NARROWING TOPICS and FOCUSED QUESTIONS

**BROAD TOPICS** are generally **phrases** that describe a big idea or thing:

- Gun control
- Immigration
- Global warming
- Healthcare

**RESTRICTED TOPICS** may only be one part of the broad topic or they may link two different ideas. In the examples below, “water pollution” is a particular type of pollution; “Nutrition and pregnancy” links the broad topic of nutrition with pregnancy to focus it.

**NARROWED TOPICS** give your research more focus. In the examples below, “Pollution in San Francisco Bay” is still looking at “water pollution” – but only water pollution in a particular location. “Commercial salmon fishing” is looking at the salmon fishing industry, rather than at sport fishing.

**FOCUSED RESEARCH QUESTIONS:** As you do your research, you need to ask very specific, focused questions to find out the information for your project.

- You will usually need to ask a lot of questions – not just one or two!
- Your questions should ask for **facts**, not opinions (if your questions start with “Should”, you’re asking for an opinion!)
- Remember: **Who?**  **What?**  **When?**  **Where?**  **Why?**  **How?**
  - **Who** = People
  - **What** = Facts; Causes and effects
  - **When** = Time
  - **Where** = Place(s)
  - **Why** = Reasons, motives
  - **How** = Methods (How many, How much = Statistics, amounts)

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