

Information Literacy Summary

Primary Source: First hand research. Eg: anything you find in a peer reviewed academic journal, medical or scientific research, historical research, etc. Use as the main evidence for your argument.

- Evaluate:
 - o Source appropriate for topic
 - o Topic appropriate for topic
 - o Year published

Secondary Source: Second hand research. The article is more like a report. The author is presenting someone else's research to you. Acceptable to use as secondary support for your argument. If a report of other research, avoid citing this source: go to the primary source!

- Evaluate
 - o Source appropriate for topic
 - o Year published
 - o Author's expertise in the area

Peer Reviewed Academic Journal:

- Reveled by experts in the field.
- MOST reliable and authoritative source.
- Either click box to limit to peer reviewed articles – or – check by clicking on the name of the journal and scroll down to see if labeled as “peer reviewed.”

Websites: May be acceptable primary or secondary sources. It is up to research to determine legitimacy of the source. NEVER cite Wikipedia, about.com, or any website similar to these.

- Date published
- Author?
- Description of organization or source
- Consider accuracy (truthfulness) and bias (appearance of being objective). Just because it appears objective, does not mean that it is accurate! Don't be fooled by style!
- Most credible: .gov
- Might be credible: .edu, .com
- Might not be credible: .org
- Be leery: .net

Newspapers: A report on a current event would be a primary source. A report on recently published research is a secondary source. Be critical of WHAT newspaper you use.

- Evaluate:
 - o Publication date
 - o Newspaper credibility
 - o Newspapers location (avoid citing local newspapers *unless* it is the newspaper from the community you are speaking with or the community affected most by the issue you are discussing).