Research Template

1. **What am I going to research?**

Find general information about your topic by using “Reference Sources.”

What are “Reference Sources?”

There are many different kinds of Reference Sources that provide different kinds of information (e.g. encyclopedias, almanacs, and dictionaries.)

*Reference Sources* are sources of information that provide an introduction to a subject area, brief factual information, definitions of unfamiliar terms, access to other relevant sources of information like books or websites, and/or a summary of issues.

**I looked at...**

- Encyclopedia Britannica Online
- The Canadian Encyclopedia Online
- A VLC Subject Guide
- Other?

**Example of topic: colonial Canada**

2. **How do I narrow my research topic?**

Create a research question.

Based on your research in #1 above, identify a specific area of this topic that you would like to learn more about.

Next, write a research question that will help you to investigate this specific topic.

**My research question...**

**Example of research question: What attitudes permitted slavery to exist in colonial Canada?**
3. **What keywords can I use to help me search?**

**Brainstorm**

Use a dictionary, a thesaurus, and/or the other “Reference Sources” above to find similar/broader/narrower words for each of the keywords in your research question.

I looked at…

- a Dictionary
- a Thesaurus
- my Reference Sources from #1 above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Keywords</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
<th>Broader Words</th>
<th>Narrower Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Canada</td>
<td>New France</td>
<td>North America</td>
<td>French Canadians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>British colonies</td>
<td>settlements</td>
<td>English Canadians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slavery</td>
<td>Serf</td>
<td>hostage</td>
<td>bondservant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Use the above words in an appropriate search engine or database to help you conduct your research.**

You will likely need to try different combinations of these keywords, including their broader, narrower, and similar words, to find the best results.