### Boolean Worksheet: A Medline/PubMed Search

#### Step 1: Choose **databases** that suit your research question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Search</th>
<th>Your Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample Research Question:</strong> What is the evidence for using music therapy as an intervention to decrease patients’ preoperative anxiety.</td>
<td><strong>Your Research Question:</strong> ________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommended Databases:**
- [ ] CINAHLPlus
- [ ] Medline (via PubMed or Ovid)
- [ ] PsycINFO
- [ ] Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- [ ] JBI (Joanna Briggs Institute) EBP Database
- [ ] Scopus
- [ ] Web of Science
- [ ] Embase
- [ ] ProQuest Central
- [ ] Dissertations and Theses Global
- [ ] Other _________________________________

For the sample search, we will start in PubMed

#### Step 2: Perform a **simple keyword search**

Identify **keywords** that describe the important concepts in your research question. (For a PICO question, select keywords that describe your patient, problem or population and your chosen intervention)

**Sample Keywords:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1 (Patient or Problem or Population)</th>
<th>Concept 2 (Intervention)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preoperative patient</td>
<td>music therapy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Connecting keywords with **AND** in the database search retrieves article citations that contain **both** terms.

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For the sample search, we will start in PubMed.
Step 3: **Expand** your search with MeSH terms and other synonyms

From the initial search results, retrieve alternate terms/synonyms/MeSH subject terms for one or both concepts.

Combining these terms with **OR** expands the search to find citations with **ANY** of the added terms. **(Remember – OR retrieves MORE!)

Sample Synonyms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preoperative</td>
<td>music therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peroperative</td>
<td>“acoustic stimulation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surgical</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>procedures,</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operative</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A larger OR’d set of MeSH/keywords/synonyms may be recombined with **AND** to narrow the search.

![Diagram showing OR and AND combinations]

**TIP:** Remember to nest OR’d synonyms with **parentheses** in your database search – e.g. **(preoperative OR peroperative OR surgical procedures, operative)**

Step 4: **Add limits** to your results

Most databases allow you to add “limits” or “filters” that restrict search results by criteria such as type of study, type of article, date, time factors, age group, etc.

In your search, look for database ‘filters’, limits’ or ‘refinements’ to narrow your search.

You may want to consider how you can apply the following filters to best suit your research needs:

- **Article Type:** ________________
- **Date:** ________________
- **Language:** ________________
- **Age Group***: ________________

*Pro Tip: If you are looking for articles about a particular age group of patients, **DO NOT** include terms like ‘pediatric’ or ‘elderly’ in your search. **DO** use the standard **age group** filter that is available in many databases.

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