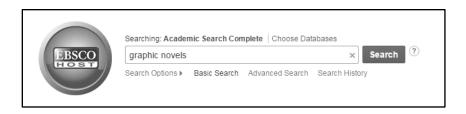


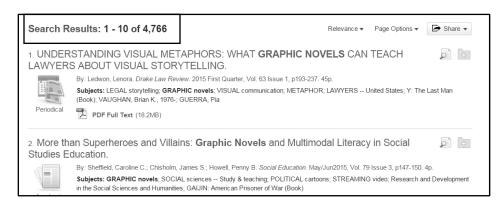
Keyword Searching vs. Subject Searching

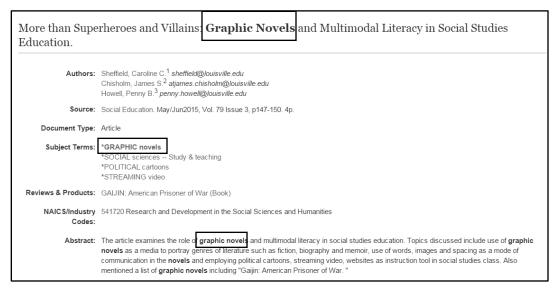
Keyword Searching

A keyword search is often the first step in the research process. For this type of search, a researcher types a term into the Basic Search box and clicks **Search**. This provides a good starting point and is similar to searching with an Internet browser. We are using the library database Academic Search Complete to demonstrate, but the library catalog works in a similar manner.



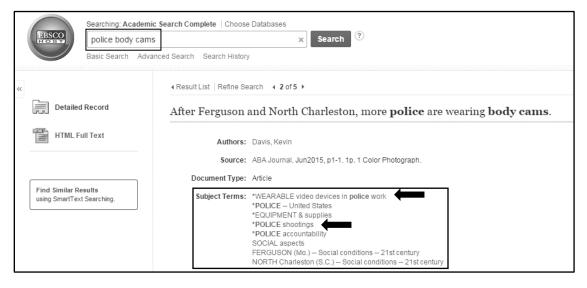
A keyword search works by finding your terms in all searchable fields, like Title, Abstract, Author's name, Subject terms, and Author-supplied keywords. It can also retrieve records that contain your search term even if they are not about your topic, so you may end up with too many results and results that are not useful.





Subject Searching

A subject search is more precise. EBSCO uses the same subject terms as the library catalog, from the Library of Congress. These subject terms may not always be the terms you would use, and this can be a challenge. For example, have a look at the subject terms that appear in an article about *police body cams*:



You may find it helpful to begin with a keyword search to identify an appropriate subject term. Look over the results of your keyword search for titles that appear relevant to your topic and click on the title of an item to see its complete list of subject terms.

Once you have identified the subject terms that correspond to your topic, using those terms in Advanced Search can help you retrieve a highly focused and relevant set of results.

