**Expanding my topic**

Before you head into unknown territory on a safari it is wise to try and find out as much as you can about where you are heading. This is often called a ***reconnaissance.*** Research is no different. Before you ‘dig deep’ into your research you should find out as much as you can about your topic. There are a number of ways you can do this.

**Brainstorming / Mindmapping**

This is where you write down as many ideas, key words and concepts as you can about the topic and group / connect similar ideas. All ideas are accepted; no ideas are seen as too crazy. In fact ‘thinking outside the box’ is highly encouraged ☺.

**Using Questions**

By making up question about your topic you are getting your brain to think about your topic in a particular way. Start with the questions below.

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? What if....?

**Harvesting**

There is a saying “*You don’t know what you don’t know*” so going exploring without a particular focus may help you find information that you would not have otherwise considered. Think about using some of the following types of information.

| **Resource** | **Results** |
| --- | --- |
| **On-line Encyclopedias**   * Search by ***Subject*** and ***Key Word*** * Check weblinks and other resources listed. |  |
| **Videos**   * Look at educational video channels * Use Tags to identify relevance of video to your topic |  |
| **Books**  Use ***Key Word*** and ***Subject*** searches in library catalogue  Use Table of Contents and Index  View images, photos, tables |  |
| **Newspapers**   * Online and traditional * Search most current articles * Use ***Archives*** for older articles |  |
| **Databases**   * Search by ***Subject*** and ***Key Word*** * Use cross-references, embedded links where relevant |  |
| **Websites**   * Select appropriate Search Engines for your search * Search by ***Subject***, ***Key Word*** or ***Boolean*** for more advanced searching * Read titles, toolbars and menus * Check links between pages and other sites |  |

**What I think I already know about my topic**

It is also good to jot down what you think you already know about your topic. When you do your research you can confirm of dispute this information.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **What I think I already know about my topic** | | |
| **Information / idea** | **Confirm (Yes I was right)** | **Dispute (No, I had the wrong idea. This is the correct information** |
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