

Sociological Abstracts: A Basic How-To Use Guide

1. Start at Swem's home page: swem.wm.edu
2. Databases → Sociology → Sociological Abstracts
3. OPTIONAL: Tools → Thesaurus → English → put in keyword and click Hierarchy to find the best search terms
4. Advanced Search
 - combine each concept with AND
 - *Example: children AND poverty*
 - combine similar terms with OR and parentheses
 - *Example: children AND (poverty or poor)*
 - truncate words with *
 - *Example: child* AND (poverty or poor)*
 - use "double quotes" for phrases
 - *Example: child* AND (poverty or poor or "social conditions")*
5. Look at **descriptors** to find better, broader, and/or narrower search terms
6. Repeat the search with these better terms
7. Narrow the search by changing the fields searched to **Descriptors**
8. Mark the articles that look good
9. Click on RefWorks and/or Save/Print/Email
10. Print any that are full-text
11. For those articles not in full-text, go to Swem's Library Catalog
12. Type in the title of the journal, click BEGINS WITH, and click PERIODICAL TITLE
13. From the next screen, click on the matching title [if it's not there, ask Reference for assistance]
14. From the bibliographic screen, click the tab that lists our copies. Depending on the year, we might have the article:
 - in full-text in another database
 - shelved in the stacks under a call number
 - in the current periodicals on the 2nd floor
 - on microfilm
 - stored at our Offsite Stacks facility
 - at another library on campus or off-campus

Ask for help at the Reference Desk!

