Check subject guides under: Research by Subject → Canadian Literature

Background Information

Specialized encyclopedias, dictionaries and other resources are useful for obtaining background information on a topic, in addition to helping you focus your topic and identify the main concepts, terms and keywords that describe your topic. Check Reference Resources in the subject guide.

Finding Books and Journal Articles

Research tools to consider: QCAT (library catalogue), Summon, Article Indexes & Databases ....

1. Books

Search QCAT to find specific titles, authors and redefined subjects. For example:

munro alice [search by subject]

To find books on your topic in QCAT, think of the words that best describe your topic and then connect them with the Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT. My topic is to explore the relationship between nature and identity in Canadian literature.

For this topic, the concepts are: relationship, nature, identity and Canadian literature.

nature and identity and “Canadian literature”

In this case, one needs to think of alternative words that describe this topic. If you do find relevant titles, look at the subject headings assigned (LCSH) which can lead to more accurate results.

(nature or environment or landscape or wilderness) and (identity or self) and canadian and (literature or plays or poems or prose)

2. Articles

Use the following electronic journal database to find scholarly articles:

→ MLA International Bibliography
→ Literature Online (LION)

To search indexes, click the tab Databases and enter the title of the database, e.g. MLA.

alice munro AND lives of girls and women

To find out if Queen’s subscribes to the journal, click Get It! @ Queen’s if full text not readily available.

Search LION to find information about authors and criticism – also reference sources.
Search as Author: wilson ethel
Search as Criticism: ondaatje michael and running in the family

3. Summon

With Summon, you can search, discover and access information on any topic from the Queen’s Library collections - print and electronic books, single articles to entire e-journals, newspapers, theses and more. You can limit your results to peer-reviewed materials, filter by year and format, narrow by additional subject terms and then save, print or email references.

Summon is a good starting point to find material for your research but if you are doing higher level research, you will want to search relevant subject specific databases.

Search the Web

Check our Search the Web guide: library.queensu.ca/research/guide/search-web

Google Advanced Search www.google.ca/advanced_search
Google Scholar scholar.google.ca/

By searching Google Scholar through the Queen’s Library website, the "Get It! @ Queen’s" citation link is activated (which allows you to click through to the Library’s subscriptions).

Evaluate Sources

Evaluating all of your sources is a crucial step of the research process. Go to the library guide on Evaluating Sources for criteria on how to judge information sources (especially for websites).

Cite Sources

Check our Citation and Style Guides page at: How-to & Help → How to Cite Sources

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers
SEVENTH EDITION

MLA is the preferred style of documentation in English literature.
Check QCAT for print copies in the library system.

Elizabeth Gibson
Stauffer Library
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