This worksheet is designed to assist you in keeping track of your research sources; it will also help you to broaden your research options, so use this worksheet as the first stage in locating references for your research project. You will be required to submit the worksheet at stated intervals, so do not discard it or separate the pages. If you change your topic, you must go through this procedure in all of its steps again. This worksheet must be submitted with the final version of the project.

I. SUBJECT ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Although encyclopedias may not be the most current sources, they are still a good place to get an overview of your topic. Select an encyclopedia from the appropriate subject guides available in the libraries, and locate the relevant articles.

You may also locate an encyclopedia by searching for [encyclopedia and (the most general description of your topic, truncated "comput?")]. Do not use brackets or parentheses.

Give the correct bibliographic citation for your source.

Is the article signed?  ____Yes  ____No

If so, who is the author?

What useful information (dates, persons, inventions, or concepts) does the article provide?

Is there a bibliography? If so, cite two potentially relevant sources.

Is your encyclopedia updated by yearbooks? Is your subject discussed in any them?
II. LOCATING BOOKS

Even the most recent developments are grounded in a past research history. For secondary materials use the subject search (or subject headings in a likely source) to find the correct search terms. List the four most relevant subject headings. Use these headings to complete an advanced search in the GMU Library Catalog.

List the four most relevant subject headings. Use these headings to complete an advanced search in the GMU Library Catalog.

Write correct citations of the four most promising book titles. Include call numbers so that you will not have to search for them again. (Important: print out your searches page by page if you use the Web version of the Library Catalog. If you use the library computers, you can mark your entries for retrieval at the end of your search.)

1.

2.

3.
Locate the books and assess their potential usefulness. Check them out now if they are especially relevant. Complete notes can be used later for the project.

III. On-Line Indexes

For this search you will use "Databases and Indexes" under "Electronic Resources" in the George Mason Library Catalog. You may use PC terminals on campus or your own PC dialing in from home to connect to the George Mason Library Catalog.

Locate four articles that seem to be the most relevant. At least two of your articles must come from sources between 1990 and 2000. Do not expect to find or to rely solely on sources available in full text. List their citations in correct format (spell out abbreviated titles):

Identify the appropriate general index (ABI Inform, Expanded ASAP, or Lexis/Nexis) and use a keyword search appropriate to your topic. List three sources in correct format:

1.

2.

3.
Select a more specialized on-line resource, e.g. Cambridge Scientific Abstracts or Public Library of Science (PLOS) (see the "Databases" link in "Electronic Resources at GMU") and repeat the search. List three references different from the ones listed above.

1. 

2. 

3. 

Using a major search engine, locate three WWW Sites relevant to your project (list both name and URL). You will be asked to assess them separately.

1. 

2. 

3. 

Are these articles available at GMU? ____Yes _____No
Are they available via an online provider? ____Yes _____No

(adapted from a Fenwick Library worksheet)