Brainstorming

1. A sudden bright idea; 2. a harebrained idea
Before you begin your research, write out a few detailed sentences about your topic. Underline the main words in these sentences.

From the description that you wrote, create a list of related keywords and phrases.
Once you have an initial list, think of other terms that also describe your topic.

Write down any ideas you have, even the ones that seem harebrained; sometimes they end up being the most helpful.

You should also identify words that have broader or narrower meanings than your original terms.
Come up with synonyms - other words or phrases that have the same meaning - for your terms. Don't forget to list alternative spellings, abbreviations, and acronyms for words on your list.
For example, consider using broader and narrower terms for “undergraduate.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broader term</th>
<th>University student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original term</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrower term</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brainstorming helps you choose good search terms before you begin.
For example, look at some keywords and phrases for this research paper topic:
Installing Internet filtering in libraries is censorship.

Keywords:
• Internet
• Libraries
• Censorship
• filtering/filters
• Software
• Web

Phrases:
• filtering software
• freedom of speech
• Internet filtering
• freedom of information
Now it's your turn. We'll give you a sample topic so you can practice brainstorming for good keywords and phrases.
Now, list all the main ideas related to the research paper topic below:

• *Studies of Internet users have concluded that spending too much time online can adversely affect a person's psychological well-being. Some surveys found long hours on the Internet can lead to depression and loneliness.*
Here's our complete list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>studies</th>
<th>well-being</th>
<th>effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>study</td>
<td>addiction</td>
<td>depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internet</td>
<td>surveys</td>
<td>loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>users</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For any topic you choose, the Thought Process will help you focus your research and select appropriate search terms.

Once you have determined the keywords and phrases for your topic, where are you going to search?
You need to think about SCOPE.