

# INFORMATION SOURCES

Information can come from social media, blogs, personal experiences, books, journal and magazine articles, expert opinions, newspapers, and websites.

## BOOKS E-BOOKS



For research purposes, books that summarize all the information on one topic are useful to support a particular argument or thesis.

## Library Catalog



A library catalog is an organized and searchable collection of records of every item in a library and can be found on the library home page. The catalog will point you to the location of a particular source, or group of sources, that the library owns on your topic.

## Encyclopaedias



Encyclopaedias are collections of short, factual entries, often written by different authors who are knowledgeable about the subject at hand. Encyclopaedias allow someone to find background information that helps them select a topic and place it in the broader context of the subject.

## Magazines



A magazine is a collection of articles and images about diverse topics of popular interest and current events. Usually these articles are written by journalists or scholars and are geared toward the average adult. Usually the magazines are meant to entertain, inform, or present an opinion.

## Academic Peer-Reviewed Journals



A journal is a collection of articles usually written by scholars in an academic or professional field. They can cover very specific topics or narrow fields of research.

## Newspapers



A newspaper is a collection of articles about current events usually published daily. It is a great source for local information. They are available in print.

## Video Databases



Available through the library and provide scholarly coverage in a variety of disciplines. Users can create playlists and create clips that can be embedded into other documents.

## Internet



The Web allows you to access most types of information on the Internet through a browser. The Web contains information beyond plain text, including sounds, images, and video.

The important thing to do when using information on the Internet is to know how to evaluate it! You must carefully evaluate the credibility and reliability of web sources.

## SEVERAL EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR INFORMATION SOURCES

### CURRENCY

#### Timeliness of the Information

- When was the information published or posted?
- When was the information revised or updated?
- Are the links functional?
- Does your topic require current information?

### RELEVANCE

#### Importance of the Information for Your Needs

- Does the information relate to your topic?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information appropriate for your needs (i.e. scholarly, scientific, statistical, popular)?

### AUTHORITY

#### Source of the Information

- Who is the author, publisher, source or sponsor?
- What are the author's credentials?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic?
- Does the URL reveal anything about the source (ex. .com .edu.gov.org.net)?

### ACCURACY

#### Reliability, Truthfulness and Correctness

- Where does the information come from?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed?
- Does the language seem unbiased?
- Are there spelling or grammar errors?

### PURPOSE

#### The Reason the Information Exists

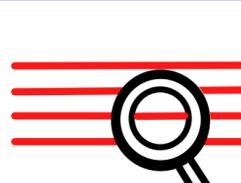
- What is the purpose? Inform? Teach? Sell?
- Entertain? Persuade?
- Is the purpose clear?
- Is it fact, opinion, or propaganda?

## EVALUATE INFORMATION SOURCES CRITICALLY



### CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



### READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



### SUPPORTING SOURCES

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.



### CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



### CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.



### IS IT A JOKE?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



### CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



### ASK THE EXPERTS

Consult organizations that offer guidance and resources to make informed choices.