

Welcome to eLibrary® Canada Curriculum Edition’s Search Tips. The following tips are designed to provide you with special hints and information to optimize your searching experience on eLibrary Canada Curriculum Edition. Use these tips as a guideline when performing your searches and before you know it, you will become an eLibrary Canada Curriculum Edition expert researcher. Good luck and remember to have fun!

Tip 1: Use Multiple Search Words

When constructing a search, think of the most important concepts and terms for your search. For example, if you want to find information the key issues surrounding the modernized Indian Act, consider using alternative terms such as First Nations People, Aboriginal People or Indigenous People and government or treaty.

* For help with synonyms use the Reference Desk feature.

Tip 2: Ask a Question

Phrase your search just as you would ask a person. The system analyzes the search and weights the terms accordingly. It may be easier for you to come up with a question, than trying to analyze what keywords you are searching for.

Tip 3: Alternate Spellings and Terms

Remember that English usage differs. If you are searching non-Canadian sources remember to include alternate spellings. For example:

British	Canadian	American
Colour	Colour	Color
Theatre	Theatre	Theater
Aluminium		Aluminum

Tip 4: Phrase Searching

Enclose phrases in quotes to indicate that the words need to appear next to each other. To be found, a document must contain at least one occurrence of your phrase. Use quotes for exact phrase searches only.

Tip 5: Automatic Plurals Searching

The database will automatically search for the plural or singular version of a word. For example, if you enter doctor it will search for both doctor and doctors.



TOO FEW DOCUMENTS FOUND?

Sometimes your search comes up with unexpected results – either no documents or just a few. If you are expecting to find more information than you retrieved, try some of these tips for improving your search:

- 1. Search restrictions might be left over from previous searches:** This is the most common problem if you hit the back button. Before beginning a new search, click on the *Search* tab (Topic or Reference Tab) or ensure all boxes are cleared or reset.
- 2. Misspelled words:** If you have misspelled a word, the system will offer you alternative spellings. It will ask you “*Did you mean...?*” Click on the link provided, to retrieve those documents

- 3. The search is too specific:** Are you including too many terms in a *Boolean* search? Are you searching for “acquired immunodeficiency syndrome” instead of the more common term AIDS; UN instead of “United Nations”.
- 4. Too few source types:** Make sure that you have not limited your search to source types unnecessarily. A search in the *TV/Radio Transcripts* category will be a much more restricted search than one that includes *Newspapers* and *Magazines* as well.
- 5. Date restriction:** If you have used the date restriction, make sure you entered the dates in the correct format MM/DD/YYYY. You may also use a date restriction that is solely for the *Newspapers* category. The default allows you to look at Newspapers from approximately the last 90 days, or you can change the setting to include all Newspaper dates in your search. This option is found in the Advanced Search Features.



TOO MANY DOCUMENTS FOUND?

The system offers several tools to help narrow down and focus a search:

- 1. Relevancy:** By default, your search results are sorted by *Relevancy*. This ensures that, even with many retrieved items, the most relevant ones will be listed first in a *Natural Language Search*. Focus on the items that have a higher relevancy score.

sort by: Relevance

- 2. Choose specific sources:** Limit your search to the most likely source category. For example, if you want to know what Bill Gates said in a television interview, you might want to try limiting your search to the *Transcript* source category.
- 3. Use the Title or Publication Field:** This is an extremely effective way of improving your search results. Include search terms in the *title* field as well as the query box. This is a more restrictive search, but is a useful technique for finding a few good items on a subject.



NOTE: If you are searching by *title or by publication*, it is a good idea to include at least one search term in the main search box as well. Both of these fields also operate as stand alone search fields and will accept Boolean operators.

- 4. Boolean search:** Switch to a *Boolean* search and include additional search terms such as the “AND” operator to narrow the search. Unlike *Natural Language* searching, a *Boolean* search will find a document only if **all** the terms are present (or not) as specified. You can create fairly complex logical relationships among the search terms. The documents that you retrieve using a *Boolean* search will always be 100% relevant as they have to meet your search requirements.
- 5. Find additional search terms:** Review the most relevant items from your search and see what additional search terms you can use to focus your search. Is there a particular acronym or phrase that often appears in relevant articles? For example, articles about flu viruses often mention the word ‘immunization’ as well.

CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

eLibrary Canada Curriculum Edition

Topic:	Consider the following publications:	Sample Searches:
Mathematics	Computer Weekly, The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia	What is Boolean Logic? What is the chaos theory?
Canadian politics	Maclean's, Toronto Star, The National Post	Will the Conservatives defeat the Liberals? What is the Kyoto Protocol?
International Business & Politics	The Economist, Business Week, Fortune, Forbes Magazine, Agence France Presse, Jerusalem Post, The Independent (London), Xinhua News Agency	Will there be peace in the Middle East? Is the Euro good for Europe?
Science and Technology	Issues in Law and Medicine, Biotech Week, Maclean's	What is the medical significance of genetic cloning?
The Arts	Down Beat, The Canadian Encyclopedia, The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia	Who was Balanchine? What are the origins of jazz music?
Pictures	CanPix, Archive Photos, Index Stock Photography, Agence France Presse	Who was Louis Riel? Who was Queen Victoria? Where is Nunavut?

ProQuest Learning: Literature

Authors		
Thomas King	Yann Martel	Sinclair Ross
Gabrielle Roy	Michel Tremblay	Margaret Atwood
Franz Kafka	Gabriel Garcia Marquez	Jane Austen
Charlotte Brontë	F. Scott Fitzgerald	Mary Shelley
William Shakespeare	Tennessee Williams	Edward Albee
Genres		
African Literature	Romantic Poetry	Elizabethan Poetry
The Modern Novel	The Short Story	War in Literature
Science Fiction / Fantasy	Mystery / Thriller	Young Adult

History Study Center

Topics		
African History	American and Canadian History	British and Irish History
European History	Historical Skills and Concepts	Latin American History
The History of Asia and the Middle East	The History of Australia and New Zealand	The History of Science and Medicine
Wars and Conflicts		