Search With Purpose

Build queries, inspect results, and revise your search.

11-12.W.8.a "Use advanced searches effectively."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline both queries in paragraph 1, circle site:, filetype:, OR, and the minus sign in paragraph 2, and number three actions in paragraph 3 that improve or check the search.

A Search That Changed Course

1. When I began researching why migrating birds collide with city buildings, a search for birds and buildings gave me everything from nesting tips to architecture. I rewrote the question as two concepts: nighttime migration and artificial light. My next query, *"artificial light" "migrating birds"*, kept each phrase together. I then tried *"bird collisions" city lights* because writers might describe the same problem without using my first wording. A precise query is a starting point, not a verdict: if the results are too narrow, I change a term rather than assuming no evidence exists.

2. Next I wanted reports from public agencies, not pages selling window decals. I searched *"bird collisions" site:.gov filetype:pdf*. The site operator narrowed the search to government domains, while the file type operator requested PDF documents; neither proved that any result was reliable. For a broader scan, I tried *(migration OR birds) "city lights" -shopping*. The capitalized OR allowed either word, and the minus sign excluded pages containing shopping. Because search tools interpret operators differently, I checked the engine's help page and inspected the actual results instead of trusting the query alone.

3. Finally, I needed evidence about current building practices, so I used the search tool's date filter to look for recently published or updated pages. I opened each promising result to check its date, author, and links to supporting evidence; a recent search listing can still lead to an old document. When a report discussed bird behavior but not buildings, I added *building design* to the query. I recorded the query and filter that led to each useful source so I could repeat the search and explain why I selected it. Search settings helped me locate evidence, not judge it automatically.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. You want sources about ocean noise and whales. Write a query that keeps the words ocean noise together, as the researcher did with key phrases.

2. You need government PDF reports about pedestrian crashes near schools. Write a query using both search operators the researcher used for agency reports.

3. You want sources about either drought or flooding and their effects on crops, but not pages containing the word sale. Write a query using two operators from the broader scan.

4. Your results for lead in drinking water include older guidance. What search setting and follow-up checks from the passage would help you find and assess current guidance?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school or community research question not used on this page. Write your question and two different search queries, then write two sentences explaining how you would check the results and revise one query if needed.

Search With Purpose

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline both queries in paragraph 1, circle site:, filetype:, OR, and the minus sign in paragraph 2, and number three actions in paragraph 3 that improve or check the search. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	You want sources about ocean noise and whales. Write a query that keeps the words ocean noise together, as the researcher did with key phrases.	**"ocean noise" whales**
2	You need government PDF reports about pedestrian crashes near schools. Write a query using both search operators the researcher used for agency reports.	**"pedestrian crashes" schools site:.gov filetype:pdf**
3	You want sources about either drought or flooding and their effects on crops, but not pages containing the word sale. Write a query using two operators from the broader scan.	**(drought OR flooding) crops -sale**
4	Your results for lead in drinking water include older guidance. What search setting and follow-up checks from the passage would help you find and assess current guidance?	**Use a date filter for recently published or updated pages. Open promising results and check their dates, authors, and supporting evidence.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Question: How do rain gardens reduce stormwater runoff near schools?
Query 1: "rain gardens" "stormwater runoff" schools
Query 2: site:.gov filetype:pdf "rain gardens" runoff
I would open promising reports and check their dates, authors, and supporting evidence. If the reports focused on home gardens, I would add schoolyard to my second query.

Accept equivalent queries that use the requested operators correctly and include the needed concepts. For Part 3, look for distinct queries and a specific plan to inspect results and revise a query.