**IME Worksheet 2.1 Finding Search Terms**

**and Developing a Search Strategy**

Relates to **Locating Sources in an Academic Library, IME p. 36**

**Objectives**

* Discover search vocabulary related to your area of concern and research ideas.
* Develop a system for searching for and gathering sources.
* Identify overview and other secondary sources relevant to your area of concern.
* Generate new ideas and questions based on a preliminary examination of sources.

This activity guides you through the exploration stage of gathering sources for your literature review. We recommend experimenting with the process of organizing research and note taking until you find a system that works for you. It can be helpful to communicate with your peers and even your professor to learn about the tools and systems other researchers use.

**Preparatory Work**

**Briefly restate your area of concern:**

**List 1-3 individual research ideas relevant to this area of concern:**

**Using one of those ideas, devise possible search terms from its component parts.** (See ***Discovering search vocabulary*** in IME.) List those here:

**The Search**

1. **Trade literature:** 
   1. Using your search vocabulary, do an online search of 5 -10 years of issues from one or more trade publications (i.e., Teaching Music, Music Educators Journal, JazzEd, Orff Echo, Choral Journal, Instrumentalist, etc.). If possible, use your college/ university library’s journal search function.
   2. Choose 3-5 “hits” that seem to pertain to your research idea. Mark them and either save their bibliographic citations to your reference management software (i.e., *Zotero*) or email the citations to yourself.
   3. If you do not have success with those terms, think of new ones and try again.
   4. Using the “copy” function in your citation management program or copying from the email you sent to yourself, list the citations from your trade publication findings below. Skim each source and make brief notes after each citation to remind yourself about the contents and the vocabulary used by those authors. If a source is not useful, you do not need to include it in the list. (See Keeping records of your search in IME.)

**List trade literature findings and notes here:**

1. **General interest databases:**
   1. Based on your findings from the trade literature, what additional search terms might be useful?
   2. Using your revised search vocabulary, do another search for relevant sources using Google or another general interest database.
   3. Choose 3-5 “hits” that seem to pertain to your research idea. Mark them and either save their bibliographic citations to your reference management software (i.e., *Zotero*) or email the citations to yourself.
   4. If you do not have success with those terms, think of new ones and try again.
   5. Using the “copy” function in your citation management program or copying from the email you sent to yourself, list the citations from your trade publication findings below. Skim each source and make brief notes after each citation to remind yourself about the contents and the vocabulary used by those authors. If a source is not useful, you do not need to include it in the list. (See Keeping records of your search in IME.)

**List general interest database (i.e., Google) sources and notes here.**

1. **Scholarly handbooks and lexica:**
   1. Based on your findings from the general interest database, what additional search terms might be useful?
   2. Using your library’s advanced general search function, look for handbooks and scholarly reviews. Many are available as both print and e-books, often published by Routledge or Oxford.
   3. In the first line of the search function, enter your revised search terms.
   4. In the second line of the search function enter <handbook OR review OR yearbook>
   5. Choose 3-5 “hits” that seem to pertain to your research idea. Mark them and either save their bibliographic citations to your reference management software (i.e., *Zotero*) or email the citations to yourself.
   6. If you do not have success with those terms, think of new ones and try again.
   7. Using the “copy” function in your citation management program or copying from the email you sent to yourself, list the citations from your trade publication findings below. Skim each source and make brief notes after each citation to remind yourself about the contents and the vocabulary used by those authors. If a source is not useful, you do not need to include it in the list. (See Keeping records of your search in IME.)

**List scholarly handbooks and lexica sources and notes here.**

**Concluding Questions**

**Based on the searching you have completed thus far:**

1. How did your search terms change during this exercise?
2. Describe the differences between trade literature, general search databases, and scholarly overview sources.
3. What specific sources were most helpful and why?
4. How have your research ideas and questions changed following this exploration?