

## WHERE TO BEGIN?

There are many starting places for a research process. Here are a few recommended places to begin if you're in the exploration phase:

- Identify your research topic.
- Develop your research question. Take what you want to know and turn it into a question, or questions. If this part feels forced or difficult, try talking to a friend about your research interest—this can help you discover what questions you have.
- Brainstorm keywords related to your research topic that you can try searching in OneSearch for related research.
- Conduct a literature review to learn more about your topic and what research has been done before.
- Create an outline of what you'll need to do for your research.
- Create a timeline of when you'd like to have finished or be working on each element of your research.

## FORMING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

While there are many ways to develop a research question and establish a process, we recommend using these three simple questions to help form your research question:

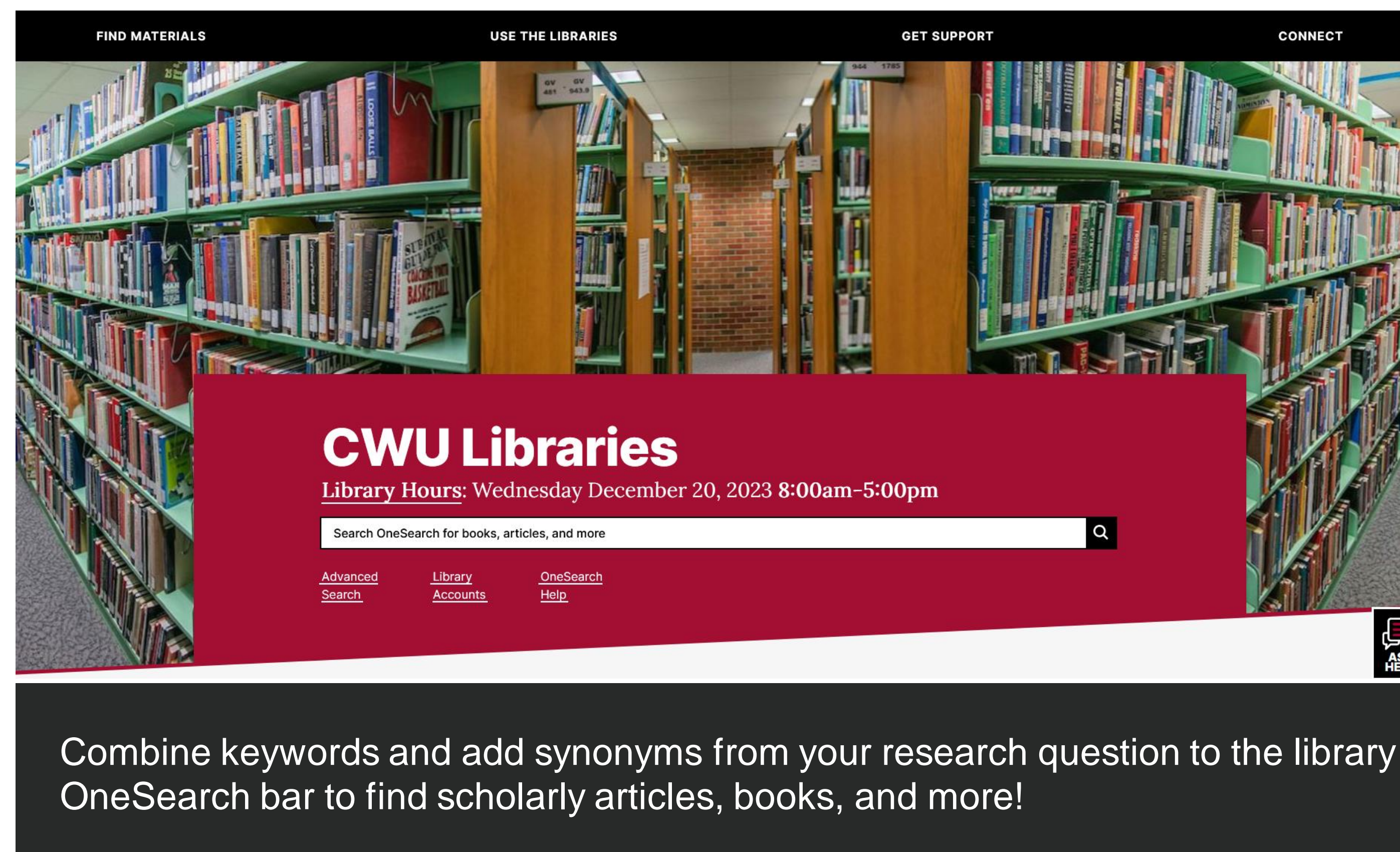
- **What am I interested in?**
- **What don't I know about it?**
- **Why do I want to know that?**

Another way to frame it is through the phrase:

I am studying \_\_\_\_\_ to find out who/how/why \_\_\_\_\_ in order to understand who/how/why \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHAT IS A LITERATURE REVIEW?

Within the context of a scholarly article, a "Literature Review" refers to the section labeled Literature Review. However, as an activity and action it refers to the preliminary research you do to help narrow and develop your research process. By discovering other articles in your research area, this information can help you develop a research plan and understand what questions we already have answers for.



Combine keywords and add synonyms from your research question to the library OneSearch bar to find scholarly articles, books, and more!

## CREATING A RESEARCH OUTLINE

- 1) Develop your research question.
- 2) Conduct a Literature Review.
- 3) Identify what information you'll need to answer your research question.
  - Will you need to gather new, original data?
  - Is there existing data that will be able to help you answer this question?
- 4) Determine how you will collect the data you need to answer the question (new or existing).
- 5) Collect your data.
- 6) Compile and interpret your results.

## TIPS FOR BETTER RESEARCH

- Add synonyms or related terms to your search terms
  - Ex: mustache, beard, stubble, facial hair, stache
- Add quotes to search for an exact phrase
  - Ex: "facial recognition"
- Use Boolean operators to combine or exclude terms
  - AND includes both search terms
  - OR provides results for both search terms individually
  - NOT excludes the word following it
- Subject Headings may be more accurate than Keywords
  - Keyword – undergrads
  - Subject Heading – college students, undergraduates

## LIBRARY RESOURCES

Schedule a research appointment  
<https://cwu.libcal.com/appointments>

Library Research Guides  
<https://libguides.lib.cwu.edu/>

Research Strategies Guide  
<https://libguides.lib.cwu.edu/ResearchStrategies>

## ARTS & HUMANITIES RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Library Research Guides:               | Library Databases:         |
| • Art + Design                         | • Academic Search Complete |
| • Film Studies                         | • Digital Theatre+         |
| • Music                                | • JSTOR                    |
| • Theatre Arts                         | • Gale Literature          |
| • Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies | • Project Muse             |

## STEM RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Library Research Guides: | Library Databases:         |
| • Biological Sciences    | • Academic Search Complete |
| • Chemistry              | • Science Direct           |
| • Computer Science       | • Science Online           |
| • Geological Sciences    | • Web of Science           |
| • Physics                |                            |
| • Psychology             |                            |

Find more resources and research help at [www.lib.cwu.edu](http://www.lib.cwu.edu)

