

*Research: Gathering and analyzing a body of information or data and **extracting new meaning** from it or **developing unique solutions** to problems or cases.*

## TQR it! – Developing a research question<sup>1</sup>

**Topic:** I am studying \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

**Question:** . . . because I want to find out who/how/why \_\_\_\_\_ ,

**Rationale:** . . .in order to understand how/why/what \_\_\_\_\_ .

### **Battle of the Alamo**

**Topic:** I am studying differences among nineteenth-century versions of the story of the Alamo...

**Question:** ...because I want to find out how politicians used stories of great events to shape public opinion,

**Rationale:** ...in order to show how politicians use elements of popular culture to advance their political goals.

## Still having trouble? Finding too much information? Too little?<sup>2</sup>

A question that is too narrow or specific may not retrieve enough information. If this happens, broaden the question.

INSTEAD OF:	Should Makah whaling rituals be permitted despite endangered species laws?
TRY:	Should <i>Native Americans</i> practice <u>religious and social customs</u> that violate <u>local and Federal</u> laws?

A question that is too broad may retrieve too much information. Here are some strategies for narrowing the scope of a question.

<b>Context/Focus</b>	
<b>Time</b>	Are you focusing on a specific period of time? Do you need to provide a historical overview of your topic?
<b>Place</b>	Does your topic connect your research to a particular region? If so, do you need to consider or address local social norms & values, economic & political systems, or languages?
<b>Population</b>	Does your topic focus on a particular population or demographic? Examples: age, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, species...
<b>Viewpoint</b>	Do you plan to approach your topic through a particular lens? Examples: legal, medical, ethical, biological, psychological, economic, political, educational...

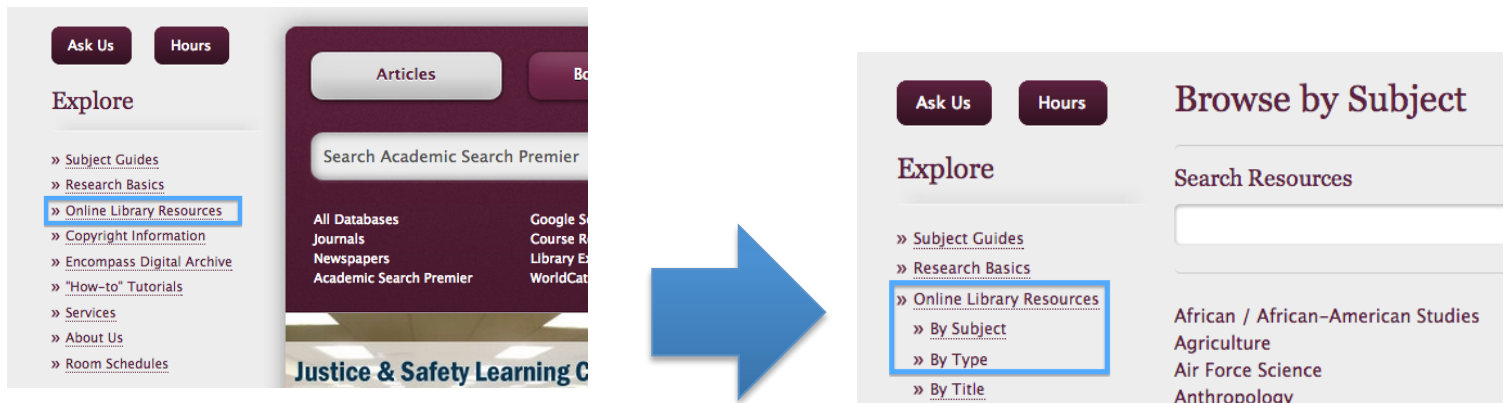
## Now what?

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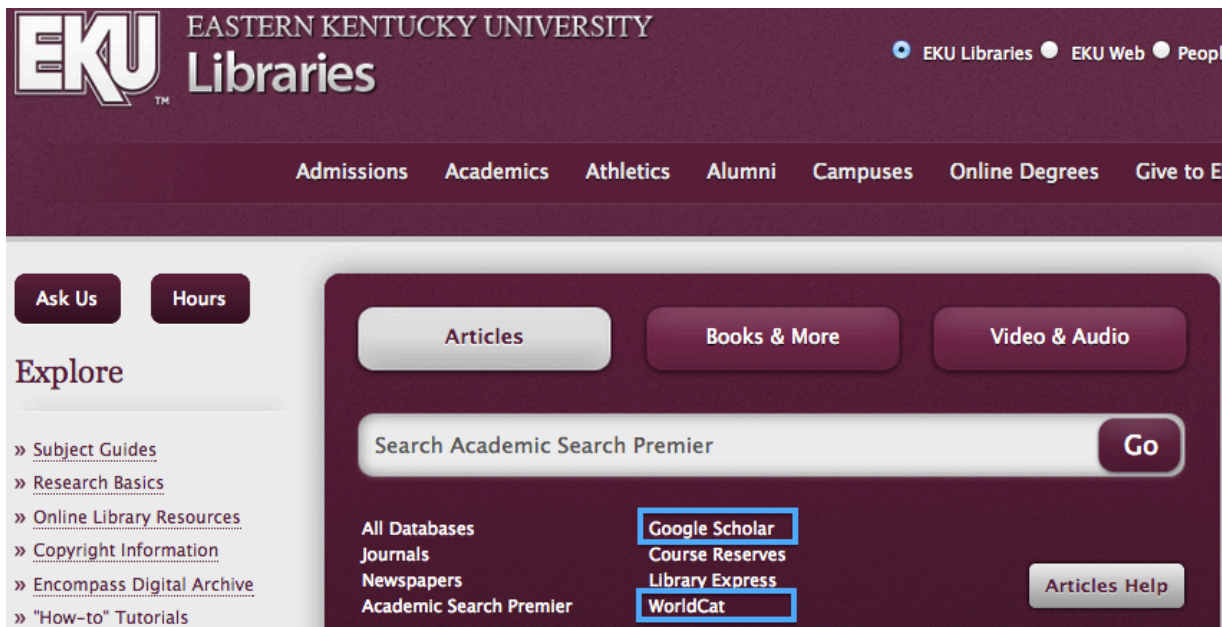
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1. Modified from Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2003). *The craft of research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2. Modified from the University of Washington Libraries – Research 101 tutorial: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/uwill/research101/>