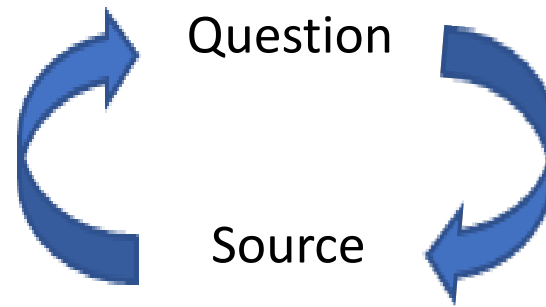


Source Selection and Purposeful Use

Module 5, Foundations for Collaborative Research

Overall—The Reading/Research Process



Research is *recursive*:

1. Have a topic, even broadly
2. Look up that topic (little 'r' research)
3. See specific examples, keywords, concepts of interest in sources
4. Start looking up those examples, keywords, concepts of interest, build new understanding
5. Reform, revise, narrow, refine topic/research question
6. Repeat 3-5 for continuous revision/refinement
7. Refined question informs more (little 'r') research, becomes directed Big 'R' Research

Generally Proper Sources



Digital Databases


Academic, peer reviewed sources; relevant, current (depending on topic); attributable, with full citations and works cited/bibliographic info (search using abstracts)

Web Sources

“Primary sources”--govt. Websites, legal language, contracts, studies, census publications; public libraries, university websites, government websites, etc.

Print Sources

Relevant books; artistic if doing something in literary or artistic interpretation (primary source); deep analyses, anthologies, etc. in expository work (secondary source)



What to Stay Away From



Questionable sources are those with a poor reputation for checking the facts, or with no editorial oversight. Such sources include websites and publications expressing views that are widely acknowledged as extremist, or promotional in nature, or which rely heavily on rumors and personal opinions.



Questionable sources are generally unsuitable for citing contentious claims about third parties, which includes claims against institutions, persons living or dead, as well as more ill-defined entities.



The proper uses of a questionable source are very limited (specifically: research INTO questionable sources/perspectives, in which case they would serve as primary evidence ONLY).

[Per Wikipedia on “reliable sources”]

Can't find a publication date? Author(s)? Revision date? Publication team or process?

Skip it...

A Note on Self-Published Sources



E-books, newsletters, wikis, blogs, personal websites, social media sites/videos, tweets...

Depends on your plan:

Analyzing these? Cool.

Using as support? Eh



Remember—Quick Evaluation

Evidence has to satisfy the following:

- ✓ Must be sufficient
- ✓ Must be precise/accurate
- ✓ Must be representative (collectively, holistically)
- ✓ Must be authoritative

Additional thought too; relevance is also key
(also see: the “CRAAP” Test)

What it Means to be “Sufficient”

- Careful reading = skeptical reading
- Avoid trivial mistakes
- Double-check ALL sources, source authors, source publishers—find bias

NOTE: if you use dubious evidence, purposefully, address that it may be problematic; this builds ethos


What it Means to be “Precise”

- Avoid “hedging” claims
 - Avoid superlatives, or empty comparisons
 - Margin of error depends on the field
 - Word choice is super important
-

What it Means to be “Representative”

- General error is too little evidence
 - Think about the full range of variation/availability
 - Small sample sizes are generally problematic (must be acknowledged explicitly)
 - Avoid “cherry-picking” and the anecdotal
-

What it Means to be “Authoritative”

- See what other researchers are valuing or devaluing (this means a breadth of research, and pay attention to their citations and the neg/pos of those works)
 - Pay attention to ‘failed arguments’ (what NOT to do)
 - Think about ‘degrees of authority’ on an issue
- 

Boolean: Ways to Engage, Expand, or Narrow in the Process

Command	Search Operator	Example
Broaden Search	Put OR between each search term to return results with either word	blue OR green
Exact Match	Put a word or phrase inside quotes	“tallest building”
Exclude Words	Put — (a minus sign) in front of a word you want to leave out	best cars –Honda
Restrict File Type	Put “filetype:” or “ext:” before the word	syllabus ext:pdf
Wildcard Search	Put a * in your word or phrase where you want to leave a placeholder	largest * in the world
Range of Numbers	Put two dots between two numbers	camera \$50..\$100
Search for Prices	Put \$ in front of a number	\$5 lunch deal
Search Hashtags	Put # in front of a word	#bloomstasticmath
Define a Word	Put “define:” before the word	define:phenotype

Sorting Sources by Function (in Relation to Research Question)



Primary

Original sources of information that are the basis of the research topic in question—includes information that is yet to be analyzed, pure facts and/or statistics, original works, and the original stories or perspectives under investigations.

Secondary

Publications that provide analysis to the original information that is the basis of primary sources (includes interpretations, judgments, reviews, synthesis of perspectives, etc.)

Review - Available Lenses

<p>Cultural/Social</p> <p>Explores how daily issues have impact on lives, relationships, customs, beliefs, etc.</p>	<p>Artistic/Philosophical</p> <p>Explores how art works express ideas about an issue, and/or what philosophers think at a meta-level</p>	<p>Ethical</p> <p>Explores issue at moral level, considers things such as laws, human rights, consequences of actions, effects, etc.</p>
<p>Political/Historical</p> <p>Explores effect of issue on government decisions, considers contextual background or causal relationship of events in relation to issue</p>	<p>Environmental/Scientific</p> <p>Explores contextual effects of an issue on social, ecological environment; uses data from biological, chemical, physical level</p>	<p>Economic</p> <p>Explores financial impact of issue and role in possible solutions on both personal, communal level</p>

Purposeful Use — Social/Cultural Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Observations of people (anthropological research), interviews of people about social/cultural issues, first-hand accounts and personal stories, biographies, diaries and/or letters, survey data, media/social media posts/publications

Secondary

Arguments of perspectives analyzing the above data types, reviews of perspectives, articles defending social agendas or political positions on social/cultural issues, comparisons

Purposeful Use — Artistic/Philosophical Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Art works (painting, short stories, poems, sculpture, etc.), biographies, manifestos, philosophical essays, etc.--by the artists/philosophers themselves

Secondary

Analytic and/or interpretive essays, secondary research papers, comparison papers, reviews, works made or written by artists/philosophers responding to the original work

Purposeful Use — Ethical Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Written meta-ethical systems by philosophers, political acts (the actual legal language from passed legislation), position papers written by politicians, legal decisions from court cases, surveys or interviews or letters/diaries/case studies from individuals regarding ethical decisions, media/social media posts/publications

Secondary

Reviews, essays, commentary on any of the primary sources, responses to legal decisions or legislation, research paper discussion sections, competing views and perspectives analyzing primary sources

Purposeful Use — Political/Historical Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Diaries/letters from historical individuals, legal documents, legislative decisions, timelines and artifacts, artworks and/or writings of specific individuals or groups, published perspectives from the individual/groups in focus, media/social media posts/publications

Secondary

Analysis of perspectives, writings, artworks, legal language, political documents; comparisons, analysis of similar issues from which to compare or methods to apply, opposing understandings of historical events/timelines

Purposeful Use — Environmental/Scientific Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Results from experiments, field notes, observations of scientific phenomena, reports, original data in tables and charts (pure, unanalyzed information)

Secondary

Analysis of experiments, reviews of published data, articles providing judgments, conference presentations, research papers' discussions and results pages

Purposeful Use — Economic Research

Some Potential Primary/Secondary Types

Primary

Government documents and legal language, monetary figures and tables/charts; to be compared with other political/historical primary data (see other slides)

Secondary

Reviews of monetary trends and currency transactions, analysis or comparisons of legal language or other primary data sets, macroeconomic manifestos or perspectives to compare or apply to primary data sets, analytic perspectives