Theme 03: Framework for planning the research

**Defending your topic**

**Task 1**

Choosing an interesting research topic was your first challenge.

It is useful to reflect on a few things:

1. The research process is more relevant if you care about your topic.
2. Narrow your topic to something manageable.
   1. If your topic is too broad, you will find too much information and not be able to focus.
   2. Background reading can help you choose and limit the scope of your topic.
3. Review the guidelines on topic selection outlined in your assignment.
4. Ask your tutors for suggestions.
5. Check the sources you have found on the subject and any old notes you have if your undergraduate degree was in a similar subject.
6. Refresh your knowledge of material.
7. Talk about research ideas with a friend.  They may be able to check the focus of your topic by discussing issues that didn't occur to you at first.

**Task 2**

**Think of the who, what, when, where and why questions in reference to your current topic. Make notes on your answers to these questions:**

* 1. **WHY** did you choose the topic?  What interests you about it?  Do you have an opinion about the issues involved?

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* 1. **WHO** are the information providers on this topic?  Who might publish information about it?  Who is affected by the topic?  Do you know of organisations or institutions affiliated with the topic?

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* 1. **WHAT** are the major questions for this topic?  Is there a debate about the topic?  Are there a range of issues and viewpoints to consider?

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* 1. **WHERE** is your topic important: at the local, national or international level?  Are there specific places affected by the topic?

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* 1. **WHEN** is/was your topic important?  Is it a current event or an historical issue?  Do you want to compare your topic by time periods?

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**Now I want you to try out tip 5: discuss with a friend.**

Pair up with someone else in the class and talk through the answers to your why, who, what, where, and when questions. Listen to their answers to their questions. Do you have anything you can suggest or add to their ideas?

Carry out this process with ***at least two other students*** before continuing your search for sources.

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| Module Learning Outcomes Covered | Academic Literacies Covered |
| ML1 | AL4 |
| Choose an item. | AL5 |
| Choose an item. | AL7 |