Let’s say you want to do some research on literacy programmes in primary schools and you want to search across all of our collections and some open access sources.

In MIESearch you can search using terms like literacy, interventions, and primary school, leaving out the connecting words.

It’s important to know that when you put in several keywords, the database will search for all of your keywords and put them in order of priority.

You can see the number of results at the top.

If you want to expand your search, you can use synonyms or related words like reading.

An OR in between the related words will tell the database that you’re happy to see results for either literacy OR reading.

Notice that your results have multiplied by over 300%!

If you want to narrow your search, you can put phrases like primary school inside quote marks –

this will tell the database to search for results where primary is found right beside school – increasing the relevance of your results.

There are many more ways to refine or tailor your search results.

Using the filtering options on the left, you can choose to narrow the publication dates so that you only see recently published material.

Or change the format – perhaps to academic journal articles.

The subject limiter is a great way to see the different facets of your topic and narrow your search accordingly.

It’s important to remember that for any in-depth study, you might have to conduct several searches using a combination of keywords, and you will never find everything you need for a literature review at your first attempt.

You’ll see related eBooks and subject guides in the panel on the right.

If you’d like some help with your search, you can click the button for “ask a librarian” and fill out the form.

The help button will show you how to become an expert at refining your searches.

Or get in touch with genevieve.larkin@mie.ie

Thanks for watching!