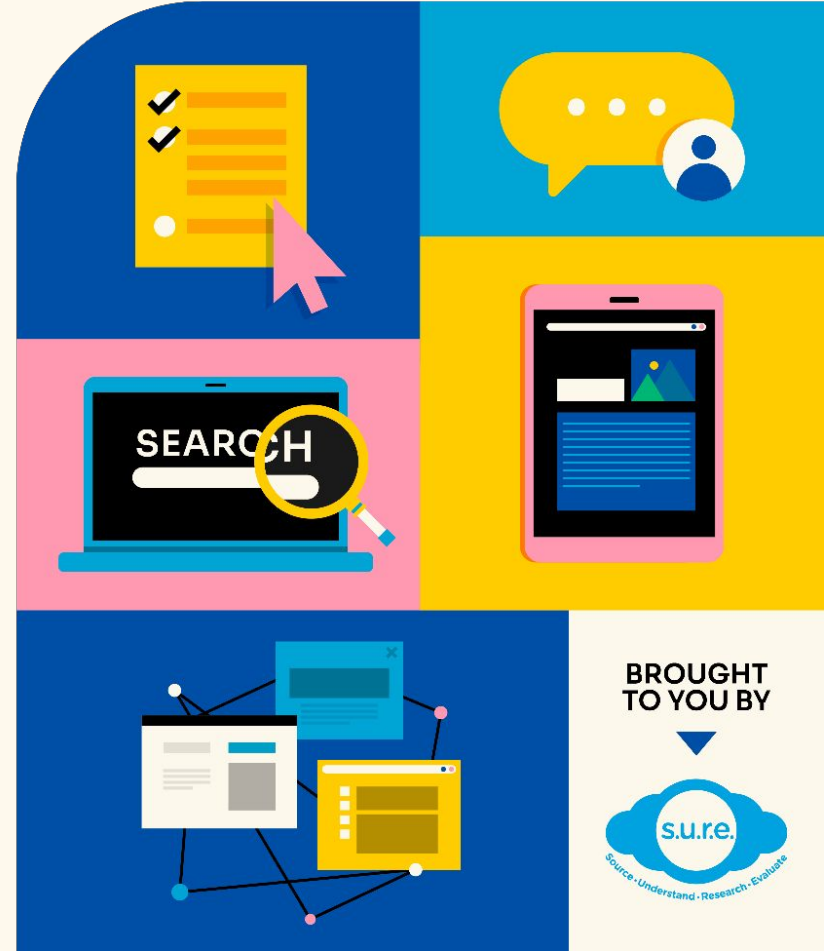# Research

In this topic, you will:

➜ Learn how to collate relevant information by picking the right keywords and platform

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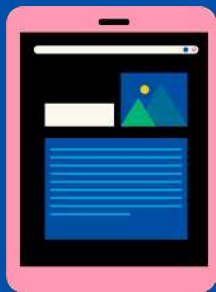
GOT IT!

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Finding the right keywords and platform

Starting your research

How search engines work

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When we do research, we want to make sure that we have a **detailed, nuanced, and well-rounded** understanding of our research topic.

In order to achieve this, we'll need to account for biases and gaps in our potential sources. We can do this by using a variety of keywords and channels.

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Definition

Before you start your search, you'll need to decide what keywords to use.

Keyword
Term that defines the scope of the research topic

- Keywords are formulated in reference to the kinds of answers you hope to find.

- For instance, you would include words like "statistics" or "data" if you are looking for numerical figures.

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Depending on the type of information you are looking for, you can choose which channel to use for your research.

Search engines will bring us to the most popular results on the Internet. This means that we can get a good overview of a situation but might not get a very detailed or nuanced understanding of it.

Images: Google, Yahoo, The Straits Times, Channel News Asia, Daniel Food Diary, MoneySmart

Newspapers and **media outlets** can give you access to current affairs and fact-checked information from official sources.

Blogs can help us tap into the opinions that others are sharing on the Internet.

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Information from **archives** and **academic journals** can give you analysis and insights from experts, such as historians and researchers.
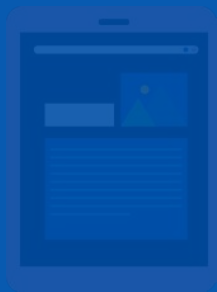
Images: National Archives of Singapore, Jstor, Instagram, Tiktok, Youtube

Video platforms and **social media** can contain useful contemporary information like interviews and first-hand accounts.

Remember that sources have biases!
Always keep in mind the author's or organisation's potential intent when reviewing information.

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Finding the right keywords and platform

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To start your research, you will first need a research question.

From there, you can then identify the keywords and platforms you will like to use in your search.

Case study:

RESEARCHING PERANAKAN HISTORY

Image:Flickr

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Image: <u>Wikimedia Commons</u>

Let's say we want to know the history behind the Peranakan people and what their culture is like.

→ We start by formulating a research question: "What is the history of the Peranakan community in Southeast Asia?"

→ Using the research question, we can then start thinking about the keywords we will like to use.

Image: Wikimedia Commons

Think of related words or synonyms based on the research question...

NYONYA HERITAGE

CULTURE BABA FOOD

... as well as what kind of information we'd like to find:

NEWSPAPERS INTERVIEWS

DIARIES MAPS ARTEFACTS

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We can also use a range of platforms in our search.

Archives store historical information.

They can provide access to primary sources of information on the Peranakan community.

Academic databases contain book titles and research articles written by experts of Peranakan history.
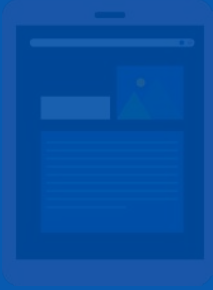
They usually contain useful insights which are derived through critical analysis.

Newspapers may publish news and commentary on the Peranakan community, making them a good place to try to get a contemporary understanding of your subject.

Video streaming sites and social media allow you to collect multimedia information, such as documentary videos and photographs, on Peranakan history.

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Finding the right keywords and platform

Starting your research

How search engines work

With these keywords and platforms in mind, most of us will start the search from a search engine.

However, do search engines always give us the most relevant and useful information?

Case study:
ONLINE SEARCH ENGINES

Image: Unsplash

Search engines give us a good gauge of the information that's available on a topic.

➜ However, it is important to note that for search engines, sources that come up at the top might not always offer us the best answers.

➜ This is because search engines primarily rank results on popularity.

▶ **Watch this video to learn more about how search engines work.**

Image: Unsplash

Site overview

Past 28 days

Page views
824 👁
↗ 91%

Avg. page view duration
2m 34s ⏱
↗ 52%

Your new content
From the past 28 days, it can take about an hour for content to show

→ This can be an issue as well-researched sources might not always be the most popular.

→ Sensational or entertaining information can garner more interest and traffic.

→ Sources can become popular too because companies promote them through advertisements. Popular sources might also not be the most updated.

Is Peranakan from Singapore?

Contrary to popular belief, Peranakans aren't just people of mixed Malay and Chinese ancestry. In reality, **they refer to ethnic groups that descended from the migrants who came to the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Penang and Malacca, and intermarried with the Malay locals**.

https://www.jetstar.com › sg-peranakan-culture-places-to-go

5 ways to experience Singapore's Peranakan Culture | Jetstar

Image: Pexels

➔ For example, this Jetstar article appears at the top when you do an online search about Singapore's Peranakan culture, which makes it seem like the most accurate result.

➔ However, it is important to note that the article is written by an airline company to encourage tourists to travel to Singapore.

➔ We thus have to be mindful of the sources we encounter and check the purpose of the information presented.

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https://www.roots.gov.sg › stories › story

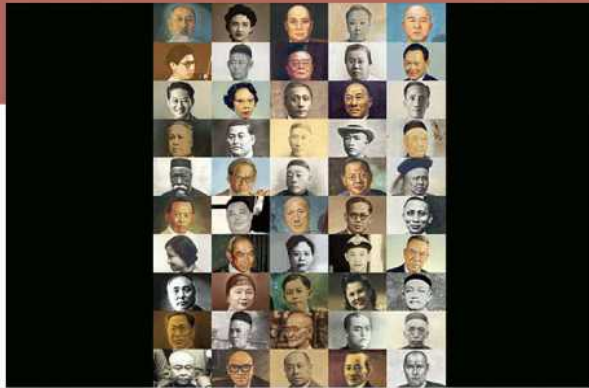Great Peranakans - Fifty Remarkable Lives - Roots.sg

15 Dec 2021 — The Malay word "**Peranakan**" commonly refers to the creolized Chinese who lived in Southeast Asia. The community gained a reputation with its ...

➔ On the other hand, the search results also directs us to Roots, a National Heritage Board-run website dedicated to making historical knowledge accessible to the public.

➔ As the information is curated and vetted by experts, this would be a more credible source to use for research.

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Utilising a range of different platforms and keywords will help us find the information we need to answer our questions.

By using the relevant platforms and keywords, we can broaden the knowledge we gain from our research.

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It's your turn!

1. Name a topic you want to learn more information about.

2. Come up with 10–15 keywords that can support your search.

3. Conduct research on at least 3 different platforms we've covered.

Where was the most relevant piece of information taken from?

Why do you think it is the most relevant?

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There's more!

Move on to the next topic **EVALUATE** to find out how you can effectively assess, critique, and use the information you've gathered.

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