Thinking Tool: Choosing a Topic and Search Terms

1. What is your assignment?
   How long is your paper? How many sources do you need? What kind?

2. What do you want to write about?
   This doesn’t have to be your final choice of topic. It’s a place to start.

3. Concept Cloud
   Write down anything related to your main idea. Anything! Everything! (Use Wikipedia for help here).

   Synonyms?
   Words experts use?

   People?
   Kinds of people?

   Places?
   Dates?

4. Keywords:
   Choose a few groups of words that might go together.

5. Your search terms:
   2-4 keywords.

   Remember: Add or subtract keywords to get different results. Pick different ones! Start with a new main idea!