Summing it up Worksheet

In this assignment, you will take a chosen topic, develop a search, and use different resources (the Internet, Wikipedia, Academic Search Premier, and a book) to find information about the chosen topic. You will also evaluate each resource that you used.

Choose one (1) of the following topics:
1. Health care reform (healthcare reform)
2. Debt management

Which topic did you choose? ___________________________________________________________

DEVELOPING A SEARCH STRATEGY

- Health care reform and debt management are broad topics. What are some related terms or other subjects that could help you narrow a search (obtain more precise results) with your chosen topic?

  For example, you may want to narrow down health care reform to look at the uninsured (healthcare reform and uninsured) or narrow down debt management to look at college students (debt management and college students).

Brainstorming: Use the diagrams below to list related terms or other subjects to combine with your chosen topic. Do these terms have synonyms (words with the same meaning)?

[Diagram of brainstorming process]

Now, choose one of your related terms or subjects that you brainstormed above. Combine the brainstormed term with your chosen topic (health care reform or debt management) to “build” your search. Use “AND” to separate your topic from the related term or subject.

NOTE: Adding AND to a database search will narrow a broad search. All of the listed topics and/or subjects will appear in each of the search results.

Your search is for:

_________________________________ AND __________________________

Either health care reform OR debt management one of the related terms or subjects brainstormed

REMEMBER: This is the search you will use to find results using various resources.
SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION AND EVALUATING THE RESULTS

For the rest of this assignment, you will be using the search you created with your chose

Internet
Use Google (http://www.google.com) to search for information.

1. What did you type in the search box?
   ______________________________________________________________

2. How many results did you get? ________________________________

3. Look at the first ten results. Look at the web addresses. How many are .com sites? _________________

4. Pick one of the websites from the first ten results. What is the name of the chosen website?
   ________________________________

5. Evaluate this website:
   a. Who is the author or publisher of the website and what are his/her credentials? (If there is not an author or publisher, put N/A):
      ______________________________________________________________
   b. When was this website published or last updated? (if you cannot find a date, use N/A): ________________________________
   c. What is the goal or purpose of the website?
      ______________________________________________________________
   d. Does this website appear biased or have a hidden agenda? (NOTE: a warning sign can be emotional or charged language): _____________
   e. What kind of audience is this website meant for? (i.e., general public, academic audience, children, etc.):
      ______________________________________________________________
   f. Does the website substantiate any claims with references or evidence?
      ________________________________
   g. Would you use this website for research purposes? _____________
      Why or why not?
      ______________________________________________________________
Wikipedia
Use Wikipedia (http://www.wikipedia.org) to search for information.

1. What did you type in the search box? (HINT: Wikipedia does not use AND or OR as operators).

2. How many results did you get?

3. Click on an article from the results list. What is the title of the article?

4. View the beginning of the article. Do you see a cleanup banner?

NOTE: A banner indicates that there may be some problems with the article.
Example of a banner:

5. Click the VIEW HISTORY tab found near the top right of the page. When was this article last revised?

6. Scroll down the VIEW HISTORY section. Do you think that this article has had extensive revisions?

7. Click the READ tab to return to the article. Skim through the article. Is the article written in an organized way?

8. Are important facts referenced?

9. Does the information seem complete and balanced or… biased and one-sided?

10. Since anyone can publish to Wikipedia, many teachers will not allow Wikipedia articles to be used for research. But, do you think that the article could be useful for an overview of the topic?

Why or why not?
Database
Search Academic Search Premier, an EBSCOhost database to search for information.

1. What did you type in the search box? ________________________________

2. How many results did you get? ________________________________

3. Narrow down your search further. Limit your results to full text articles published in the last ten years. How many results did you get? ________________________________

4. Narrow down your results even further. Limit your current results to scholarly (peer reviewed) journals. (NOTE: You will be searching for articles from full-text, scholarly journals published in the last ten years). How many results did you get? ____________

5. View one of these articles:
   a. What is the title of the article? ________________________________
   b. Who is the author(s)? (If there is not an author or publisher, put N/A): ________________________________
   c. What is the name of the journal that contains the article? (this is the source): ________________________________
   d. When was the journal containing the article published? ____________
   e. What kind of audience is this article meant for? (i.e., general public, academic audience, children, etc.): ________________________________
   f. Are there references? ________________________________

6. Could this article be used for research purposes? Why or why not? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
Book
Use the Sullivan University Library Catalog to search for a book (also known as a monograph) on your chosen topic.

NOTE: You may need to broaden your search so do not use the related terms or subjects. Use either health care reform or debt.

If you are not finding anything, you may consider the use of synonyms in the search.

1. What did you type in the search box?

2. How many results did you retrieve?

NOTE: If you retrieved at least 5 results, go to question 3. If you retrieved less than 5 results, follow these directions:
Click on a title from the results list. At the next screen, look to the right side of the page under related searches. Click on one of the subjects listed (this will broaden your search further). A new screen will open. Click on the subject to open a new results list.

How many results did you retrieve?

If you retrieved at least 5 results, go to question 3.

3. View the listing of titles. Select a title (make sure that it is a book).
   a. What is the title of the book?
   b. Who is the author(s)? (If there is not an author or publisher, put N/A):
   c. When was the book published?
   d. At which campus(es) can this book be found? (NOTE: This can include the Virtual Library):
   e. What is the status of the book (item). Is it available, overdue, non-circulating, etc.?

4. Could this book be used for research purposes?
   Why or why not?