Proposal Memo Assignment

In a few sentences, present your research question and the context for it. Why does this question need to be answered? How did this gap in the knowledge emerge? How long has this topic been studied? What do you know (or not know) about researchers’ attempts to answer this question? You might not know the answers to all of these questions right now.

Identify 15-20 possible keywords you could use to research. These keywords are usually parts of the question, other names or synonyms for the topics involved, and categories the question might fit into.

On the BYU library homepage, search for your topic in the main search bar. How many results does this search yield? What types of sources are you finding? In the first 10 results (if you got that many), how many might actually be worth reading to answer your research question? What are they?

The library provides better ways to conduct research than a generic search bar. From the homepage, click on the “Research Guides” button and scan through the list of “Subject Guides” to find any that might cover your topic. Which subject guides might help you narrow your research? Who are the subject librarians in charge of the subject guides?

Pick the most relevant subject guide for the next few tasks. Identify the top 3 recommended databases or indexes for finding journal articles.

Identify 3 journals that might publish research on your topic.

Pick one database or index and try searching for your topic there. How many results does this search yield? What types of sources are you finding? In the first 10 results, how many might actually be worth reading to answer your research question?