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.

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**