



# What's Your Issue? Formulating a Question Before You Begin Researching



## 1. What's an Argument?

An argument has three parts: (1) the *issue*, (2) the *conclusion*, and (3) the *reasons*.

## 2. Topic & Issues

A **topic** is an idea or subject. An **issue** is what you are arguing. An issue must contain at least two topics.

The Subject/Topic	The Issue/Question
Vaccines	Do vaccines cause autism?
Hockey	Should fighting be allowed in NHL hockey?
Light Rail	What are the effects of light rail on traffic?
Therapists	Are therapists at high-risk for lawsuits?

## 3. What's Your Issue?

Write your issue in the form of a question below. Circle the nouns and identify your two primary research topics.

---

---

If you are having difficulty answering the question above, try this:

I am studying: \_\_\_\_\_  
to investigate: \_\_\_\_\_  
in order to understand: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn this paper over

## 4. Searching

Do vaccines cause autism?

- Use a separate search box for each topic
- Search for your topics in the title of the article by pulling the dropdown search to **TI Title**

Searching: [Academic Search Complete](#) | [Choose Databases](#)

EBSCOhost

vaccines    Select a Field (optional)    Search    Clear    ?

AND    autism    Select a Field (optional)

AND       Select a Field (optional)

[Basic Search](#)   [Advanced Search](#)   [Search History](#)

**Search Options**

**Search Modes and Expanders**

Search modes ?

- ☒ Boolean/Phrase
- ☐ Find all my search terms
- ☐ Find any of my search terms
- ☐ SmartText Searching [Hint](#)

**Limit your results**

Full Text ☐

Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals ☐

TX All Text

AU Author

**TI Title**

SU Subject Terms

AB Abstract or Author-Supplied Abstract

KW Author-Supplied Keywords

GE Geographic Terms

PE People

PS Reviews & Products

CO Company Entity

IC NAICS Code or Description

DN DUNS Number

TK Ticker Symbol

SO Journal Name

IS ISSN (No Dashes)

IB ISBN

AN Accession Number

## 4. Searching a Topic with Two or More Words

If a research topic is two or more words, try searching it in quotes. Examples:

“colony collapse disorder”

“substance abuse”

“of mice and men”

“edgar allen poe”

“north korea”

## 5. Synonyms

What are some other words the author of the source that you want to find might use to describe it.

Example: You are trying to find articles on *old people* and *driving accidents*. Might the author use the words: [aged] or [senior citizens] or [elderly] or [geriatric] or [traffic accidents] or [crashes].

What are some other words the author might use to describe your topics?