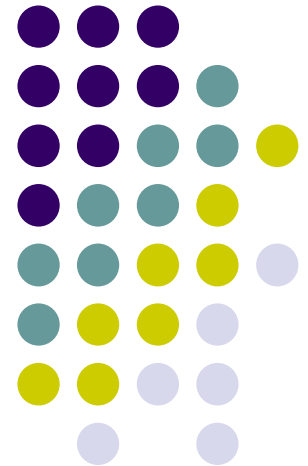
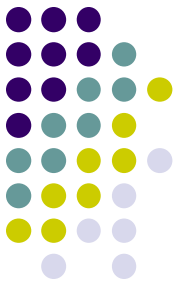


Research

Developing Research Skills



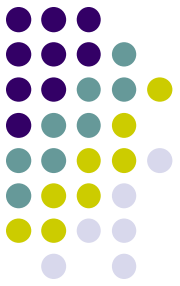


Learning Objectives

By the end of this lecture you should be able to:

- Identify a range of techniques used when searching for electronic resources
- Describe their meanings

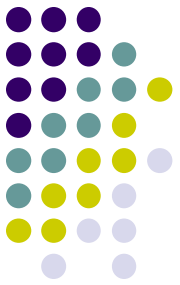
Searching for Electronic Sources



A range of techniques are used when searching for electronic resources:

- Keyword searching
- Truncation
- Wildcards
- Proximity searching
- Stop words
- Boolean logic and logic
- Date range

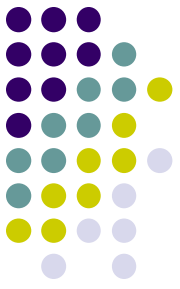
Searching for Electronic Sources



Keyword Searching

- Think beyond the key words you are searching for and include related words e.g. 'third world', 'developing countries', 'poor countries'.
- Identify the main concept and list the key words e.g. 'Consider the impact **public opinion** has on **UK government policy relating to children.**'
- If necessary use a dictionary or Thesaurus to find alternative keywords with similar meanings (synonyms).
- Try to think of broader and narrower terms e.g. key terms for public opinion may include **polls** and **voters**.

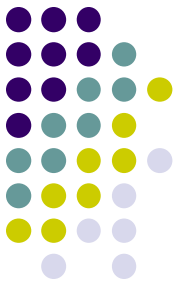
Searching for Electronic Sources



Truncation

- Reduces the number of searches.
- Different search tools use different truncation symbols.
- Example: child* - retrieves search results including child, childhood, children, childlike etc.
- One search will retrieve all relevant results, rather than separate searches.

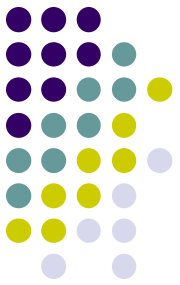
Searching for Electronic Sources



Wildcards

- Also reduces the number of searches.
- Solves problems of variations in spelling.
- Example: organi*ation – retrieves results containing organisation and organization.
- Can be used for all words with alternative spelling e.g. globalisation, behaviour, paediatric.

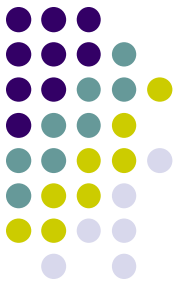
Searching for Electronic Sources



Proximity Searching

- Useful when searching for a phrase or name.
- Key words in quotation marks tells the database that these words must be found next to each other in the search results.

Searching for Electronic Sources



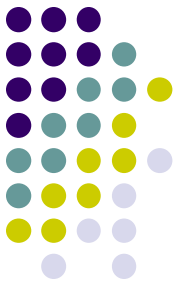
Stop Words

- Common words used in sentences or phrases which databases ignore as irrelevant when a search is entered.
- Stop words include:

a, also, although, an, are, be, do, does, done, for, from, had, has, have, I, if, in, is, of, only, that, the, this, to, was, we, were, with, you.

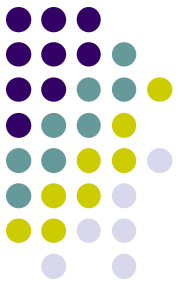
- Including these words in proximity searching provides different search results.

Searching for Electronic Sources



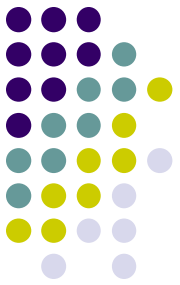
- ***Boolean Logic and Logic***
- 3 little words make a significant difference to search results – ***and, or, not.***
- They can be used to combine key words.
- Allow users to manipulate the search to make it more precise and relevant.
- Combining key words narrows the search to find the most specific results.
- Examples: child and poverty, poverty or welfare, child not adolescent
- Changing the link word between the keywords produces different search results.

Searching for Electronic Sources



Date range

- Not always possible when using the internet.
- Library databases will allow searches to be limited to a particular date range.
- Start searching the most recent information first – particularly important for when researching current issues!
- Later dates will provide a historical perspective.



Search Tips

- Think about your search strategy before you begin.
- List all the search terms you might use.
- Don't dismiss the idea of using information from other disciplines as subject areas often overlap.
- Work from the present to the past as this means when enough information has been found it will be the most recent.
- Note down all the references and where they were found.