

Literature Review:

The bolts and nuts



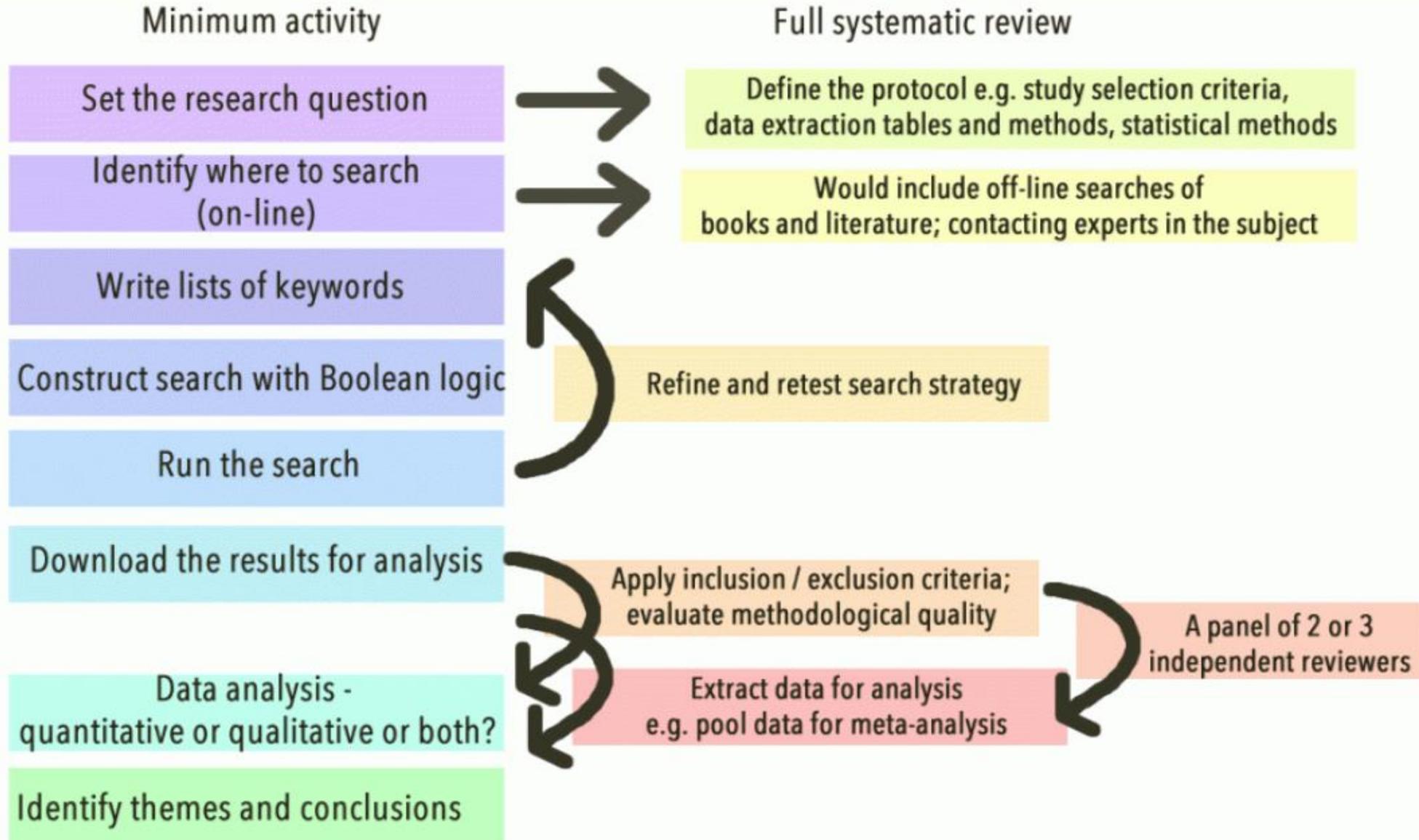
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WORKSHOP LEARNING OUTCOMES

- By the end of this workshop, you should be able to:
 - Understand the different types of literature review
 - Use advanced searching techniques
 - Create a research space for your own study in a literature review.
 - Use the literature review template to write your own review.

Systematic approaches to desk-top research



WHAT IS A LITERATURE REVIEW?

- The term “the literature” is the body of scholarly work on a particular topic.
- A literature review is a formal analysis and critique. It surveys, highlights, summarizes, synthesizes, interprets, and critiques this body of work.
- Literature reviews are a key part of proposals, research papers and reports.
- Literature reviews have strict conventions. They are even formulaic.

TYPES OF LITERATURE REVIEWS

- **Literature review** – a key part of proposals, theses, dissertations, and reports
- **Review paper** – a published article that synthesizes the work that has been done on a particular topic.
- **Mini-literature review** – an assignment that asks you to explore a restricted number of publications in answering a particular question.

TYPES OF LITERATURE REVIEW

- **a systematic review.** This synthesizes and critically assesses literature to see the way in which a particular issue is understood.
 - It might also examine how the issue is researched, how those understandings are produced.
 - Its purpose is to produce a greater understanding of the issue.
- **a state-of-the-art review.** This examines the most recent contributions to a field or area of study in the light of its history of research.
 - It particularly looks for trends, agreements, and debates.
 - This is the kind of review that editors of journals write at periodic intervals in order to position their journal and its future directions.
- **an expert review.** Rather like the state-of-the-art review, but undertaken by a senior figure in the field and heavily inflected with their own particular interests and contributions.
 - This is the kind of review that presidents of learned societies give to the assembled masses at a conference.

TYPES OF LITERATURE REVIEW

- **The scoping review.** This review sets out to create an agenda for future research.
 - It documents what is already known about a topic, and then focuses on the gaps, niches, disputes, blank and blind spots.
 - It delineates key concepts, questions and theories in order to refine the research question(s) and justify an approach to be taken.
 - Usually for doctorate or in a research bid in order to position the new research project
- The final variation is the literature review as it appears in the final humanities/social science thesis or in a journal article or book, after the research has been completed.
- **The traditional review.** This is somewhat like a scoping review, but its argument is not to create the space for a research project. It is to position a piece of research that has already been undertaken.
 - In essence the reader gets what's-already-known, plus the newly conducted piece – this research as the contribution.
 - The literature is used to locate the contribution, the what-we-now-know-that-we-didn't-before-and-why-this-is-important.
 - Some texts and themes that were in the initial scoping review are omitted, and other things are now emphasized in order to make clear the connections and continuities, similarities and differences of the new research to what's gone before.

HOW TO DISCOVER LITERATURE

- There are two crucial elements to discovering the literature for your review with the least amount of stress as possible: **the places you look** and **the words you use in your search**.
- The **places you look** depend on:
 - The stage you are in your research
 - The disciplines represented in your research question
 - The importance of currency in your research topic
- The **words you use** will help you locate existing literature on your topic, as well as topics that may be closely related to yours. There are two categories for these words:
 - Keywords – the natural language terms we think of when we discuss and read about a topic
 - Subject terms – the assigned vocabulary for a catalog or database
- Discovery is an iterative process. There is not a straight, bright line from beginning to end.

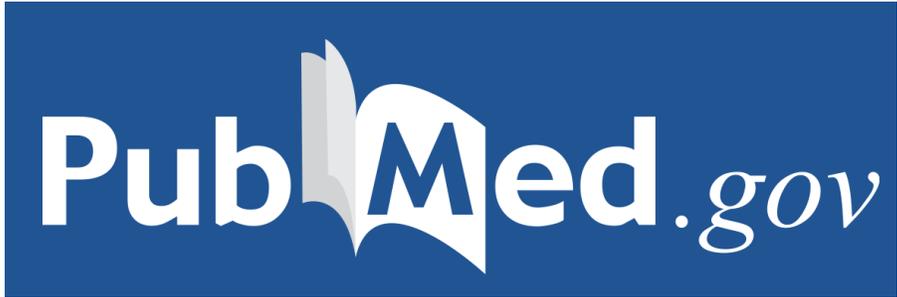
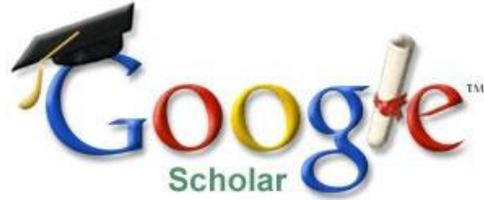
FINDING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

- **Databases:** A database is an electronic system for organizing information.
- Journal databases are where the scholarly articles are organized and indexed for searching.
- There are different types of databases that include:
 - Indexes– with citations only e.g. Web of Science.
 - Abstract databases – with citations and abstracts only IEEE explore.
 - Full text databases – with citations and the full text of articles, reports, and other materials e.g. Research gate.

FINDING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

- Why search a database instead of Google Scholar or your library catalog?
 - Both can lead you to good articles BUT:
- The content is wide-ranging but not comprehensive or as current as a database that may be updated daily.
- Google Scholar doesn't disclose its criteria for what makes the results "scholarly" and search results often vary in quality and availability.
- It doesn't give you as much control over your search as you get in a database.

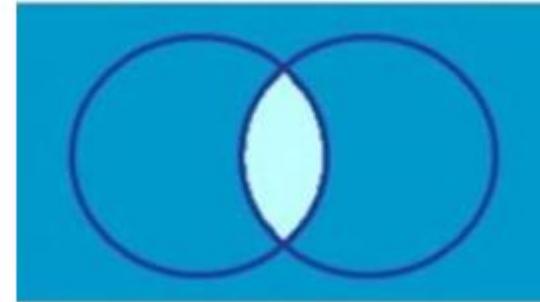
ACADEMIC DATABASES



ADVANCED SEARCHING

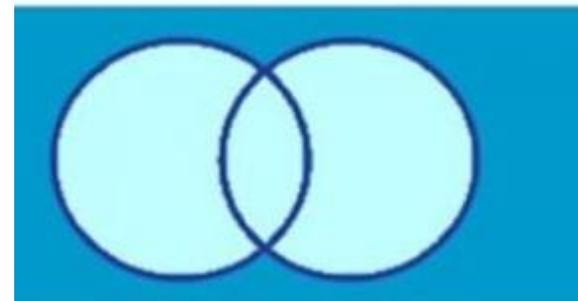
- SEARCH OPERATORS
- Literature review research often necessitates the use of Boolean operators to combine keywords.
- The operators – AND, OR, and NOT — are powerful tools for searching in a database or search engine.
- By using a combination of terms and one or more Boolean operator, you can focus your search and narrow your search results to a more specific area than a basic keyword search allows.

AND



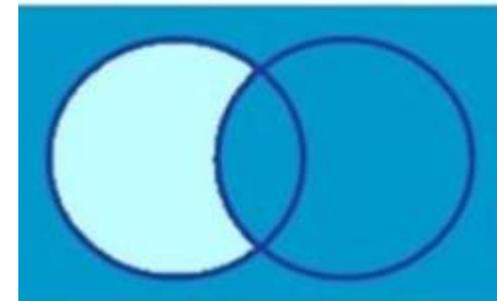
solar AND energy

OR



power OR energy

NOT



solar NOT energy

ADVANCED SEARCHING

- **Truncation** – If you use **truncation** (or wildcards), your search results will contain documents including variations of that term.
 - For example: **light*** will retrieve, of course, **light**, but also terms like: **lighting, lightning, lighters** and **lights**. Note that the truncation symbol varies depending on where you search. The most common truncation symbols are the asterisk (*) and question mark (?).
- **Phrase searching** – Phrase searching is used to make sure your search retrieves a specific concept.
 - For example “**durable wood products**” will retrieve more relevant documents than the same terms without quotation marks.

References

- <https://patthomson.net/2013/05/23/not-all-literature-reviews-are-the-same/>
- <https://press.rebus.community/literaturereviewседunursing/chapter/chapter-4-evaluating-sources/>