

ENG 102 "The Working Poor": How to Refine Your Topic

The guide will provide an access point for resources related to the topics in David Shipler's "The Working Poor."

- Home
 - 1. Choosing a Topic
 - 2. Keywords
 - 3. Databases and Journals
 - 4. Websites
 - 5. Books
 - 6. Citation & Writing Resources
 - Evaluate Sources
- Research Hacks

Is Your Topic Too Broad

If your topic is too **BROAD**, you will find too much information addressing many aspects of your topic. Consider narrowing it:

Time Period	20th Century, Renaissance, 1980's
Location	United States, Illinois, Will County, Midwest, North America
Population	age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic group, occupation, economic class
Event or Aspect	government programs related to poverty, Fair Labor Standards Act
Person or Group	college students, mothers, veterans, households

Broad: race and poverty

Narrower: How has the poverty class of the African-American household in Chicago changed since the development of federal welfare programs?

Is Your Topic Too Narrow?

If you are finding too little information, your topic may be too **NARROW**. Try broadening it:

Generalize	Generalize your topic. If your topic is the effects of predatory lending in the Joliet community, broaden your topic to all Illinois communities or the United States.
Currency	If your topic is very current, there may not be books or journal articles available yet. Choose an alternative topic that is not so recent.
Synonyms	Use a thesaurus to find synonyms for your keywords. When reading background information in reference sources , note the terminology that is used.
Related	Explore related issues.
Expand / Remove	Expand or remove: location, time period, aspect, event, population, person/group.

Narrow: How has the poverty class of the African-American household in Chicago changed since the development of federal welfare programs?

Broader: Change *Chicago* to *Illinois* or *United States* OR remove *African-American households* to search for the effects of welfare programs on *all* households.