b> property <b>NOT</b> intellectual
<p>Will only return those results which mention both the term "polymer" <b>AND</b> the term "structure".</p> <p>It should filter out and exclude any results which only mention "polymer", or only mention "structure".</p>	<p>Will only return results where the term "import" appears within 3 words of the term "bees".</p>	<p>Will return results such as which include the PHRASE "<b>diminished responsibility</b>".</p> <p>Would exclude results such as "the range of duties in their role had <b>diminished</b>, as had their level of <b>responsibility</b>".</p>	<p>Will exclude results which mention the term "intellectual", even if they include the term "property"</p>
<p>Used to focus your search on those results which discuss all the key concepts you are interested in.</p> <p>Some databases assume an "AND" even if not included, but not all do, so it is worth including as good practice.</p>	<p>Used to add context to your search. Used instead of the <b>AND</b> connector.</p> <p>The symbol used will vary, depending on which database or catalogue you are using.</p>	<p>Used to focus your search when looking for specific phrases, formal names (personal, company or scientific for example).</p>	<p>Used to exclude any results unintentionally returned.</p>

 [dur.ac.uk/library/research](http://dur.ac.uk/library/research)



Who's this?

Eric Hobsbawm. The biggest selling historian ever, an author who writes about the rise of industrial capitalism and nationalism.

## Evaluating sources

? **Who?** Does the author have authority, who are they being funded by, what are the author's politics, do they use evidence, is their work peer-reviewed ?

? **Why?** Why was it written?

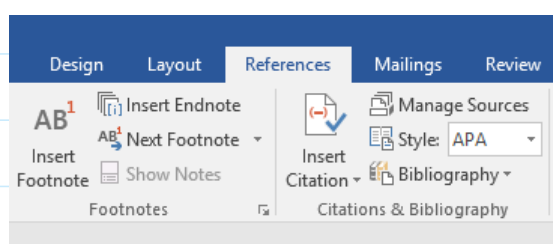
? **When?** How recently was it published, what has happened since?

? ! **And?**

Answering these questions will empower you to make a judgment as to the relevance of the source to you and field you're studying. It will also allow you to assess the implications, significance and value of the source.

- To avoid plagiarism; a form of academic theft.
  - Ensures that you give appropriate credit to the sources and authors that you have used.
  - Demonstrates that you have undertaken wide-ranging research in order to create your work.
  - Enables the reader to consult for themselves the same materials that you used.
- 💡 Make an note of everything you have looked at and keep it in one place.

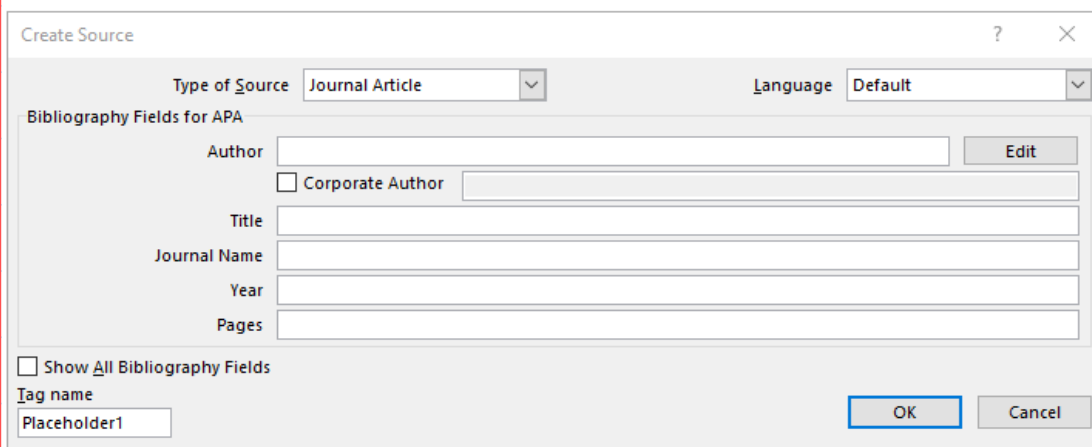
## Using Microsoft Word to Reference



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### ? Choosing a style of referencing

- APA - Social Sciences
- Chicago- History/ Business
- MLA- Humanities
- Harvard- Undergraduate, Multidisciplinary



The 'Create Source' dialog box is shown with the following fields and options:

- Type of Source: Journal Article
- Language: Default
- Bibliography Fields for APA:
  - Author: [Text Field] [Edit]
  - Corporate Author: [Text Field]
  - Title: [Text Field]
  - Journal Name: [Text Field]
  - Year: [Text Field]
  - Pages: [Text Field]
- Show All Bibliography Fields
- Tag name: Placeholder1
- Buttons: OK, Cancel

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# Helpful Links and Further Reading

06 April 2020 13:03

## Durham University sites:

 [Durham University's advice for researchers](#)

 [Durham University's information on open access sites and browser plugins](#)