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.
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.

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%).
Find Editorial and Opinion Articles:
This function is helpful when you would like to look up an editorial article.

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.
Add Broadcast Transcripts to Your Evidence:
Broadcast transcripts, often forgotten by many researchers, can be very useful inclusions in your body of evidence.

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

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.