

LexisNexis® Scholastic—Research Guides

Forensics Team Help: Policy Debate

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If you have trouble accessing the LexisNexis® Scholastic database, contact one of your school librarians. If they need to speak with someone at LexisNexis, please have them call 800.227.9597, ext. 54846.

LexisNexis Scholastic is an invaluable research tool for high school students. Whether you're a student looking up a legal case for a homework assignment, or a debate team member gathering news articles for your next competition—LexisNexis Scholastic is a go-to resource.

Look to these guides for insight on the best ways for forensics teams to use the Scholastic database. This guide, in particular, deals with the **Policy Debate** event. For the research scenario, we will use the 2012/2013 Policy Debate Topic from the National Forensic League, found at nationalforensicleague.org.

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its transportation infrastructure investment in the United States.

The guide covers the following searches to gather evidence:

1. Use the index to find relevant news.
2. Find editorial and opinion articles.
3. Add broadcast transcripts to your evidence.
4. Find international examples of increased transportation funding.

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Use the Index to Find Relevant News Articles:

Each quarter, all news articles are indexed, or “tagged,” by topic in LexisNexis Scholastic. This function helps users find the most relevant articles on a specific topic.

The screenshot shows the LexisNexis Power Search interface. On the left is a navigation menu with 'General Searching' selected. The main area is titled 'Power Search' and contains several fields and buttons. Red arrows with numbers 1 through 5 point to specific elements: 1. Points to the 'Power Search' link in the left sidebar. 2. Points to the 'Search' button. 3. Points to the 'Search' button. 4. Points to the 'Specify Date' dropdown menu. 5. Points to the 'Search' button. The search terms field contains 'Terms(construction spending AND transportation infrastructure)'. The 'Specify Date' dropdown is set to 'Previous year'. The 'Add Index Terms' section has 'Subject' selected. The 'Select Source' section has 'Newspapers' selected.

1. Click on the **Power Search** form.
2. To search the index, you should use a search string. This string will help to search a specific part of the document where the index terms are placed. Type **TERMS**(construction spending AND transportation infrastructure).
3. (optional) To see more index term options, click the **Subject** link and browse or search the lexicon in the Add Topics pop-up box. Click red **Search** button and view results list.
4. Choose a **period of time**, like the previous year. Also, select your **source**. In this case, Newspapers.
5. Click red **Search** button and view results list.

When you get to the results screen, you will find that the index terms you input will appear at the bottom of the documents with a high relevancy ranking score (usually over 90%).

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Find Editorial and Opinion Articles:

This function is helpful when you would like to look up an editorial article.

The screenshot shows the LexisNexis search interface. On the left is a sidebar with 'General Searching' and 'News' sections. The 'All News' link is highlighted with a red arrow and the number 1. The main area is titled 'All News' and contains a search form. The search form has a 'Search For:' section with three rows of input fields. The first row contains 'government spending', the second 'transportation', and the third 'infrastructure'. Each row has a dropdown menu set to 'Everywhere' and a red 'Search' button. A red arrow and the number 2 point to the search input fields. Below the search form is a 'Specify Date:' dropdown set to 'Previous year'. The 'Select Source:' section has a 'By Type:' dropdown set to 'US Newspapers & Wires', with a red arrow and the number 3 pointing to it. The 'Article Type:' section has a grid of checkboxes, with 'Editorials & Opinions' checked, and a red arrow and the number 4 pointing to it. At the bottom, the 'Article Location:' section has radio buttons for 'US State', 'Canadian Province', 'Country', and 'World Region', with a dropdown menu set to 'Choose a State'. A red arrow and the number 5 point to the 'Search' button.

After clicking the News section:

1. Click the **All News** link to get to the All News form.
2. Type a **subject or phrase** to start your search. Choose relevant words and phrases like **“government spending,” “transportation,” “infrastructure”** or all three.
3. Change the sources to **US Newspapers & Wires**, since you want results specifically from the U.S.
4. Check the **“Editorials & Opinions”** Box.
5. Press the red **Search** button to see your results list.

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Add Broadcast Transcripts to Your Evidence:

Broadcast transcripts, often forgotten by many researchers, can be very useful inclusions in your body of evidence.

The screenshot shows the LexisNexis search interface for TV & Radio News Transcripts. The interface includes a left sidebar with navigation options: General Searching, News, Legal, Legislation, Companies, Subject Areas, Sources, and Help & Instructions. The main content area is titled "TV & Radio News Transcripts" and contains a search form. The search form includes a "Search For:" field with the text "transportation AND infrastructure AND government", a "Specify Date:" dropdown menu set to "Previous year", and a "Select Source(s):" section with a grid of checkboxes. The "All Transcripts" checkbox is checked. A red "Search" button is located to the right of the search form. Red arrows with numbers 1 through 5 point to the following elements: 1. The "TV & Radio Transcripts" link in the sidebar. 2. The search text in the "Search For:" field. 3. The "Specify Date:" dropdown menu. 4. The "All Transcripts" checkbox in the "Select Source(s)" section. 5. The red "Search" button.

1. Click on the **News** section and then the **TV & Radio Transcripts** form.
2. Type a **subject or phrase** to start your search. Choose relevant words and phrases like **“government spending,” “transportation,” “infrastructure”** or all three.
3. Narrow your search to the **most recent year** for the newest transcripts, select **Previous year** from **Specify Date** pull-down menu.
4. Keep the default **“All Transcripts”** selected, unless you have a specific transcript in mind.
5. Press the red **Search** button to see your results list.

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Find International Examples:

Insight from examples in other countries can sometimes add weight or add doubt to the resolution. Use the All News form.

The screenshot shows the LexisNexis 'All News' search interface. A left sidebar contains navigation links for 'News', 'Legal', 'Legislation', 'Companies', 'Subject Areas', 'Sources', and 'Help & Instructions'. The 'All News' form includes a 'Search For:' section with a text input containing 'transportation', a dropdown for 'Subject Terms', and a 'Search' button. Below this are 'Specify Date:' and 'Select Source:' sections. The 'Specify Date:' dropdown is set to 'Previous year'. The 'Select Source:' dropdown is set to 'All News (English)'. An 'Article Type:' section contains various checkboxes for content types like 'Book Reviews', 'Movie Reviews', etc. The 'Article Location:' section has radio buttons for 'US State', 'Canadian Province', 'Country', and 'World Region', with 'Country' selected. A dropdown menu below 'Country' is set to 'India'. Red arrows with numbers 1 through 6 point to the 'All News' link, the search input, the 'Subject Terms' dropdown, the 'Previous year' dropdown, the 'All News (English)' dropdown, the 'Country' radio button, and the 'Search' button respectively.

1. Click on the **News** section and then the All News form.
2. Type a relevant **subject or phrase** to start your search, like “**transportation.**” You may leave the default as **Everywhere** or change it to **Subject Terms** to search the index, as we did in the earlier guide.
3. Narrow your search to the **Previous year** for the newest articles.
4. Select **All News (English)** from the Sources pull-down.
5. Select **Country** from the Article Location section and then pick a country, like India.
6. Click **Search** button and view results list.