

## Transcript: Basic bibliographic search on SOLO using special characters

Hello and welcome to this introductory video of iSkills: Finding stuff: Scholarly literature for your research.

In this session we're going to explore the best tools to choose from when you are looking for available bibliography for your research, creating an effective search query by developing effective search strategies and working with your results.

Before we dive into the session, just a quick overview of some of the tools that we will be looking at.

SOLO is the first tool. This covers the holdings of most Oxford libraries and both physical items such as printed books, audiovisual materials and theses and electronic books, journals and databases. SOLO is really excellent for finding specific items such as from a reading list or bibliography. It is also a really good source for subject searching for books. However, it is limited to materials held in Oxford libraries. In addition, although it is good for searching for books by subject, it is more limited when it comes to searching for journal articles, conference papers and theses.

The second sources are Databases A-Z, and also e-Journals A-Z. All the databases and e-journals from Databases A-Z are also on SOLO, but as you will see later in Databases A-Z, you can browse lists of databases by subject, which you can't do on SOLO.

The third source is really a group of sources and that is 'bibliographic databases'. These are fantastic, because they search across the scholarly literature, not just materials in Oxford. They are particularly good for searching for journal articles, conference papers and theses. As you'll see later in the session, you can use Databases A-Z to find out which bibliographic databases serve your subject. When you're using bibliographic databases, you will generally only get brief details of each item. For example, you might see the author, title, publication details and abstract. However, nearly all bibliographic databases have a 'Find it @ Oxford' button which will take you to the full text article. You therefore use the bibliographic databases to compile a list of the

things you want to read and then 'Find it @ Oxford' to get to the full text of each item. If this seems a bit confusing, don't worry. We'll be covering this again as we go through the session. Shortcuts to the collections of e-journals A-Z and databases A-Z can be found on SOLO's initial page under the useful links tab.

Notice that we are prompted to sign in. This is a very good idea as it ensures you are seeing all the results Oxford has access to. Some publishers do not let us display their journal articles in SOLO's results unless the user is actually signed in.

Now that we have signed in, we can browse the main SOLO interface. The new SOLO interface has a minimalistic design in order to facilitate navigation. You can find the old search tabs, 'Search Everything', 'Oxford Collections' and 'Articles' via a drop down menu. Additionally, your search can be further refined by the same drop down menu.

Let's navigate to the main three search tabs.

'Search Everything' is a combination of 'Oxford Collections' and 'Articles'.

'Oxford collections', on the other hand, is a perfect choice when we would like to find results of books, e-books, journal titles, etc.

Finally, selecting the 'Articles' menu sorts our results by article titles, a good choice when we know an article title and would like to find whether this the article is linked onto SOLO (available online). However, note that when our search in articles menu returns no results, it is best to look up for a journal article or 'Search Everything', or 'Oxford Collections'.

Having navigated through some basic options of SOLO's drop down menu, we can begin with a simple search. The basic principles of this search can further be applied on articles, journal titles, etc. We can keep our search very basic: keywords such as title and author can narrow down your results. As noted previously, use of the drop down menu will give you more targeted results such as articles, books or both.

For the purposes of our search, we'll use a prolific writer, Aristotle, and a researcher who wrote about Aristotle's work, Sir William David Ross. We will keep our search simple, for example, by using only two keywords, Aristotle and Ross. [Typing on SOLO the keywords Aristotle, Ross].

When we are searching for books, notice that if we select the 'Search Everything' option from the drop down menu, this will include all articles, peer reviews, books, etc., that refer to those two keywords.

[Selecting the 'Oxford Collections' option from the drop down menu]. If, on the other hand, we select the second option 'Oxford Collections', our results will be filtered solely to books and, our keywords will come up in the top ten list of our search.

When we are looking for articles on the other hand, usually a basic search on the default 'Search Everything' option will show you the result you want somewhere near the top of your results.

[Typing Furedi, Moral panic and reading on SOLO]. If this does not work, then try a focussed article search using the article title or try looking up the journal in the 'Oxford Collections' option using the journal title. An example is the article 'Moral Panic and Reading: early elite anxieties about the media effect' by Furedi Frank, that was published in the journal 'Cultural Sociology'. [Typing Cultural Sociology on SOLO.]

If we want to refine our search further, for example, by limiting our results specifically to work's title as Aristotle, we include special characters in our search. The most suitable in this case would be the double quotation marks. Other special characters that we can use are the question mark, which is the equivalent of a wildcard and replaces a single character, the asterisk which is the equivalent of the truncation and replaces multiple characters. Using special characters such as truncating a word to find synonyms and replacing a single character at the current position with a wildcard can be really useful, especially if we are uncertain about the title or if our search terms are singular or plural.

Other ways to enrich our search are by using Boolean operators. Boolean operators are simple words (AND, OR, NOT) used as conjunctions to combine or exclude keywords in the search resulting in more focussed and productive results. This should save time and effort by eliminating inappropriate hits that must be reviewed before ignoring. If you link terms with AND, they must all be present [types Aristotle AND Ethics on SOLO]. For example, Aristotle and Ethics will find records containing both e.g., Aristotle's works on ethics. Adding further terms using AND makes your search narrower as more terms must be present.

[Types Aristotle and Aristotelian on SOLO]. If you link terms with OR, records containing any of the terms will be found; e.g. Aristotle or

Aristotelian will find records containing either Aristotle, OR Aristotelian OR both. Adding further terms linked with OR makes your search wider. Using OR is one way to search for synonyms and also for singular or plural forms, etc.

Using NOT in your search will exclude a term. For example, if we use the term child\* and if we truncate the suffix and we link it with NOT childish, this would find records containing child, children, childhood, but it will exclude childish. NOT is another way of making your search more precise [types Aristotle AND Ethics NOT Nicomachean]. In our example, using the terms Aristotle AND Ethics, NOT Nicomachean, our results will include most of the Ethics works of Aristotle that are available in our collections, but they will exclude any works related to 'Nicomachean Ethics'.

To conclude: AND combines both search terms together, OR includes any of the search terms, whereas NOT excludes one of the terms.

SOLO has integrated the terms AND, OR, NOT in its Advanced Search feature and they can be selected from there. Additionally, the Advanced Search menu includes more options, such as sorting results by resource type, language, or publication date.

Thank you for attending this online tutorial. The next part of this workshop is dedicated to creating an effective search query. More guidance about SOLO can be found on LibGuides.