

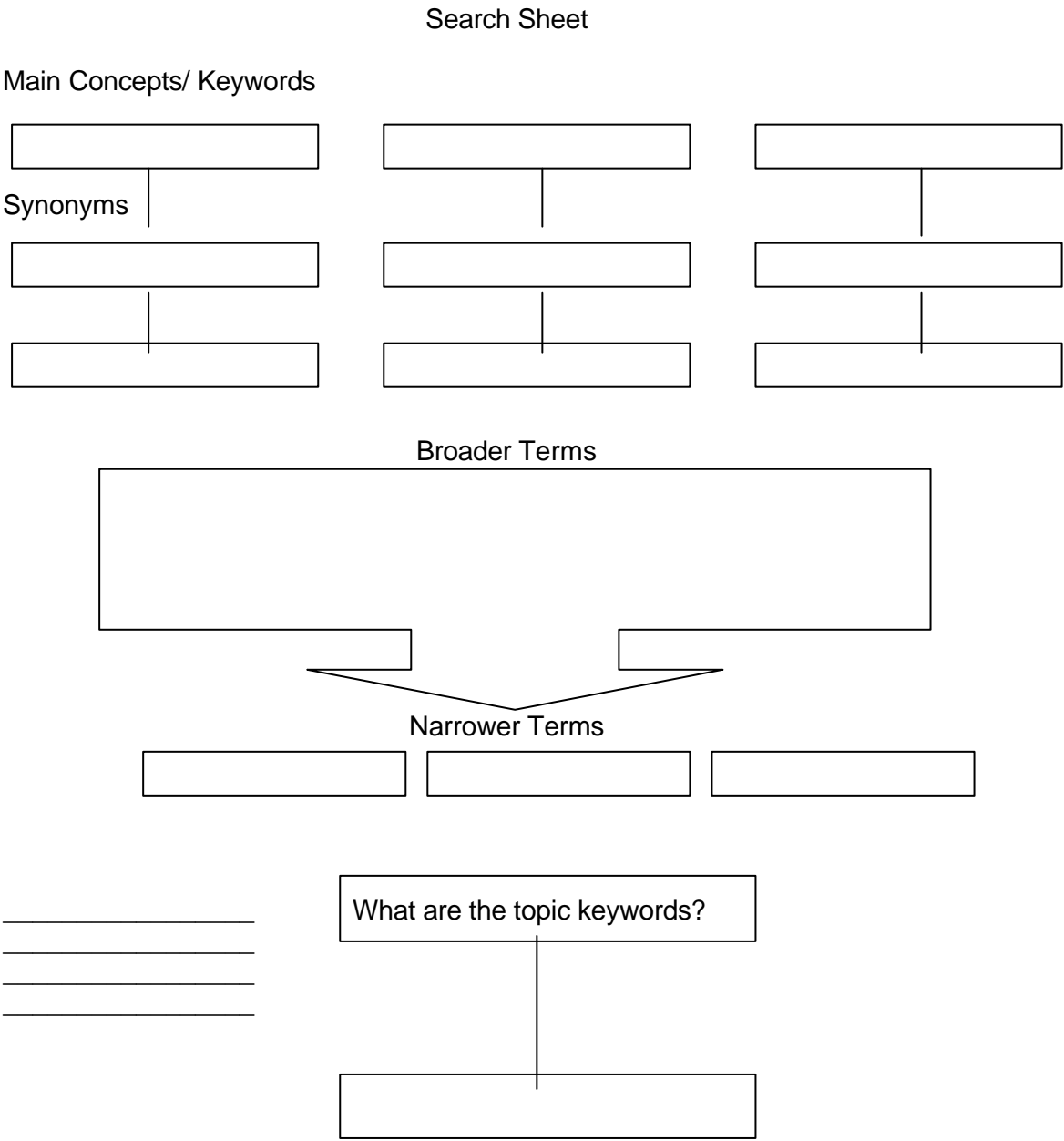
Creating a Concept Map

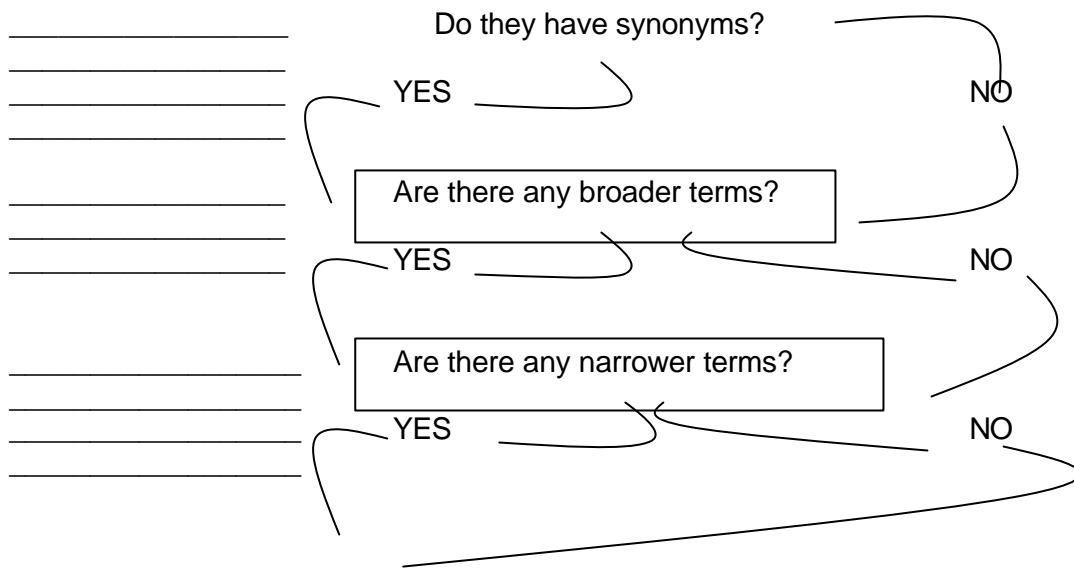
Creating a concept map – also called a mind map – of your topic helps you to find more relevant information by including alternative forms for your keywords.

- First, write down your topic sentence, phrased as a question.
- Then write down any other questions that follow on from the first question.
- Write down all the keywords in these questions.
- Underneath each of the keywords, write down all the synonyms and related terms for the word that you can think of.

Synonyms are terms that carry roughly the same meaning as your keywords. The related terms include *broader terms* that refer to other concepts besides your keywords. A broader term for *television* would be *media*, for example. And they include *narrower terms* that only describe part of what your keyword describes. A narrower term for *television* might be *children’s television*.

You can plot your concept map like this:





As you carry out your search, you will probably identify further search terms as you discover what words writers in your field commonly use. You can then modify your concept map accordingly.