

# Thesaurus

## To browse a thesaurus:

1. To browse a thesaurus of terms available in the database, click the **Subjects** link at the top of the EBSCOhost screen. If you are searching multiple databases, several subject lists may be available. They will appear in the drop-down list.
2. Select the thesaurus that you want to browse. A new thesaurus-specific Browse Screen is displayed. The thesaurus name appears above the **Browse for** field.

**Note:** For information on browsing CINAHL and MeSH headings, see the [CINAHL/MeSH Headings](#) Help topic.

The screenshot shows the EBSCOhost interface for browsing a thesaurus. The top navigation bar includes links for 'New Search', 'Thesaurus', 'Cited References', 'Indexes', 'More', 'Sign In', 'Folder', 'Preferences', 'Languages', 'New Features', and 'Help'. The main content area is titled 'Browsing: PsychINFO -- Thesaurus'. It features a search bar with 'PsychINFO' entered and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there are three radio buttons: 'Term Begins With' (selected), 'Term Contains', and 'Relevancy Ranked'. A 'Page' navigation shows 'Previous' and 'Next'. A section for 'Select term, then add to search using:' includes a dropdown menu set to 'OR' and an 'Add' button. A list of terms is displayed with checkboxes and 'Explode' and 'Major Concept' options. The terms listed are: Abandonment, Abdomen, Abdominal Wall, Abducens Nerve, Ability, Ability Grouping, and Ability Level. At the bottom, there are links for 'Ability Tests' and 'Use Aptitude Measures'.

3. Enter your search terms in the **Browse for** field, and then select from: [Term Begins With](#), [Term Contains](#), or [Relevancy Ranked](#) radio buttons and click **Browse**. A list of headings is displayed and your search terms are retained in the **Browse for** field.
4. Mark the headings that you want to use, combine your selections with AND, OR, or NOT if needed. (You always have the option of searching the terms requested. If a subject heading is not found for your search terms, the terms are displayed at the bottom of the list. You can mark the check box so that your terms are searched as a keyword search.)

5. Click the **Search Database** button. A Result List is displayed.

## Using Explode and Major Concept

### Explode

When you **Explode** a term, you create a search query that “explodes” the subject heading. The headings are exploded to retrieve all references indexed to that term as well as all references indexed to any narrower subject terms.

In a database with a tree, such as *MeSH* or *CINAHL Headings*, exploding retrieves all documents containing any of the subject terms below the term you selected. In other databases, exploding retrieves all documents containing the selected term, as well as any of its first level of narrower terms. If a plus sign (+) appears next to a narrower or related term, there are narrower terms below it.

### Major Concept

When you select **Major Concept** for a term, you create a search query that finds only records for which the subject heading is a major point of the article. Searches are limited with specific qualifiers (subheadings) to improve the precision of the search, and limited to major subject headings indicate the main concept of an article.

### Combining Explode and Major Concept

If you select both **Explode** and **Major Concept**, you retrieve all references indexed to your term (and its narrower terms) and all articles for which the subject heading is a major point of the article.

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