Instructor Guide for
Search Strategy Worksheet

(SPARK >> Exploring >> Research Strategies)

NOTE: Works well when preceded by the "Combining Keywords" worksheet.

Skills Addressed
- breaking down a research question into main concepts
- selecting appropriate keywords, synonyms, and related terms for each concept
- using Boolean Operators -- AND, OR and NOT -- to build effective searches
- identifying appropriate search tools for different information needs, e.g. finding books, journal articles or statistics

Suggested Uses
☑ **Independent student use**: Ask/ suggest that students read resource on their own and decide for themselves when/ if/ how they will use resource

☑ **Instructor-led Discussion**: Devote lecture/ tutorial time to describing the resource, its purposes and uses, and/or incorporate description and use of resource into broader discussion focusing on building the skills the resource targets
- o Tip: When addressing the "Appropriate Tools for the Job" section, provide discipline-specific guidance on selecting the right search tool for resources needed. Keep in mind the Subject Research Guides (http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca), which have categorized the search tools.

☑ **Small Group Discussion/Activity**: Use to stimulate informal class/ tutorial discussion, and/or small group discussion
- o Tip: When addressing the first page of the worksheet, have students
    1. develop the research topic into a question
    2. identify main concepts
    3. identify keywords (including synonyms and related terms) and combine with Boolean OR within each concept
    4. combine different concepts with Boolean AND

Feedback / Evaluation Options
☑ **Personal reflection and/or self-assessment**

☑ **In-class exercise/ small group discussion**: Assign to students to complete for sharing and discussion in small groups

☐ **Peer Evaluation:** Assign to students to complete independently, for more formal peer evaluation

☑ **Instructor Evaluation:** Assign to students to complete independently, or as one stage of a larger assignment, and hand in for formal instructor evaluation

☑ **Tracking Completion without Evaluating:** Assign to students to complete resource independently (on an ongoing basis, or at specific, appropriate times during the course), then hand in to instructor to track completion without assigning a specific grade to any individual completed resource

Potential Customization
The "Appropriate Tools for the Job" section can be adapted to include discipline-specific resources and to draw attention to individual Subject Research Guides (http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca).