General Library Orientation

START YOUR RESEARCH AT THE CYPRESS COLLEGE LIBRARY WEBSITE

www.cypresscollege.edu/library

HOW SHOULD I SEARCH FOR ARTICLES ON MY TOPIC?

Try using the following databases to look for articles from reference sources, newspapers, magazines and scholarly journals:

- *Gale Virtual Reference Library*
    A database of encyclopedias, almanacs and specialized reference sources.

- *CQ Researcher*
    Provides in-depth, non-biased analysis on current political and social issues. Regular reports include topics in international affairs, education, the environment and much more.
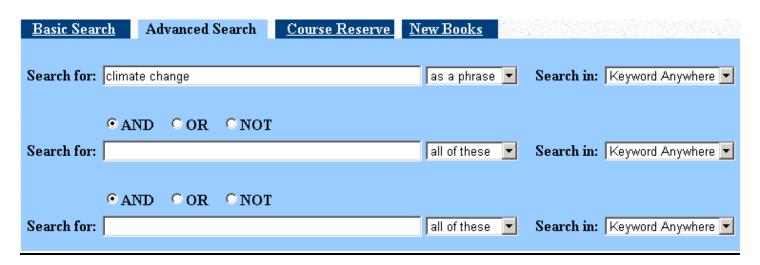
- *Opposing Viewpoints*
    Access to viewpoint articles, topic overviews, statistics, primary documents, links to web sites, and full-text magazines and newspaper articles.

- *EBSCOhost: "Academic Search Premier" and "MasterFILE Premier"*
    Provide selected full-text articles from scholarly journals, magazines, and newspapers.

HOW CAN I FIND BOOKS ON MY TOPIC?

When you first start searching for books using the library catalog, you probably won't know the author or title of any useful books. Usually, the best way to get started is to do a **"Keyword" search**. Type in whatever keywords you can think of and see what you find. Once you find a title you like, then you can focus your search by clicking the official subject heading.

IS THERE ANY WAY FOR ME TO FIND CREDIBLE WEB SITES?

The free web has a lot of great things to offer, but not all the sources found there are appropriate for academic research. How can you determine if the sources you've found are credible? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who created the site?
- Can you determine if the author is an expert in the field?
- What kind of an audience was the site created for? General adult population? Scientists? 3rd graders?
- Can you determine if there is any kind of bias expressed in the site? Is the site trying to sell you a particular point of view?
- When was the web page last revised?
- What is the date range of the materials covered in the site?
- What other resources (print & non-print) are available in this area?
- What is the relative value of the web site in comparison to the range of information resources available on this topic?

To locate relevant, credible web sites on your topic, try using one of the following subject directories:

- *ipl2:*   **http://www.ipl.org/**
- *InfoMine:*   **http://infomine.ucr.edu/**
- *Open Directory Project:*   **http://dmoz.org/**

Also, a great place to search for primary source documents published by governmental agencies is:

- *USA.gov: The U.S. Government's Official Web Portal   http://www.usa.gov*

DON'T FORGET TO CITE ANY MATERIALS YOU USE FOR YOUR PROJECT:

Helpful sources for MLA style formatting	
Title	**Location/Call Number**
MLA Handbook	Main collection: LB2369 .G53 2009
MLA Style Guide	http://www.cypresscollege.edu/ad/uploads/72//MLA.pdf
The OWL at Purdue	http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/