

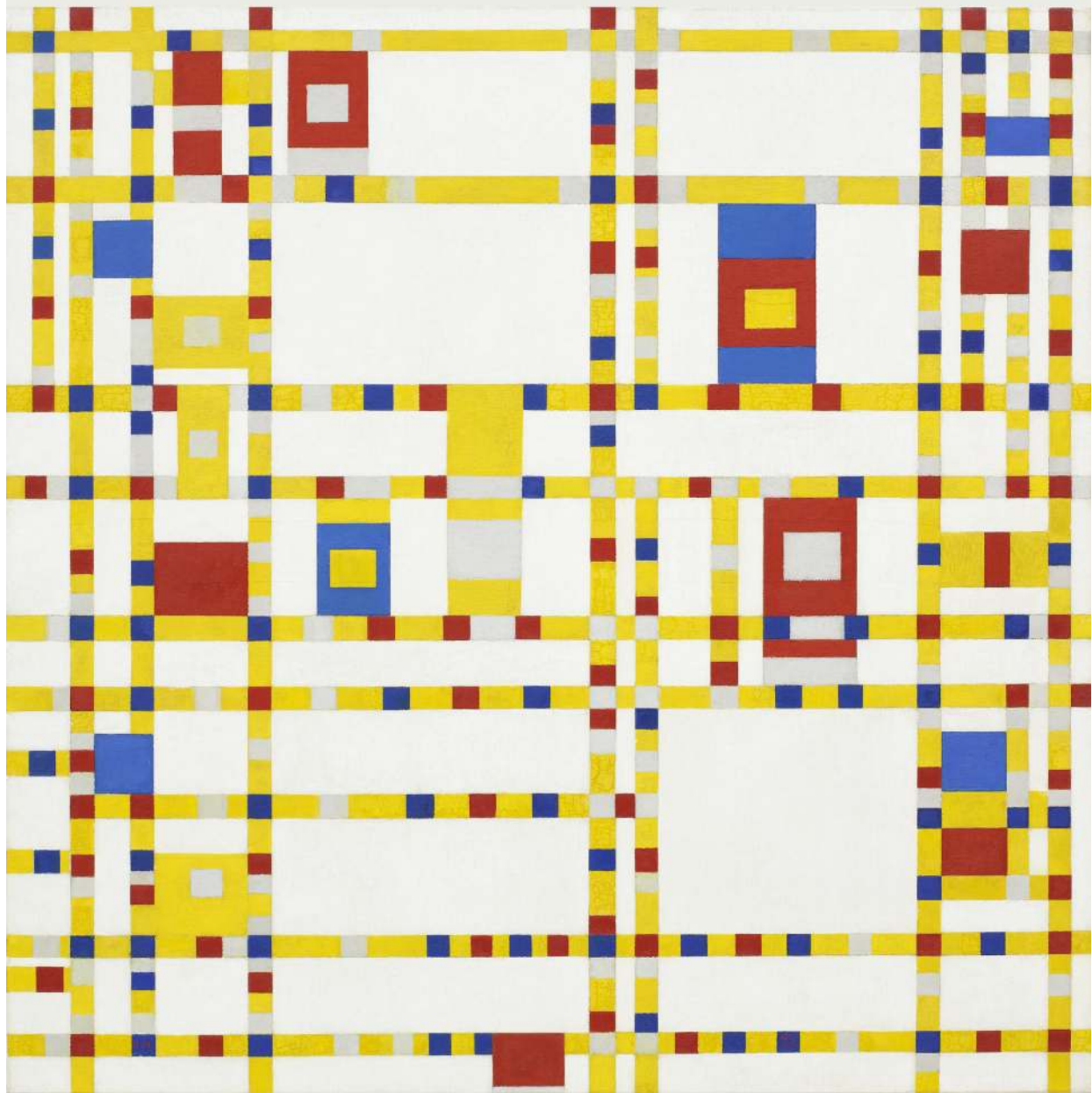
LIS 105: INFORMATION LITERACY BASICS



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City Colleges of Chicago

LIS105: Information Literacy Basics

An Open Educational Resource



Sara Klein

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This text was compiled on 07/25/2025

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Introduction

This Open Educational Resource has been designed to support students at Truman College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago, in the credit course LIS105: Information Literacy Basics. Like other community colleges, City Colleges serve students from communities across the city, who are primarily from minority backgrounds, and many of whom are first-generation college students, immigrants, or returning or older students.

Information literacy is foundational not just for library research and academic work, but also for everyday interactions with information “in the wild.” Because the cost of textbooks is so often prohibitive for our students, I have chosen to put course content into a free-to-access resource.

LIS105: Information Literacy Basics is meant to support students in developing and growing their information literacy skills, from recognizing a need for information, to their abilities to locate, evaluate, and effectively and ethically use that information from all types of resources, in order to foster their success as students, citizens, and life-long learners. More specifically, the basic student learning objectives for the course are to:

1. Identify keywords, synonyms, and related terms describing the information they seek
2. Design search strategies using these terms, and apply Boolean operators to refine their searches
3. Find and access information through a variety of means, including library subscription databases, print, web, and other resources
4. Critically evaluate information sources
5. Recognize the ethical and legal importance and procedures for using quotes, references, and citations

The modules in this text follow a detailed course outline for LIS105 student learning and classroom activities, and cover much more than the basic student learning objectives listed above. Additional student learning outcomes for this text are:

1. Understand when and how to evaluate, use, and create information in everyday life as well as in an academic setting
2. Recognize the complex nature of the current information landscape, and the importance of demonstrating ethical and responsible information behavior within it
3. Have awareness of bias and other barriers to information reception and use, and to apply the information literacy gained to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners

Each module is divided into 3 sections: readings, classroom activities, and assignments related to the main topic of each module.

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Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful for all of the input and support I have received during the process of creating this resource, especially from Eileen López who contributed to content in modules 4,8, and 10, to Dan Killelea, who contributed to module 11, to Katie Ediger, for her valuable suggestions, which have been incorporated throughout the text, and to my children.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

1: What is Information Literacy?

1.1: Readings

1.1.1: Information Literacy

1.1.2: Types of Resources

1.1.3: The library research process

1.1.4: The information lifecycle

1.2: Classroom Activity

1.3: Assignment

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SECTION OVERVIEW

1.1: Readings

Welcome to the information landscape! Let's start with a deceptively simple question: What is information?



Figure 1.1.1: What is information? word cloud (Copyright Sara Klein)

Information can be identified in many ways, including ones that aren't listed in the illustration above. For our purposes we'll think about information as knowledge that is produced from ideas or raw data that have been analyzed or placed within social frameworks. We use information to communicate, to understand, and to create more information.

1.1.1: Information Literacy

1.1.2: Types of Resources

1.1.3: The library research process

1.1.4: The information lifecycle

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1.1.1: Information Literacy

"What is information literacy and what does it mean to be information literate? The American Library Association defines information literacy as a set of abilities empowering individuals to recognize when information is needed and to be able to locate it, evaluate it, and use it effectively. While information literacy is often talked about on college campuses in terms of doing library research for papers and annotated bibliographies and other sorts of classroom assignments, we use and need information in every aspect of our lives.

Think about all of the informal research we do each day. We look up movie and book reviews, how-to videos on YouTube, product reviews, and strategies for parenting. We Google how to fill out some field on our tax forms, we look up job ads and tips on job interviews, how to spell or define some unfamiliar word or acronym. We all have information needs, and being able to effectively identify and meet those needs is at the core information literacy. Being able to differentiate quality information from questionable information is also critical. Is that shocking article your sister posted on social media actually true? What about health advice offered by a friend? What about some surprising statistic you heard cited by a politician or political candidate?

The [American Library Association](#) asks us to think about information literacy in six ways.

1. Authority Is Constructed and Contextual When you use information, or choose one source of information over another, you presume a certain amount of expertise on the part of the information's author on the topic they are writing about. What gives the author that authority? What makes some information more authoritative than other information? What makes a piece of information authoritative can vary from discipline to discipline and be based on context. So for example, an author may be an authority on a given topic because of extensive experience, or because of extensive education. Even without deep experience or education, an author may bring authority to their writing based on their having witnessed or participated in some major event. In both cases, their authority is contextual. A physics professor may have authority when writing within their field, but be considered far less authoritative when writing in an unrelated field.
2. Information Creation as a Process Information appears in a variety of forms. Depending on whether it is in the form of a newspaper article, a scholarly book, or a formatted report, the creation of information requires a process. Understanding how and why authors publish in a particular format, what those formats require in terms of fact checking, or sourcing, or expertise, what editorial oversight exists, the role of publishers—all these considerations may play into your thinking about the relevance of a particular information source to your research question.
3. Information Has Value Information has value, and this fact has very real implications to researchers and information consumers in both how information is produced and how it is disseminated. It has economic value as a commodity, for example, as evidenced by intellectual property rights and other legal considerations, and by the considerable role of the publishing industry. Information also has educational and social value, with its ability to inform, educate, and persuade.
4. Research as Inquiry One can think of research as an inquiry. A researcher asks a question, or identifies some gap in our current understanding of a topic, and in the process of filling that gap, new questions and new avenues for further research emerge.
5. Scholarship as Conversation Scholarship on a given topic will grow and evolve over time. New theories, new interpretations, new experiments, new facts are always being discovered and debated. As the references or citations of any scholarly article demonstrate, every researcher is building on the work of many other researchers. Conscientious scholars will always go to great effort to indicate what previous work has informed their own work. College students are expected to adopt this practice as well, citing the work that informs their own work and situating their ideas and theories within the larger conversation taking place in their respective discipline.

Searching as Strategic Exploration Over time, as you gain experience and your research needs grow more complex, you will likely develop sophisticated strategies for locating relevant information. Searching for information is rarely as simple as just plugging a keyword into a search engine or library database and getting all the books and articles you need. You'll likely try different ways of searching for information, and in different places. You may want to brainstorm, or talk to a librarian. ..." (All text above from [Hisle & Webb, Introduction](#)).

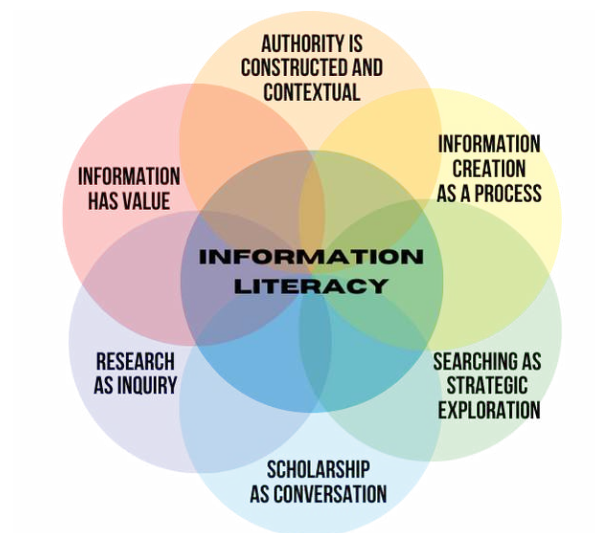


Figure 1.1.1.1: Information literacy Venn diagram. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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1.1.2: Types of Resources

There are 3 main categories of information resources: primary, secondary, and tertiary sources.

1. **Primary** Primary sources relate first-hand information. They include original works of art or literature, research data or results, historical documents, newspaper articles, and more.
2. **Secondary** Secondary sources are works that are created using information from primary sources. These sources may communicate and support an author's thesis or give an account of a topic based on earlier works and/or primary sources. Many non-fiction books and journal articles are secondary sources. When you write a research essay for a class, you are creating a secondary source.
3. **Tertiary** Tertiary sources give a brief overview, background, or summary of a topic. Handbooks, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are good examples of tertiary sources.

The chart below identifies a few of the most common types of resources that you encounter in your daily life or in school. You'll notice that the descriptions of each of the resource types listed are broken down according to concepts laid out by the American Library Association (see above). The places each type of resource can be found and real-life examples of each are listed as well.



Figure 1.1.2.1: Some resource types, characteristics, and examples (Scholarly, Trade/Professional, General Interest, Popular, Reference, Gov Docs). (Copyright Sara Klein)

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1.1.3: The library research process

We will cover the research process more specifically in module 4, but here is a basic overview:



Figure 1.1.3.1: The research process. (Copyright Sara Klein)

- **Plan ahead:** Consider what you need to accomplish, and how you expect to accomplish it
- **Select a topic:** Find a topic that interests you
- **Ask a question:** Form a clear and focused question that you can answer with research
- **Design a search:** Select keywords from your question and determine where you will look for resources
- **Do a search:** Use your search terms to find results
- **Modify your search:** Filter your results to be more or less specific and/or adjust search terms
- **Find key resources:** Review your search results to find the best resources for your purposes
- **Integrate and cite resources:** Use your sources to support your argument; Be sure to cite them!
- **Present your work:** Compose your paragraph/section/essay/etc. and turn it in when you're finished
- **Do it all over again!:** Start a new or related search using the same strategy (You may need to do this multiple times for a single research project)

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1.1.4: The information lifecycle

The information cycle follows the creation of information and how it changes over time, as shown in the chart below. "The [University of Illinois Library](#) defines it as "the progression of media coverage of a particular newsworthy event."

This is important because the amount of information that is available on a particular topic might be very difficult to find, especially if the topic is a very recent or current event. First-person accounts such as interviews, newspaper articles, videos, or social media posts might be all you are able to find during or immediately after an event. More detailed or analytical accounts such as in-depth reporting or academic articles and books take time to produce, so they will not be available right away.

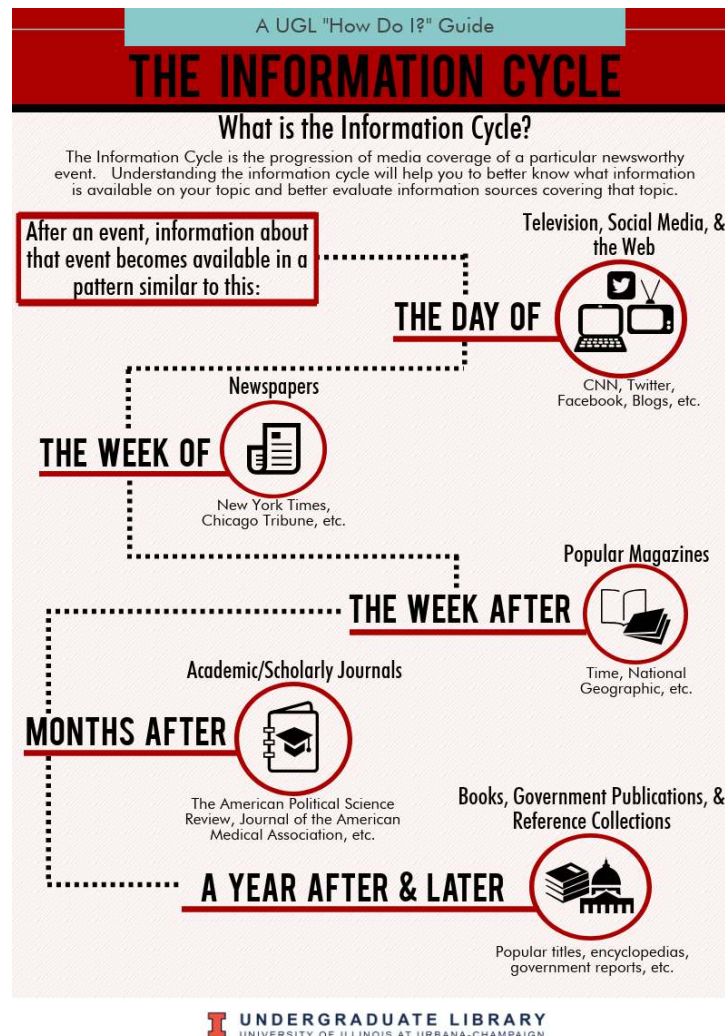


Figure 1.1.4.1: The Information Cycle (via [Undergraduate Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#))

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1.2: Classroom Activity

Dinner Party

To practice thinking about different types of sources that work well together, instead of choosing sources, students in small groups will choose who to invite to a small dinner party. The goal is to put together a group of guests that will be able to find enough common ground to have interesting conversations. Small groups will share their plans with the class, and explain their reasoning.

Your goal is to put together a small dinner party where your guests will be able to find enough common ground to have an interesting conversation. Select 3 guests from the following list, then answer a few questions about why you chose these guests and how you, as the host, hope to direct the conversation so that everyone can participate.

- **James** grew up in a neighborhood with high poverty and crime. He spent 5 years in prison for stealing a car when he was a teen. He's been out for nearly a decade, and though he had trouble finding work at first, he now works in a well-reviewed restaurant as a line cook and has begun studying in a culinary program. He wants to be an executive chef and eventually open his own restaurant. James has a son who was born when he was in prison, and he wants to be a good role model.
- **Madeline** is an intellectual property lawyer for a mid-size firm. She loves new tech and gadgets and is always the first to have the latest device or apps. She says that technology changes everything about our lives, though she admits it's not always good. Madeline loves to talk about the legal and ethical implications of new technologies and how the government should or should not try to regulate them. She's also an outspoken advocate for equal rights and a card-carrying member of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union).
- **Mike** is a rapper who's had one album released by a small independent record label. He frequently uploads homemade music videos to YouTube to "be seen." He plays local clubs and draws decent crowds. His idols are Kendrick Lamar and Common for their social consciousness. To pay the bills, Mike works two part time jobs, at a bookstore and an after-school program. Sometimes it's hard to pay the rent, especially during the summers, but he's optimistic that it will all work out for him.
- **Carrie** is an abstract and conceptual artist who creates paintings and sculptures with found objects. She's also a huge pop culture fan and loves to incorporate current trends into her art. She currently works as an elementary school art teacher. Due to budget cuts her schedule was cut to part-time and she travels between three different schools. Fortunately her wife is employed full-time, so they are financially stable. Carrie likes to take her time to consider all sides of a topic and rarely has decisive opinions. She enjoys hearing others' perspectives and particularly values life experience.
- **Taryn** is an aspiring model and part-time receptionist for a high-end salon. She considers her appearance and presentation to be her brand and she works hard on her social media presence. She has two dogs and is passionate about cruelty-free beauty products. She's a member of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and volunteers at her local cat shelter on weekends.
- **Sam** just finished a PhD in Communication and Media Studies and started a job as an instructor at the local community college. In the class they teach, they talk a lot about Freedom of Information issues, and they're concerned that students don't worry enough about online privacy. Sam likes their smartphone, but only uses apps and social media minimally because they're afraid of identity theft. Sam is also adjusting to being at a community college rather than the large research universities where they were a student and graduate student. Their students have a wide range of life and school experiences, some still improving their English, and some who have returned to school after doing other things. A few of their students are older than they are.
- **Aubrey** is studying to be a Unitarian minister. He volunteers twice a week leading a class on meditation at the county jail. He often talks about social justice issues such as reforms in juvenile justice and economic inequality. Aubrey often participates in demonstrations for equality including Black Lives Matter. Aubrey is not married or currently in a relationship but he would like to have children one day.

ALA Frame: Scholarship as Conversation

(Adapted from Kowalik, E. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/usage-sources-party>)

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1.3: Assignment

Starting your research

Begin to think about a topic you would like to explore in this class this semester. Start with something that you are interested in, or passionate about, and that you can spend a lot of time on. Then answer the following questions using complete sentences, proper grammar, and correct punctuation. Each response should be at least 2 sentences.

- What is it about your topic that you are specifically interested in? Why are you interested in it?
- Where would you look for resources about your topic?
- What types of resources would you look for, and what do you expect to find?
- Who has expertise or expert knowledge about your topic? What makes them an authority on the topic? How will your exploration of your topic relate to their work?
- How will you compare sources to determine which ones are the best for your purposes?
- How do you plan to use the resources you find? What is your ultimate goal for this exploration?

ALA Frames: Information Creation as a Process, Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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2.1.2: In-text divisions

2.1.3: Finding books in the library

2.1.4: Library database organization

2.2: Classroom Activity

2.3: Assignment

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2.1: Readings

Have you ever felt anxious or overwhelmed about the amount of information that is out there? You are not alone! Finding information, especially the right information, is a complex task. But this text can help!

It's easiest to find information when it's presented in an organized manner. To get to the information, then, the main things you need to know are where to look for the information, and how to navigate the tools you're using to find the information. Information is organized in a number of different ways, depending on where it is kept and how it is used. We'll look at tools and strategies for finding information soon, but for now we'll focus on how information is organized.

Libraries, archives, museums, government offices, online repositories, and other institutions organize information in various ways, but all have the same purpose of making information resources available and accessible. In libraries resources are usually organized alphabetically and/or numerically, in a logical sequence, and labeled according to the system being used. These labels are usually placed on the spine of a book so that it can be easily located on the shelf according to the order of the organizing system. The combination of letters and/or numbers on a spine label is referred to as a call number.

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2.1.1.1: The Library of Congress classification system

College and university libraries in the United States typically use the [Library of Congress classification system](#) to organize their books, and an online catalog to make the collection searchable.

The Library of Congress system was developed for use in the United States' national library. It uses 21 classes identified by a letter of the alphabet to help organize the information contained in the library. Classes are then divided into subclasses, which are identified with an added second or third letter; they are further subdivided using a series of letters and decimal numbers.

Library of Congress Classification Outline
A -- General Works
B -- Philosophy. Psychology. Religion
C -- Auxiliary Sciences Of History
D -- World History And History Of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Etc.
E -- History Of The Americas
F -- History Of The Americas
G -- Geography. Anthropology. Recreation
H -- Social Sciences
J -- Political Science
K -- Law
L -- Education
M -- Music And Books On Music
N -- Fine Arts
P -- Language And Literature
Q -- Science
R -- Medicine
S -- Agriculture
T -- Technology
U -- Military Science
V -- Naval Science
Z -- Bibliography. Library Science. Information Resources (General)

Figure 2.1.1.1: The Library of Congress classification schedule. (Copyright Sara Klein)

Take Class L as an example:

L - EDUCATION

L Education (General)

LA History of education

LB Theory and practice of education

LC Special aspects of education

LD Individual institutions - United States

LE Individual institutions - America (except United States)

LF Individual institutions - Europe

LG Individual institutions - Asia, Africa, Indian Ocean islands, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific islands

LH College and school magazines and papers

LJ Student fraternities and societies, United States

LT Textbooks

With further subdivisions categorized by number and additional letters, books in call number order on a shelf might look something like this:

LB	LB	LC	LC	LC
2342	2342	196.5	212.42	212.52
.A685	.E97	.U6	H37	.D48
2011		T43	2021	2018
		2007		

Figure 2.1.1.1: Call numbers in order. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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2.1.2: In-text divisions

Information is usually organized within resources as well, using tables of contents and indexes, and chapters and chapter sections, or sections and subsections in books or articles:

- **Table of contents:** A list, usually at the beginning of a book, outlining the various chapters and/or sections of the work, and providing page numbers for ease of reference.
 - **Index:** A list, usually at the end of a book, identifying key concepts or topics in the work, alphabetized and with page numbers for ease of reference.
 - **Chapters/Sections:** A discrete portion of a book chapter or article, focused on a particular aspect of the main subject matter. Chapters may be subdivided by section, according to subtopics.
-

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2.1.3: Finding books in the library

There are two ways to find books in the library: searching for known items in a catalog that lists all of the items in a library's collection, and browsing through resources, with the hope of finding something useful. Both methodologies are perfectly acceptable, and often complement each other.

Locating a book by its call number requires searching the library catalog, then matching the call number listed in the catalog record to the book on the shelf. When you find the item you're looking for, you may want to browse books that are shelved nearby, to find other resources on the same or similar topics.

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2.1.4: Library database organization

Instead of the natural language you may use on a search engine such as Google (example: when was the first community college founded), databases need a different approach because they deliver results differently. Rather than returning results the way Google does based on popularity, marketing, your search history, and other categories, database results are based only on keywords and related terms, ranked by relevance to your topic (how closely the content of a result matches your search).

One way to conceptualize the way databases are organized is to compare the layout of a database to that of a grocery store. When you go to the store, you know where you'll find particular items because of the way the store is organized: Produce, Bakery, Deli, Meat, Frozen, etc. Within each of these departments, items are organized in a fairly logical manner according to categories and subcategories, down to divisions like brands and quantities, similarly to the way information is organized in libraries and databases. We'll discuss more about how to navigate this in module 4.

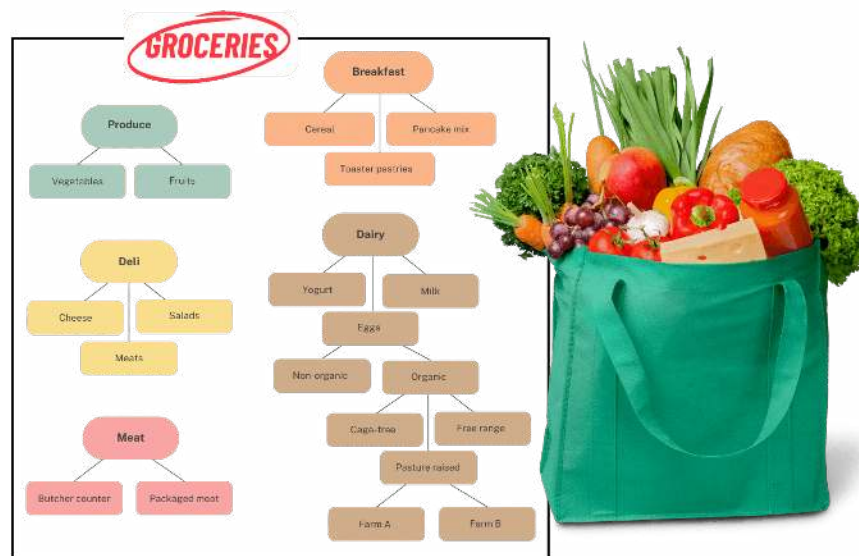


Figure 2.1.4.1: The grocery store model. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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2.2: Classroom Activity

Information Overload Think/Pair/Share

Have students discuss their information overload experiences and responses to those experiences in small groups; with the whole group, see what students have in common, and if anyone has tips to share. Discuss experiences, responses, and strategies to control information intake and reduce information overload and anxiety such as:

- Being thoughtful about the type, purpose, and quantity of information you engage with
- Put digital tools to work for you with note-taking apps, cloud storage, and citation matrices or citation management tools
- Brain dumping: write down thoughts and information to clarify, prioritize, and clear your mind
- Focusing on one task at a time, taking care to minimize distractions
- Taking information breaks to refresh and refocus

ALA Frame: Information Has Value

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2.3: Assignment

Information Consumption Diary

Observe the types and content of information you engage with on a daily basis for 48 hours by keeping an information diary, using the chart below (add rows as needed). Pay attention to the who, what, when, where, why, and how of your observations, as well as your senses.

Part 1: Record your exposure to, uses of, and interaction with various media and information. Jot down what media/interfaces/platforms/apps/sources you used. Make notes about your interaction with the information and your response to the information intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

Part 2: After 48 hours look over your chart. Consider how you would organize the information in the chart, and create a classification outline for your data. You can use the Library of Congress classification outline or a grocery store as models or create your own system!

Information Consumption in Diary

Type of media (websites, books, TV, games, etc.; be somewhat specific)	Time spent (how long did you engage with the information?)	Why did you choose this information source? (consider your age, race, sex, gender, employment, relationships, etc.)	Intellectual responses (what did you think about the information?)	Emotional response (did the information affect your mood? how?)	Physical response (did the information affect your physically? how?)	PART 2: Classification (you determine the categories for your entries when you're done recording them)
--	--	---	--	---	--	--

Example: web site article: "How to avoid information overload at work"	10 minutes	Looking for ways to decrease information overload	Seems like it had some good ideas	Helped me feel calmer and less anxious	My shoulders relaxed	Research

ALA Frames:

(Some inspiration from Franks, T. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/media-observer>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Bias in Information

[3.1: Readings](#)

[3.2: Classroom Activity](#)

[3.3: Assignment](#)

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3.1: Readings

Let's explore bias in information. Bias is a prejudice, inclination, or preference that affects our abilities to judge information impartially. We find bias not only in the ways we interact with information, but also how information is organized in libraries and how it is presented to us online. For example, the Library of Congress system (discussed in module 2) was developed in 1897, and the subject headings and their order reveal the biases in scholarship at the time, privileging an American perspective, Western European colonialism, and including systemic racism and sexism, among many other biases. Librarians are working to repair this, in the way subject headings are currently being used and added, to amplify the voices of marginalized communities.

In addition to the bias we see in how information is organized, bias is present in information sources, and in the ways we engage with information on a daily basis:

- Bias in the media is something we encounter all the time. The chart below (which is continuously updated; [click here to see the most recent version](#)) compares dozens of media outlets based on their relative political bias, with news value and reliability on the vertical axis and political leanings of the outlets on the horizontal axis ([Interactive Media Bias Chart](#)).

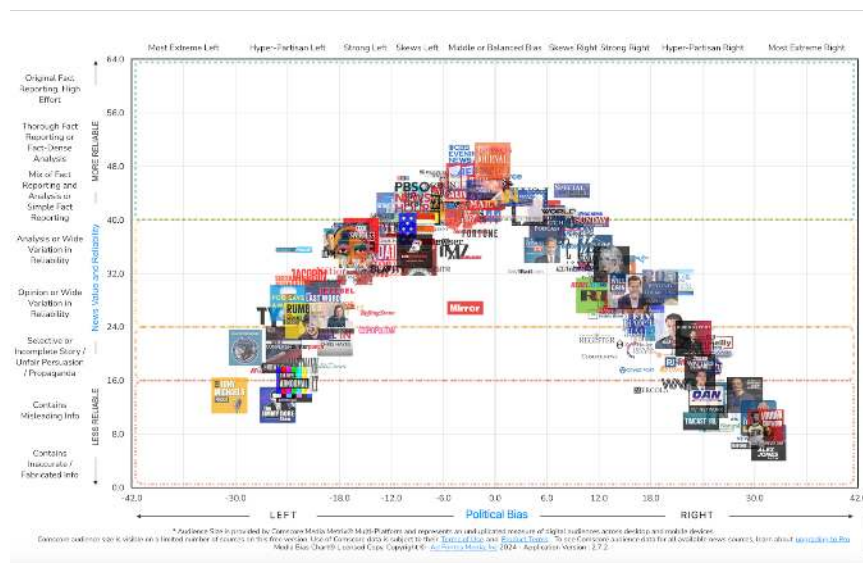


Figure 3.1.1: Interactive Media Bias Chart (screenshot 24.6.21).

- **Implicit bias or unconscious bias:** Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes affect how we engage with the world, from our perceptions, to decisions and actions. Implicit bias can contribute to people's unequal treatment, based on their race, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, and more.
- **Bias in Search Algorithms:** In addition to implicit bias, search engine algorithms can also perpetuate bias. These algorithms are complex sets of instructions that determine how search results are ranked and displayed. While algorithms are designed to be efficient, they can inherit and amplify biases present in the data they are trained on. For example, searching for a "successful entrepreneur" might return primarily results featuring men, reflecting a historical bias in the business world. Similarly, searching for a particular skill or profession might return gendered results, such as "nurse" returning mostly female results or "engineer" mostly male.

This report from the Kirwan Institute at The Ohio State University discusses implicit bias a bit further, and shows some of its serious real world consequences (<https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/2.6%20Implicit%20Bias.pdf>).

- **Confirmation bias:** People tend to favor information that matches their pre-existing expectations, beliefs, or hypotheses, and therefore confirms these ideas for them.

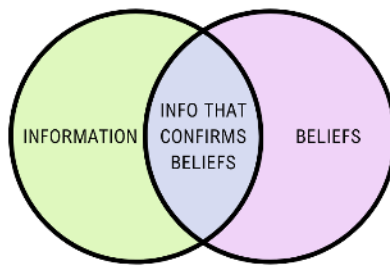


Figure 3.1.1: Confirmation bias Venn diagram. (Copyright Sara Klein)

On the web this is reflected back to us in filter bubbles, where our search results are pre-filtered by search engines according to what *they* think *we* want to see, according to our search histories.

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3.2: Classroom Activity

Survival of the Best Fit Game

Play the Survival of the Best Fit game together as a class: <https://www.survivalofthebestfit.com/>

Discussion questions:

- Was the decision-making of the algorithm straightforward and transparent?
- Are any of the criteria biased or could they be? Why were fewer blue applicants hired?
- What were the strengths of this machine learning algorithm?
- Who should be held accountable for the hiring decisions made by an algorithm?
- How could this algorithm be modified to increase fairness?

ALA Frame: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual

(Adapted from Hallman, S. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/rise-against-machines-understanding-algorithmic-bias>)

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3.3: Assignment

Assessing Bias in the News

Visit AllSides <https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news> and select a story that interests you. Compare and contrast the right, center, and left viewpoints under “Featured Coverage of this Story” (you will have to scroll down). Click on each article to read the full text.

Consider each of the following:

- Who wrote the source? Who owns/produces the source?
- Who advertises in the source? Are the advertisements appropriate for the source?
- Is there a political slant in the content?
- Does the content contain all the facts or at least present both sides of an argument fairly?
- What type of language is being used? Does the author use strong language or hyperbole?
- Do they back up their argument with factual evidence? Can you see where they got their evidence through links or citations?

Write a short reflection on this assignment, using complete sentences and proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Your reflection should be no more than 250 words.

Article title & political slant	Who wrote & published the source?	Who advertises in the source? Are the ads appropriate?	Are all facts presented, or are both sides present?	Type of language	Is there factual evidence? Are sources cited?
Example: <i>Biden Administration Proceeds with New \$1 Billion Weapons Package for Israel - <u>Right</u></i>	<i>National Review News</i>				
<i>Biden Moves Forward on \$1 Billion in New Arms for Israel - <u>Center</u></i>	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>				
<i>Despite Threats, Biden to Send Another \$1B of Weapons to Israel - <u>Left</u></i>	<i>Daily Beast</i>				

ALA Frame(s): Authority Is Constructed and Contextual

(Questions from *Identifying Bias* <https://libguides.uwgb.edu/bias>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: Designing and Building a Search

4.1: Readings

4.1.1: Database searching

4.1.2: The Toolbox

4.1.3: Database searching pro-tips

4.2: Classroom Activity

4.3: Assignment

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4.1: Readings

Where do you start when you need to find information? A shy, “Google,” is a common first response when a librarian asks this question. We use Google so routinely that “googling” has become a commonly-used term in our language.

In fact Google can be an excellent place to start your research, to find the general idea of a topic on a website such as Wikipedia or to find the most recent information about current events (see “Information Lifecycle” in module 1). However, search engines like Google organize information differently than library databases and catalogs (see module 2). Search engines use algorithms (processes designed for machine problem solving; more on this in module 14)) to rank and display results on various factors, including the relevance of the webpage content to your search terms, the authority of the source, and your own searching habits. This means that search engine results can be less predictable than those found in the library databases. Google Scholar works slightly differently and can be useful for finding scholarly information, but it doesn’t allow for the nuanced searches or content access that library databases and catalogs do.

You’ve probably heard that you should never use Wikipedia as a source for your research. This generally holds true for college level or academic research, but it is not to say that you should never think of Wikipedia as a credible source. There are plenty of reasons to use Wikipedia, from getting a general idea of a topic to beginning a research project, to finding additional (legitimate) resources on the topic.

Given all of these concerns about search engines and sites like Wikipedia, library databases are the best first place to begin your research.

	Library databases	Google	Google Scholar
Uses	Find information for academic research.	Search for anything and everything online, including professional and commercial websites, self-published content such as blogs, and much more.	Search across scholarly literature, across disciplines.
Organization	Content is arranged logically according to database schema, allowing for reliable and reproducible search results.	Google ranks web content based on many factors, including keywords, optimized content, sponsored advertising, site popularity, media quality, and your personal search history.	Google Scholar ranks documents according to the academic content, publication, author, and citations in other scholarly literature.
Content	Published sources such as magazines, newspapers, scholarly articles, books and eBooks, and videos.	Content varies.	Articles, theses, books, abstracts, and court opinions, from academic publishers, professional societies, online repositories, universities, and other websites.
Credibility	Reviewed for accuracy by publishers.	Variable. Credibility depends on the source.	Credibility is generally reliable, based on included content.
Cost	Paid for by the library and free for you to use.	Free, but some information is behind paywalls.	Free, but some information is behind paywalls.
Pros	The first place to look for research.	Can be helpful for research, but carefully evaluate all material.	Allows you to find related works, citations of works, authors, and publications, and to keep up with current research.

Figure 4.1.1: Comparison chart for library databases, Google, and Google scholar. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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4.1.1.1: Database searching

Here are some basic instructions for researching information using library databases:



Figure 4.1.1.1: The research process. (Copyright Sara Klein)

Plan ahead: The best way to start any project is to determine what you will need to do, and what your final product will be.

- Read your assignment carefully, well ahead of the due date
- Ask questions if something isn't clear
- Make sure you have enough time to complete your project before the due date, including proofreading and editing

Select a topic: To get started with your research, take some time to think carefully about what you want to investigate. Within the context of your assignment, select a topic that interests you personally, that you would like to learn more about. Also think about why the topic interests you. At this point in the process your topic should be fairly broad.

Ask a question: Research papers involve critical analysis of a complex issue, rather than simply reporting information on a topic. Your next step in the process will be to form a clear, focused, researchable question, which will determine how you do your research. One way to begin is to brainstorm or make a concept map or mind map about your topic: consider the context and different aspects, facets, or approaches to the topic, and write or draw out your thoughts, connecting your ideas, something like this:

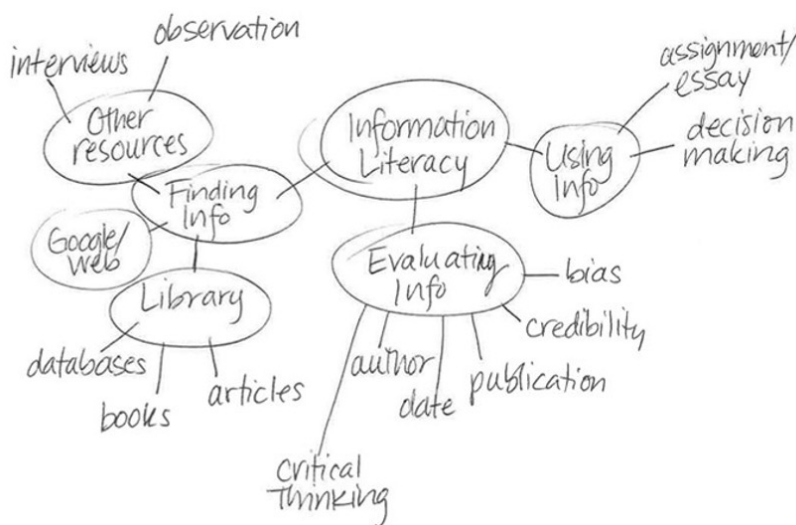


Figure 4.1.1.1: Mind map. (Copyright Sara Klein)

- Use these prompts to streamline and organize your thoughts and begin to think about a research question:
 - Is there a cause and effect related to your topic that you could explore? For example, how does X affect Y?
 - What do you already know about your topic? Does this relate to your interest in the topic?
 - What information do you need to know, to examine all aspects of the topic?
 - Can you narrow your topic to focus your research?

Once you've answered these questions you can form a specific question to guide your research, using the 5 Ws (who?, what?, when?, where?, why?) or how. Check to make sure your question is open-ended, and can't be answered simply with a yes or no. (You may want to compose a few questions and pick your favorite). For example:

How do college students evaluate and select the resources they use for research papers?

What effect does bias in news sources have on how people vote in local elections?

Note: Your research question is not the same as your thesis. For now you are focusing on finding information so that you can compose a thesis statement once you have the information you are looking for.

Before moving directly to your database search, examine your question. Is it:

- open-ended? Does it allow for multiple points of view on your topic?
- focused? Does it make the size of your topic more manageable?
- specific? What exactly are you investigating?
- answerable? Will you be reasonably able to find information to answer your question?

Design a search: Select the main ideas/words from your question and decide where you will use them to look for resources. Keep in mind that you can use synonyms and related terms as well. For example:

- **Question:** *What effect does bias in news sources have on how people vote in local elections?*
- **Keywords:** effect, bias, “news sources,” vote, “local elections” (you can put quotation marks (“”) around more than one word to create compound search terms)
- **Keyword synonyms:** impact, consequences, prejudice, newspapers, media outlets, online news content, (specific sites or apps: CNN, TikTok, etc.), voting, electing, (specific location: state or city), etc.

Do a search: Use your search terms to find results.

- Search more than one database. Some have overlapping content, but others differ.
- Using the Advanced Search function and at least 2 keywords will help you to search databases more efficiently and effectively because you will be focusing your query to find more specific content than you would otherwise.
- Use *Boolean operators* to link keywords in your search. Boolean operators are “a method of searching created by mathematician George Boole that uses the terms AND, OR, and NOT to broaden or narrow a search. ... For instance, AND allows two different but related terms to be searched, which narrows down your search to be more specific. An example would be [bias AND news sources], which would search all of the literature first on [bias], but then limit to only the articles that were written about [bias in news sources]. The operator OR allows you to search two like terms and have the results of both searches appear on the same page. An example of using OR would be to search for [news sources OR media outlets], which would return results that used either of the two forms of the term. NOT excludes certain terms from being included in a search. In the same vein as the other example searches, you may be interested in finding out only about [bias in media outlets], but not [bias in social media] ([Hisle, D. & Webb, K.](#), 53).”

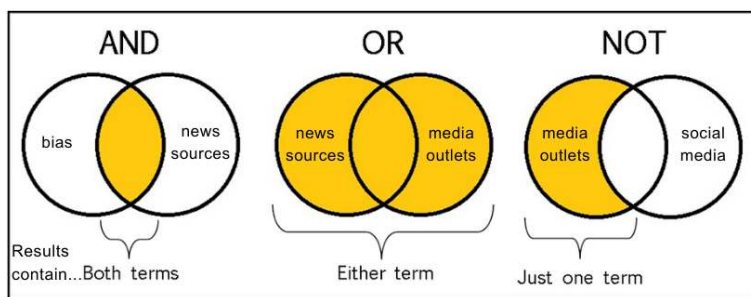


Figure 4.1.1.1: Boolean operators and their descriptions. (Copyright Sara Klein)

You can add search terms beyond what the database defaults to; add a search box with another Boolean operator and your additional term:



Figure 4.1.1.1: Search with Boolean operators. (Copyright Sara Klein)

Modify your search: Filter your results to be more or less specific and/or adjust search terms. Keep in mind that research is an exploration of a topic. As you are doing your research, you may discover information that examines a more interesting (or easier to research) question, and decide to modify your own question.

- Use database filters to find full text, to read the entire article; apply other filters as well, such as for resource types, publication dates, or geography or location. Depending on your topic, it's usually best to limit your results by dates, focusing on sources from the last 5 years or so. This will ensure that you are getting the most recent information on a particular topic. Of course, if you're searching a historical topic you may not want to apply this limit.
- Adjust your filters and/or keywords to find the best results. Try different terms or combinations of terms. Make use of search terms that are suggested in the database since they match the basic descriptive subject terms of the database, kind of like the signs in a grocery store. You can also add these subject terms to your list of keywords to search in any database.
- While you are searching for sources, consider where the information is coming from and what biases might be present.

Find key resources: Review your search results to find the best resources for your purposes.

- After gathering information from multiple sources and viewpoints, especially for controversial topics, compare your sources.
- Do sources agree? If not, you will want to dig deeper to investigate.
- Take a closer look at the sources in your results list, starting with the titles and the abstracts.

If you find a source that looks promising and you want to know more about it:

- (Note: If you have a choice between HTML and PDF full-text, always select the PDF).
- Read the conclusion as well as the abstract.
- If the source still looks useful, skim it and look for the most relevant sections for your purposes; read those more closely, and add the source to a citation matrix (see below).
 - Use the "Cite" and "Permalink" buttons in the database toolbox (see below).
- At this point it is a good idea to print out a paper copy of an electronic source and annotate it by hand (If you are using a library book, do not write in the book! Take clear notes in a notebook or on your device, or annotate a copy of relevant pages.)
- Be prepared to cross-reference (look for similar information in other sources) or conduct further research.
- If you decide to quote information from a source that comes from another resource, locate the original source to use for your citation.

Present your work: Share what you've learned.

- Use your sources to support your argument and be sure to cite them! When you're researching, keep a record of all of the sources you think you *might* use for your project. This can be in a Word or Google doc, pages in a notebook, in a citation matrix like the one below, or whatever works best for you. Setting this up at the beginning of your research will help you out in the long run, especially if you need to write an annotated bibliography.

<u>Citation</u>	<u>Link</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Summary or Annotation</u>	<u>Possible quotes</u>

Example: Porfirio, L., Chavarin, A., Linzy, M., Lopez, H., & Montiel, A. (2023). Students Take the Lead: Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Adult Education through Ambassador Training. <i>COABE Journal: The Resource for Adult Education</i>, 12(1), 52–60.	https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ss&db=a9h&AN=163643662&site=ehost-live&custid=s9211204 (requires credentials for access)	Use as an example of adult education students advocating for diversity and inclusion in their school environment.	(from article abstract) “Ambassador training ... creates networks of diverse learners who use their voices, stories, and skills for advocacy and social change. ... The authors examined ambassador training through ... “lens of their own experiences and provided the resulting recommendations to the field....”	“Students need to see themselves in our curriculum, materials, literature, content, and as the ultimate experts on adult education in advocacy and leadership roles” (55-56).

We’ll discuss citations, intellectual property, and annotated bibliographies in more depth in the following modules.

Do it all over again! Start a new or related search using the same strategy. You may need to go through this multiple times for different facets of a single research project.

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4.1.2: The Toolbox

Every database you encounter will have filters, just like shopping websites, where you can sort and limit your search results, based on the way the information is organized. There is often a “toolbox” near the top or at a side of the screen, with buttons labeled “Save,” “Cite, Share,” “Permalink,” etc. The placement and look of the toolbox will vary, depending on the database you’re using. Let’s take a quick look at a database record:

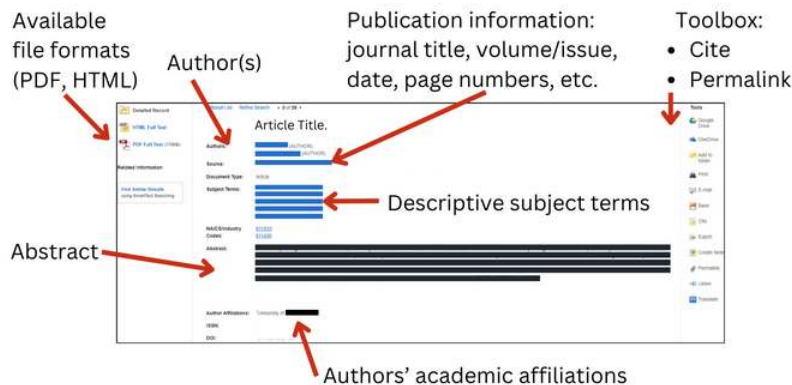


Figure 4.1.2.1: Database record example. (Copyright Sara Klein)

The most important of these functions are *Cite* and *Permalink*:

- “Cite” takes you to citations in various styles including MLA and APA for that resource. Your instructor will let you know which citation style they want you to use. Select the citation in the prescribed style, copy, and paste it into your citation matrix.
 - *Note:* The pasted citation will most likely not be formatted exactly correctly for your paper. Before you finalize your project and turn it in, check the citation formatting against the MLA or APA handbook, or check it on [Purdue OWL](#), Purdue University’s online writing lab website.
- “Permalink” or “Stable URL” provides a link directly back to the resource, that you will be able to return to using your academic login credentials for subscription-based library databases. Without this link you may not be able to access the resource again, unless you reconstruct your original search.

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4.1.3: Database searching pro-tips

Database searching pro-tips

- Not all databases contain the same information. Some have overlapping content, while others will differ. Use more than one for research.
- Use advanced search with at least 2 keywords + Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) to narrow or broaden your results and get to relevant resources more quickly. You can also put quotation marks ("") around a term to create a compound keyword.
- When viewing the full text of an article, always select the PDF version vs. HTML.
- Use the database toolbox to cite, share, and more; the permalink provides a direct link to the article, using your academic login credentials.
- Mine bibliographies of relevant resources and use "Related Search" functions for related articles and information.

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4.2: Classroom Activity

Research workshop & diary.

Give a brief overview demo of the research process and where/how to find sources, as with a one-shot. Reserve at least half of the class period for students to experiment and explore the topics they chose in the first week. They should find at least one good resource to use to begin building their citation matrix before the end of class. Check in with each student individually at least once to help with questions and pointers while they are trying out tools and strategies. Ask students to take notes on their searches:

Resource used (name of database, search tool, etc.)	Search terms used	Search strategies used (keywords, synonyms, related words, subject tags, etc.)	Results (Number of results for this search)	Relevant materials (list all you found relevant)	Adjustments made to search strategy (what did you change as a result of this search?)	Reflection on the resource & search strategies/results (1-2 sentences)

ALA Frames: Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration

(Archambault, S. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/research-diary>)

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4.3: Assignment

Research matrix

Students should have at least 2 resources in their matrix before the next class. (See above for more info).

Citation (copy from database)	Link (copy permalink)	Purpose	Summary or Annotation	Possible quotes

ALA Frames: Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: Citations and Plagiarism

5.1: Readings

5.1.1: Scholarship as a conversation

5.1.2: Plagiarism

5.1.3: Citation basics

5.1.4: Notes on quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing

5.2: Classroom Activity

5.3: Assignment

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5.1: Readings

How and why are citations important in scholarly conversations? How are they related to the Big P (plagiarism)? How do you create a citation anyway? We'll discuss these questions and more in this module.

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5.1.1: Scholarship as a conversation

"To participate in college-level research is to engage with a chain of debate and scholarship that extends well beyond any individual scholar or researcher's efforts. As new knowledge builds on or upends older established knowledge, a conversation of sorts develops across time. When we conduct or synthesize the research or writings of others in a college-level research paper, we participate in that conversation" ([Hisle & Webb, 1.6](#)).

"We are capable of original thought. But much of what we think about is based on what we have learned from others' contributions. Even Albert Einstein, a very original thinker, learned from others and then worked on problems many in the field had identified (Stachel, 2005).

"He [Einstein] had been probing the edifice erected by his predecessors in this field [theoretical physics] for its strengths and weaknesses..." (Stachel, 2005, p. 215). All our work is based on generations of work that has come before us. Our predecessors read and used the work of their predecessors. With gratitude, it is only right that we acknowledge the work of others on which our thoughts and works are grounded.

Legal protection for the creator of a work (article, book, writings, music, photograph...) is called copyright. We can use copyrighted works if permission is given by the copyright holder or if it falls under fair use. Fair use is a list of four criteria that, when met, allow for the legal use of copyrighted works.

Plagiarism is the use of any work (with or without copyright) without giving credit to the creator, the originator of the work (author of a book or article...). Plagiarism is unethical and is against the code of conduct of universities and colleges. Citing the work of others that we use is how we give credit to the creators, the originators of the works. To do this you will use both in-text citations in written works and full citations at the end of your work, or project. The latter is called References (in APA) or Works Cited (in MLA)." (Paragraphs 2-5: [Withers, 3](#)).

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5.1.2: Plagiarism

You know it's not good. But what is plagiarism, exactly?

"All our work is based on generations of work that has come before us. Our predecessors read and used the work of their predecessors. It is only right that we acknowledge the work of others that we use. Plagiarism is failing to do this honest thing and is not acceptable. Plagiarism is passing off other's work as our own or not citing our sources. Here is a bit about what some of the universities have to say about plagiarism.

San Diego State University (n.d.) says, in part,

Plagiarism is defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the university as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source.

University of California, Berkeley Graduate Division (n.d.) says, in part,

Plagiarism is defined as the use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source. Some examples:

- Copying passages from works of others into one's homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation, without acknowledgement.
- Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another, without acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other rhetorical device, without acknowledgement.

An increasingly common form of plagiarism is copying and pasting papers or articles from the internet, simply purchasing prewritten papers from on-line paper mills, [or using content written by ChatGPT or another AI tool]. **Fortunately, this sort of plagiarism is also increasingly easy to detect**" (Adapted from Withers, et al., 3.3).

We'll discuss AI in more depth in module 14.

You can use this handy infographic to check your work for plagiarism (click the image to access the original):

5.1.3: Citation basics

Why we cite

To participate in college-level research is to engage with a chain of debate and scholarship that extends well beyond any individual scholar or researcher's efforts. As new knowledge builds on or upends older established knowledge, a conversation of sorts develops across time. When we conduct or synthesize the research or writings of others in a college-level research paper, we participate in that conversation. Key to holding this vast enterprise together is the notion of citation.

Citation is how scholars acknowledge or point to the work of earlier scholars. Ideally, citation provides a standard means for tracking down the research of others by providing sufficient information about the original source so it can be easily found. Citations typically include things like article titles, journal titles, authors, dates, and publication information. Citations will look different depending on citation style, discipline of study, and the format and nature of the information itself. The purpose is the same: to make the original source of any information you reference easily findable by others. This is our responsibility as participants in research. One day others may use your work in their own research, and those future authors will be obligated to cite you.

Citation also allows you to avoid plagiarism. Most every educational institution has some sort of academic integrity policy that outlines a student's responsibilities as a researcher.

These policies may vary slightly from institution to institution, but typically warn against two behaviors:

1. **Committing plagiarism.** Plagiarism is when we use the ideas or research of others and fail to attribute those ideas or research to the original authors. This is a form of theft easily remedied by extensive use of citation. Did you get an idea from a book, article, or website? Cite it as specifically as possible. Did you find a terrific graph or image online that you want to include in your paper? Cite it. Using a quote from any source? Cite.
2. **Self-plagiarizing.** This happens when you submit work you completed in one class for a different class. Most syllabi expressly forbid this. If you are considering using your previous work for a current project, be sure to cite yourself and to note how extensively you are reusing the work. Also be sure to talk to your instructor. What constitutes self-plagiarism may seem murky to you, but your instructor may have bright red lines over what is and isn't allowed in a particular class.

Why are there so many citation styles?

One common frustration with student researchers is the need to learn more than one citation style. You may learn MLA in an English composition class, but may also need to learn APA for a sociology class, or Chicago style citation for a history class. Why are there so many? Styles have developed for the most part organically to reflect the needs of different areas of study. While the differences between styles may seem arbitrary, they emerge from how scholars in various fields cite sources and present their research. For example, historians often use the Chicago style. Why? One reason is that Chicago accommodates the footnotes and endnotes essential to history researchers in a way other styles do not.

[The three citation styles that are most commonly used, and the fields that they are typically used in are:

- MLA (Modern Language Association) - humanities
- APA (American Psychological Association) - education, psychology, and the sciences
- Chicago/Turabian (University of Chicago) - business, history, and the fine arts]

How we cite

Most databases and many library discovery tools will include a citation feature, providing student researchers with an auto-generated citation of the article or book they are viewing. While no auto-generated citation builder is perfect, these tools can be helpful for creating a references or works cited page, or an annotated bibliography. Even Google Scholar includes a citation tool for creating citations in multiple styles.

More serious student researchers may want to consider using bibliographic management software for their research-based projects. Products such as RefWorks, EndNote, Zotero, and Mendeley allow researchers to easily save citations to articles and books as they conduct their research. Whether a student is using a library database, Google Scholar, or their library's discovery service, useful citations can be quickly exported to the bibliographic management tool and saved for use later. Many of these tools also allow users to store copies of the articles themselves and can even generate bibliographies. Some of the more robust bibliographic management tools can create citations in hundreds of different citation styles, greatly reducing the amount of time and effort required to create high-quality reference or works cited pages. Citations can also be organized by project, allowing researchers to easily share their

citations with colleagues and collaborators. Contact your library to see what bibliographic management software your campus supports. Many of these products are free, but some require a subscription.

Also consider asking a professor in your field what software is used most frequently in your field" (adapted from Hisle & Webb, 1.6).

What about the structures of citations? Citations have 2 main parts: a brief reference within a document (in-text citations or footnotes, or endnotes at the end of the document), and a detailed reference at the end of the document, as part of a list of all of the references used for the document:

- Brief reference within text:
 - In-text citations: brief references, noted in parentheses () within the text of a document, directly following quoted, paraphrased, or summarized content from an outside source
 - Footnotes: brief references, listed at the bottom of a page, within the text of a document
 - Endnotes: brief references, listed at the end of a document
- Detailed references at the end of a text:
 - Bibliography/Works Cited/Reference List: a collection of complete references, including author, title, and publication information (publisher and date published), generally listed in alphabetic order by author's last name for each source used for or cited within a document

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5.1.4: Notes on quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing

There are a few ways to properly borrow information from resources, and incorporate them into your work. As scholars in a conversation, we are obligated to adhere to these rules of academic integrity, the moral code for demonstrating that we are committed to honesty and ethical behavior in research and academics. According to [Purdue OWL](#), the Purdue University Online Writing Lab:

- "Quotations must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author. [Note: If you are quoting a passage that comes from an earlier resource, track that source down and use the original source for your quotation]
- Paraphrasing involves putting a passage from source material into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a somewhat broader segment of the source and condensing it slightly.
- Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material" ([Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing](#)).

The Purdue OWL is an excellent resource for finding information about citations (including how to format them), plagiarism, writing, and more. It is freely available at any time to anyone with an internet connection. You can access it at: <https://owl.purdue.edu/index.html> or by googling "[Purdue OWL](#)."

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5.2: Classroom Activity

Scholarship as a Literal Conversation: Quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing

This activity helps students collectively practice summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting. To begin, students have a conversation as a class on any topic of their choosing. The instructor transcribes the conversation and then as a group, the class examines the conversation and writes summaries, paraphrases and quotes.

The instructor can prepare a few suggested topics on conversation - but they should be general and only be used to prompt a student conversation if they do not suggest their own topic.

OUTLINE:

1. Introduce Scholarship as Conversation (using [Burke's Parlor](#) is one option) - 5 minutes
2. Ask students to conduct a conversation on a topic of their choosing - 10 minutes
- Instructor transcribes the conversation as it takes place, projected onto a screen for everyone to see
- Make sure to include student names so you know who said what. If you use first names during the conversation, at the end, take a moment to discuss academic writing, and how we use last names, and change the names as needed. Or you can have that conversation at the beginning and start with last names.
- Ask probing questions to push the conversation forward if necessary (e.g. Why do you think Marvel is better than DC Comics? Can you tell us more about Wonder Woman and why you like her?)
3. Have students examine the conversation they have as transcribed. Ask them to, individually or in groups, summarize the conversation they just had, include in-text citations. - 2-5 minutes
4. To practice paraphrasing, instructor should begin by writing a BAD paraphrase, only changing one word. Ask the class what they think of the paraphrase, and discuss why this doesn't work. - 2-5 minutes
5. Then have the class, individually or in small groups, write their own paraphrase, including in-text citations 2-5 minutes
6. Lastly, individually or in small groups, have students write their own sentence quoting the conversation, including in-text citations. 2-5 minutes
7. Share the document with students after the class for reference.

Alternative suggestion: have students anonymously submit their summaries, paraphrases and quotes via a google form, then analyze them collectively as a class.

ALA Frame: Scholarship as Conversation

(Adapted from Rusk, F. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/scholarship-literal-conversation>)

-OR-

Play some games!

- Goblin Threat Plagiarism game <https://libguides.mssu.edu/c.php?g=185283&p=1223333>
- Online Citation Games <https://researchguides.ccc.edu/c.php?g=575336&p=3967681>

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Scholarship as Conversation

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5.3: Assignment

Citation exercise

This assignment will familiarize you with citing various types of sources. Please provide an MLA or APA (your choice) citation for all entries. You can consult the appropriate handbook, or Purdue OWL for help. Do NOT use citation generators! All of your responses must be done only by you.

- Select a quote from a scholarly journal article. Write a short paragraph introducing the source and the author, and incorporate the quote
- Locate 2 scholarly journal articles and provide a citation for each
- Locate 2 secondary sources; select a quote and provide a citation for each, in alphabetical order by author
- Cite one of each in alphabetical order by author:
 - A book w/one author
 - A book w/one editor
 - A book w/multiple authors or editors
- Cite a quote from an article in a major print or online newspaper
- Cite a YouTube video
- Cite an entire website

ALA Frame: Scholarship as Conversation

(Modified from Freeman https://libguides.hccfl.edu/ld.php?content_id=39947116)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: Evaluating Sources

6.1: Readings

6.1.1: The SIFT Method

6.2: Classroom Activity

6.3: Assignment

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6.1: Readings

How do you evaluate information? How do you decide what information has value? What does value even mean in this context?

Just like other raw materials, information has value that depends on social contexts; that value can be economic or cultural, and its value can change, depending on where it comes from and what is done with it. When things have value, access to them is often restricted based on some type of privilege. This is important to think about in the context of academic research and library resources.

Much of the world's population doesn't have reliable internet access, if they have it at all. This difference defines the digital divide: the "haves" and "have nots" when it comes to accessing digital resources and information. Just like economic privilege, the information privilege of those who have access gives them advantages over those who do not.

With most of the world unable to access digital information reliably, consider how many voices are not represented, how many are silenced, and also whose voices are the loudest and reach the farthest, what information is shared, and how bias and all sorts of privilege frame this idea: the value of information is related to socioeconomic status, and within that, also to historical privileges and biases related to racism, sexism, ableism, gender bias, religious bias, and more.

The image below represents what (in this case, white) privilege might look like in everyday situations ([Duke University](#)).

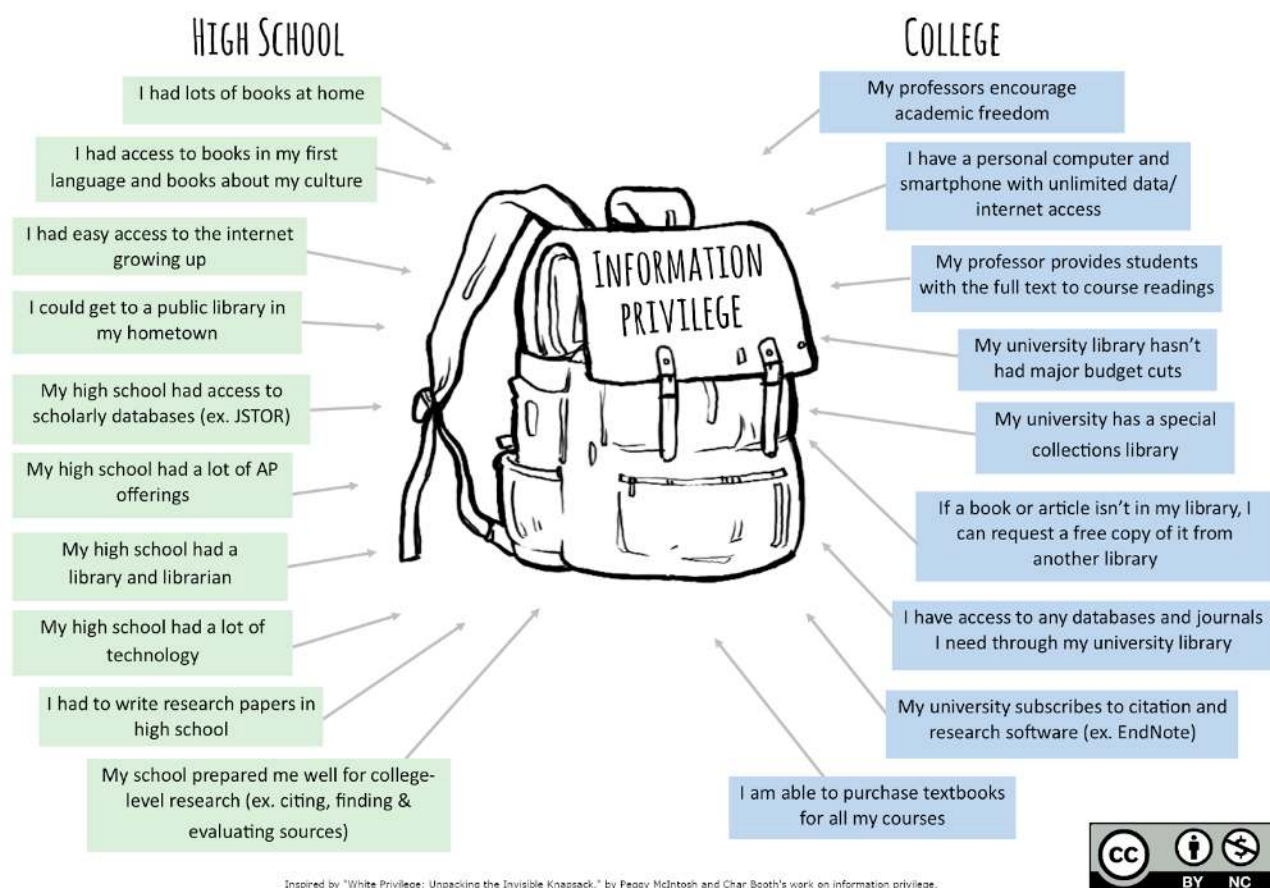


Figure 6.1.1: Information Privilege Backpack. (Copyright [Duke University](#))

As users of an open educational resource (OER), we are fortunate to have digital access to information. We can use this privilege in many ways, including to make positive changes in the world. However, a lot of information on the internet is behind paywalls, further limiting access for people who can't afford to pay for it, or for those who choose not to pay the fees. In this sense, the value of information is literally tied to money. One benefit of having access to libraries is that libraries pay subscription fees to database companies, allowing you to access their contents essentially for free.

Above all, critical thinking is essential for evaluating information. Rather than the negative connotations the term “critical” can have, critical thinking refers to the reasoned process of gathering, analyzing, and evaluating information in order to guide decision-making.

Here are some general tips for evaluating the information you encounter, no matter the context:

- Always nurture a healthy sense of skepticism, but stay open-minded
- Read laterally: compare sources and look for additional information if sources don’t agree
- Consider the source of the information and fact check or investigate its credibility
 - author’s credentials (check their professional associations or personal website)
 - website’s “about” section, mission statement, or other background information (a quick Google or Wikipedia search can often tell you what you need to know)
- Examine links and references cited for content and reliability
- Check publication and revision dates
- Ask yourself whether the content seems sensational or promotional
- Be aware of filter bubbles and your own biases

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6.1.1.1: The SIFT Method

The [SIFT Method](#) was developed by [Mike Caulfield](#) at Washington State University for analyzing information, especially news or other online media. Learn about it [here](#) (Butler, et al).

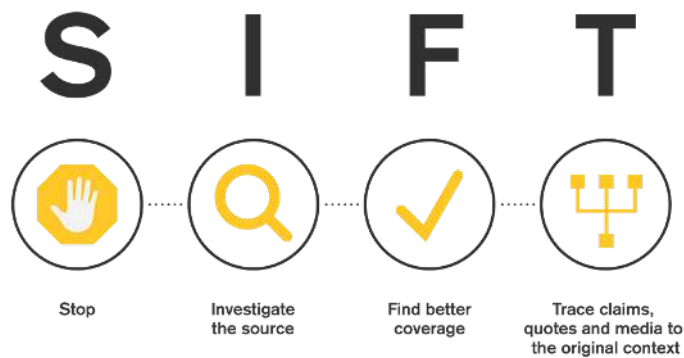


Figure 6.1.1.1: SIFT: The four moves. (Copyright [Mike Caulfield](#))

At this point you may be wondering why we haven't covered evaluation of truth in information more specifically, "fake news," and information disorder (mis-, dis-, and mal-information) yet. Don't worry! These will all be discussed in depth in module 13.

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6.2: Classroom Activity

SIFT technique source evaluation

Examine a set of web pages. (Instructors may wish to recommend certain websites, depending on the course content and learning goals.) Note reasons why these web pages are or are not appropriate for college level student research or for in-class use. Explain the value (or lack thereof) of each web page to academic research. In your assessment provide the criteria you used to evaluate the pages and the reasoning behind your evaluations.

ALA Frames: Information Has Value

(Trask, G. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/source-evaluation-sift-technique>)

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6.3: Assignment

Information Evaluation Worksheet

This worksheet will guide you through the process of carefully and critically evaluating a resource on your chosen topic.

Select a resource from your citation matrix to analyze in detail, then respond to each of the prompts below. Be sure to include the citation for your source. *Your responses do not need to include answers to every single question*, but should include as much information as possible for your selected resource. Each response should be at least a couple of sentences. Use complete sentences and proper grammar, and correct spelling and punctuation.

Source citation: _____

- What type of resource is the material (primary, secondary, scholarly, popular, etc.)?
- What information does the resource contain? Does it match other resources on the same topic? Is there more complete, accurate, or less-biased information elsewhere? How closely does the information relate to your topic? Is the content well-written? Does the language used seem sensational or neutral?
- What is the context of the information? Is it presented in its original context, taken out of context, or put in a certain frame that changes its meaning for the reader?
- How is the information presented visually? Does the information source contain sponsorship, ads, or other unrelated information?
- Who is the author? What's their expertise? What's their record for fairness or accuracy? Does the author cite supporting sources? What is the quality of their sources and citations?
- Where was the information published? What is the context in which the information was published? Who sponsors the resource or publisher financially?
- When was the material published? Does it contain the most up-to-date information? If the information is in a subject area that is evolving, when was it last updated? Was the material peer-reviewed, tested, or otherwise verified?
- Why was the information published (to inform, entertain, persuade, sell, etc.; does the author or publisher have an agenda?)?

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Authority is Constructed and Contextual

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

7: Annotations

[7.1: Readings](#)

[7.2: Classroom Activity](#)

[7.3: Assignment](#)

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7.1: Readings

Anno-what?? An annotation is a note that explains or discusses a piece of information. It is also used as a verb, “to annotate:” the activity of making notes about a resource or topic. Annotations are important for research in a couple of ways. You can annotate sources while you are reading them to highlight key ideas or passages, jot down your observations about the content for later use or analysis, and more. Or you may be asked to write an annotated bibliography for an assignment. This is also something a scholar might do when they are researching a topic, and they want to know what has already been contributed to a relevant scholarly conversation.

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations with brief notes for each resource in the list, summarizing each resource and analyzing its usefulness in terms of:

- the value of evidence and arguments in the resource
- the qualifications and credibility of the author(s) and publication source
- how the resource will support your argument or thesis

You may use an annotated bibliography for many reasons, including:

- organizing the results of your research, to compare resources, or to formulate a thesis
- gathering major sources on a topic, also known as a literature review
- providing an overview of a subject area
- demonstrating your research on a subject
- analyzing strengths and weaknesses of resources on a particular subject

All of these make using a citation matrix like the one mentioned in module 4 a good practice. It will make your research, writing, and any annotated bibliographies, a much more streamlined process.

Annotated bibliographies are most often organized alphabetically by author’s last name, or chronologically in order of publication. Each entry for an annotated bibliography consists of two parts: a regular citation and an annotation for each source. Typically annotations should include:

- a brief summary, completely in your own words
- the value of evidence and arguments in the resource
- the qualifications and credibility of the author(s) and publication source
- how the resource relates to your argument or thesis

The summaries in annotated bibliographies should be short and to-the-point, but also use complete sentences and proper spelling, and correct grammar and punctuation. Because annotations are narrative, sentences should flow smoothly from one to the next. An annotated bibliography should look something like this:

Annotated Bibliography (DRAFT)

Your Name

Alastname, F. M. (Year). *Book title*. Publisher.

An overview of the resource (1-2 short paragraphs), including a very brief summary of the resource, completely in your own words. An explanation of how the resource is connected to your approved topic.

Your evaluation of the resource in terms of authorship/publication, quality of content, context, timeliness, etc. An explanation of why and how this resource is useful for your research.

Blastname, F. M., & Other-Lastname, F. M. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, Vol. (Issue), page numbers. DOI

An overview of the resource (1-2 short paragraphs), including a very brief summary of the resource, completely in your own words. An explanation of how the resource is connected to your approved topic.

Your evaluation of the resource in terms of authorship/publication, quality of content, context, timeliness, etc. An explanation of why and how this resource is useful for your research.

Clastname, F. M. (n.d.). *Title of page*. Site name. URL

An overview of the resource (1-2 short paragraphs), including a very brief summary of the resource, completely in your own words. An explanation of how the resource is connected to your approved topic.

Your evaluation of the resource in terms of authorship/publication, quality of content,

Figure 7.1.1: Mock up of annotated bibliography. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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7.2: Classroom Activity

Group annotation

Using a short article, have the class work together, either as a whole or in small groups, depending on the size of the class, to compose an annotation for a source. Suggested article:

Mowreader, A. (2024, February 19). What Helps Students Feel Like They Belong?: Research from the University of Illinois finds college students derive belongingness from four factors. Having the cultural capital to navigate higher education matters most to students from racial and ethnic minority groups. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/student-success/college-experience/2024/02/19/study-evaluates-four-factors-college-student>

ALA Frames: Information Creation as a Process, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation

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7.3: Assignment

Annotated bibliography

Taking the focused topic you've been working with in earlier modules, use the skills you've been developing to search for, evaluate, and select 2-3 quality information sources on your topic.

For each resource, provide:

- A citation in proper APA or MLA format
- A short overview of the resource (1-2 short paragraphs), including:
 - A very brief summary of the resource, completely in your own words
 - An explanation of how the resource relates to your argument or thesis
 - Your evaluation of the resource in terms of the author's credentials, publication source, the quality of content, context, etc.

Use proper APA or MLA format, complete sentences, and proper grammar and punctuation. Each annotation should consist of 1-2 brief paragraphs, around 100-200 words in total length. Sources should be listed in alphabetical order by author's last name.

ALA Frames: Information Creation as a Process, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: Intellectual Property

8.1: Readings

8.1.1: Copyright

8.1.2: Fair use

8.1.3: Copyright and AI

8.1.4: Creative Commons

8.1.5: Public domain

8.2: Classroom Activity

8.3: Assignment

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8.1: Readings

Now that we have some foundational knowledge, let's look at information from another perspective: the ownership of information and the rights that go along with ownership. Intellectual property (IP) refers to ideas as things of value that are owned by their creators. This includes inventions, works of literature, music, and visual arts including symbols and logos, and much more as well. Intellectual property may be created and owned by an individual or by an entity such as a software company, which brings up complex legal and ethical questions about the rights of individuals vs. groups, and whether corporations can or should have the same rights as individuals. We'll discuss this idea in a moment.

Intellectual property law oversees intellectual property owners' rights and the enforcement of those rights, such as how ownership can be demonstrated, communicated, controlled, or shared. You've most likely heard of copyright, which is a type of intellectual property law.

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8.1.1: Copyright

According to the United Nations, copyright is a universal human right ([United Nations](#)). The United States government defines copyright as "a type of intellectual property that protects original works of authorship as soon as an author fixes the work in a tangible form of expression" ([What is Copyright?](#)). This means that any work that is authored or made by anyone, and is put into some sort of physical or digital form, is automatically copyrighted, and that copyright is present in our lives all of the time. A copyright owner (literally the one who has the *right to copy*) controls who can:

- reproduce their work (whether it is published or not)
- distribute copies of their work through selling, renting, lending, or giving it away, or by licensing the work to someone else for distribution
- perform or display the work in public
- make derivative works such as translations, adaptations, and reinterpretations

U.S. copyright law is incredibly complex, but here are some basic points:

- Copyright is protected by the U.S. Constitution
- Works published in the U.S. have copyright protection for 70 years after the death of the creator or 95 years after publication if the creator is a corporation
- Copyright protects original works including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture
- Not protected by copyright are: facts, ideas, procedures, processes, slogans, principles, or discoveries
- Government documents, including images, are generally not protected by copyright, but it's always best to cite them to avoid possible plagiarism
- Registration with the U.S. Copyright office is not required unless you want to argue your case in court, though many register their works to have a public record of their copyright

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8.1.2: Fair use

Can resources ever be reused or adapted without the copyright owner's permission? In certain cases, yes; this is called Fair Use. Fair Use of a work is usually allowed if it is being used for purposes of "criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research" ([U.S. Copyright Office](#)). Section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Act helps to identify Fair Use based on the following criteria, among others:

- Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes
- Nature of the copyrighted work ... and the degree to which the work that was used relates to copyright's purpose of encouraging creative expression
- Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole
- Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work ([ibid.](#)).

Even when you are reasonably sure that you are making fair use of a work, you should still cite the source.

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8.1.3: Copyright and AI

What does this all mean when we consider generative AI, or artificial intelligence that produces what could be argued to be original works, in relation to copyright? This short article by attorney Lloyd J. Jassin discusses exactly that question: [Generative AI vs. Copyright: An attorney examines what artificial intelligence will mean for the publishing industry](#).

Keep in mind that as technology develops and alters the information landscape, copyright law needs to adapt as well.

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ND: No derivatives or adaptations of the work are permitted.

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If you are creating a work and want to give it a CC license, the [License Chooser](#) can help you “select the appropriate license for your work” ([License Chooser](#)). These licenses can be tricky to use, however, partly because when works that are CC-licensed are reused, new works need to be licensed under the same, or a compatible license. This chart makes it easy to sort out which licenses are compatible:

	 PUBLIC DOMAIN	 PUBLIC DOMAIN	 CC BY	 CC BY-SA	 CC BY-NC	 CC BY-NC-SA	 CC BY-ND	 CC BY-NC-SA
 PUBLIC DOMAIN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
 PUBLIC DOMAIN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
 CC BY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
 CC BY-SA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
 CC BY-NC	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
 CC BY-NC-SA	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
 CC BY-ND	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
 CC BY-NC-SA	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Figure 8.1.4.1: CC License Chooser. (Copyright [Kennisland](#))

Google allows you to search for CC-licensed images from their main search page. As illustrated below, under Tools, select Usage Rights, and then Creative Commons licenses. Be sure to double check licensing before using any images you find this way.

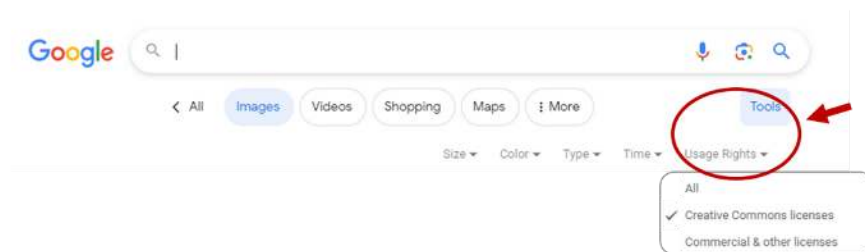


Figure 8.1.4.1: Google image search; CC licenses. (Copyright Sara Klein)

If you would like to see what CC-licensed content is available in a variety of media, including music, videos, and more, and from many different resources, you can use Openverse, the Creative Commons search tool:

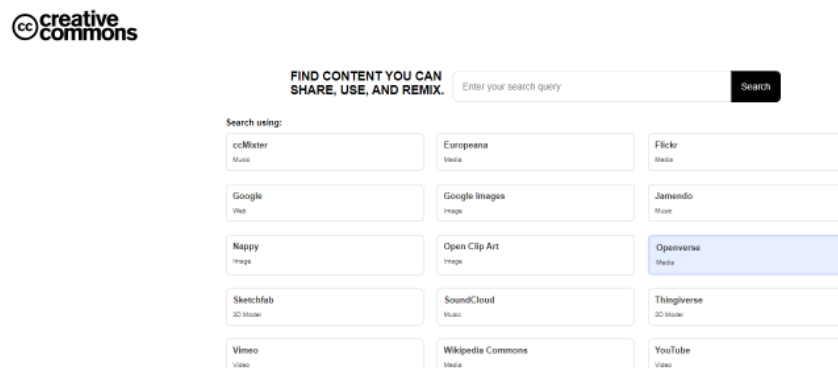


Figure 8.1.4.1: Openverse CC content finder. (Copyright [Openverse](#))

Remember that these licenses are meant to work with copyright. No matter how you are using CC-licensed content, you still need to cite your sources according to the content’s original license.

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8.1.5: Public domain

Some works are not protected under IP law, and are free for anyone to use however they want! These works are in the public domain, meaning that no individual creator can claim ownership. Just like other things with intellectual property, Public Domain has its exceptions, but generally speaking works can enter the public domain in several ways. Some common ones are:

- the copyright expired (this happens 70 years after the death of the creator or 95 years after publication if the creator is a corporation), or the owner has not renewed the copyright
- the work isn't in a fixed, recorded form
- the copyright owner purposely places a work in the public domain through a “dedication”
- the work isn't protected under copyright law

Despite the lack of copyright protections for works in the public domain, just like CC-licensed works, you still need to cite your Public Domain sources so that people will have a reference to the original material. This gives your work its space in the scholarly conversation and shows that you are using information ethically.

ALWAYS CITE YOUR SOURCES. 😊

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8.2: Classroom Activity

Fair Use Checklist activity

Try using the 2-page [Fair Use Checklist](#) (below) from Columbia University Libraries to assess fair use of a work.

Consider scenarios such as those listed at <https://csulb.libguides.com/copyrightforfaculty/scenarios> (University Library, California State University Long Beach).

Fair Use Checklist
Copyright Advisory Office
Columbia University Libraries
Kenneth D. Crews, Director
<http://copyright.columbia.edu>

Name: _____
Institution: _____
Project: _____
Date: _____
Prepared by: _____

Purpose

Favoring Fair Use

- ☐ Teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use)
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Scholarship
- ☐ Nonprofit educational institution
- ☐ Criticism
- ☐ Comment
- ☐ News reporting
- ☐ Transformative or productive use (changes the work for new utility)
- ☐ Restricted access (to students or other appropriate group)
- ☐ Parody

Opposing Fair Use

- ☐ Commercial activity
- ☐ Profiting from the use
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Bad-faith behavior
- ☐ Denying credit to original author

Nature

Favoring Fair Use

- ☐ Published work
- ☐ Factual or nonfiction based
- ☐ Important to favored educational objectives

Opposing Fair Use

- ☐ Unpublished work
- ☐ Highly creative work (art, music, novels, films, plays)
- ☐ Fiction

Amount

Favoring Fair Use

- ☐ Small quantity
- ☐ Portion used is not central or significant to entire work
- ☐ Amount is appropriate for favored educational purpose

Opposing Fair Use

- ☐ Large portion or whole work used
- ☐ Portion used is central to or "heart of the work"

Effect

Favoring Fair Use

- ☐ User owns lawfully purchased or acquired copy of original work
- ☐ One or few copies made
- ☐ No significant effect on the market or potential market for copyrighted work
- ☐ No similar product marketed by the copyright holder
- ☐ Lack of licensing mechanism

Opposing Fair Use

- ☐ Could replace sale of copyrighted work
- ☐ Significantly impairs market or potential market for copyrighted work or derivative
- ☐ Reasonably available licensing mechanism for use of the copyrighted work
- ☐ Affordable permission available for using work
- ☐ Numerous copies made
- ☐ You made it accessible on the Web or in other public forum
- ☐ Repeated or long-term use

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Scholarship as Conversation

(Worksheet adapted from Crews & Buttler <https://copyright.columbia.edu/basics/fair-use/fair-use-checklist.html#Fair%20Use%20Checklist>)

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8.3: Assignment

Understanding Plagiarism, Intellectual Property, Copyright, and Fair Use Survey

Answer each of the following true/false questions and include a short, reasoned explanation for your choice. Responses should be at least 2 sentences long, using complete sentences, proper spelling, and correct grammar and punctuation.

- Intellectual property can only be protected if it is registered with the government.
- Fair use always allows for the unauthorized use of copyrighted material in any context.
- Copyright protection typically lasts for the lifetime of the creator plus 50 years.
- Plagiarism occurs when you use someone else's ideas without citing them, but not their words.
- Creative commons license restricts the use of intellectual property to only educational purposes.
- What is the difference between plagiarism and intellectual property?
- Explain the concept of fair use in relation to copyright law.
- How does copyright protect intellectual property?
- What does a Creative Commons license allow for?
- How long does copyright protection typically last for?

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Scholarship as Conversation

(Adapted from CrispQuasar <https://quizgecko.com/quiz/understanding-plagiarism-intellectual-property-copyright-and-fair-use-srr4v7>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

9: Information in Our Daily Lives

9.1: Readings

9.1.1: People as information sources

9.1.2: Social media

9.1.3: Big data

9.2: Classroom Activity

9.3: Assignment

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9.1: Readings

What does your daily interaction with information look like? Where do you get information? How do you evaluate, share, and use information? Other modules in this text touch on issues related to how we engage with information in our lives; this one will focus on engagement with information through a lens of social and societal contexts.

We communicate with each other through various means and media, increasingly through digital avenues. The use and spread of information using different technologies has evolved along with our culture, ever since information was first recorded by early humans in prehistoric times. In the last several decades information has become vastly more mobile and even more widely-shared through the use of digital technology.

Technology can make information more accessible, allowing more people to share and access information more easily, but it also magnifies inequities and introduces information literacy and privacy concerns that didn't exist before. With this in mind, it is important to be aware of the privilege and power that certain groups, organizations, and people have in relation to others in this larger social context.

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9.1.1: People as information sources

"People don't just create the sources we use. They are actually sources themselves. Most of us use people as sources all the time in our private lives, such when we ask a friend for a restaurant recommendation or ask whether a movie is worth watching. But you probably aren't using people as sources very often in your assignments—unless you are a journalism major, of course.

In fact, research indicates that employers such as Battelle, Nationwide Insurance, Microsoft, the FBI, the Smithsonian, the Port of Los Angeles, SS&G Financial Services, and Marriott International have been dissatisfied with their new hires' inability to gather information by talking with real people. They've found new hires unwilling or unprepared to ask the experienced employee down the hall or the expert across town for information to solve a problem. For instance, the study linked to above quotes one employer as saying about new hires:

Here's something we're targeting in interviews now—the big thing is they believe the computer is their workspace, so basic interactions between people are lost. They won't get up and walk over and ask someone a question. They are less comfortable and have some lack of willingness to use people as sources and also have a lack of awareness that people are a valid source of information...

So getting some experience using people as sources is likely to help you not just with a current research assignment but with your work in the future.

Important: Who's an "Expert"?

Experts aren't only researchers with Ph.D.s doing academic work. The question when trying to decide who can be a source is really always, who can speak with authority about any part of the subject? And the answer to that question is always contextual, a kind of "it depends."

People can speak with authority for different reasons. According to the framework for information literacy, they can have subject expertise (say, having done scholarship in the field), societal position (maybe a public office or other relevant work title), or special experience (say, living or working in a particular situation of interest or having participated in an historical event).

For instance, people who have had firsthand experience living or working with a situation (say, a survivor of school shooting if your topic is on that subject) you are studying can have a unique perspective unavailable elsewhere. And it's that up-close, firsthand view of the situation that gives them the authority that you and your audience respond to.

Of course, such sources have to be evaluated just like any other. Could they be biased? Like any source, yes. We just have to keep that possible bias in mind as we use the information from such a source. That's part of exercising the critical thinking that research assignments are famous for producing.

Potentially biased or not, sometimes a source's firsthand experience can't be beat. And recognizing what they offer can help us open up to diverse ideas and worldviews that we would otherwise miss. Don't be surprised if this kind of source takes you off in completely new directions with your assignment, ones that turn out to be much more interesting than those you were following before. For many researchers, finding sources that really open up a topic like that is one of the most rewarding—and fun—things about doing research.

Some Examples of People as Sources

Comparing types of research questions with types of potential information sources.

Research Question	Potential Person as Source	Potential Person as Source
How are tools originally developed for medicine, geology, and manufacturing used to explore paintings and sculptures?	An art conservator who uses those tools that you read about in the newspaper or other source	The person who invented one of the tools on the floor of the factory where he works
Why do most people who qualify for food at foodbanks not ask for food?	A local food bank director	A person (perhaps a fellow student) who qualifies but does not ask for food at a food bank
How and why do city and county governments brand themselves?	An official in such a city or county who has been involved in branding decisions	The director of a company that designs branding for cities and counties

You can interview a person as a source on the phone, in email, with [Zoom], or face-to-face. You'll need to:

- Pay attention when reading other sources so you can identify whom to contact and know what they could have to offer.
- Prepare by learning enough about your topic so you can ask appropriate questions, know what your expert has done in relation to that topic so you don't seem ignorant of their contribution, and know how to contact them. You might also want to do a practice interview with a friend.
- Contact your source to see if they are willing to talk with you and when that would be convenient. Then follow through.

Use good interview techniques, such as trying to put them at ease, using active listening techniques to encourage them to talk, asking follow up questions, and thanking them at the end of the interview" (Wilson).

Including people as information sources means, of course, that you need to cite them! See the [Purdue OWL](#) for information on how to cite personal communications and interviews.

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9.1.2: Social media

Other than communicating face-to-face, one of the primary ways most of us create, share, gather, and consume information in our daily lives is on social media. According to data journalist Katharina Buchholz, “on average, global internet users spend 2 hours and 27 minutes on social media per day” ([Buchholz](#)). Take a look at the Pew Research Center’s Social Media Fact Sheet for more information about our engagement with social media (click the image below to view the original detailed content):

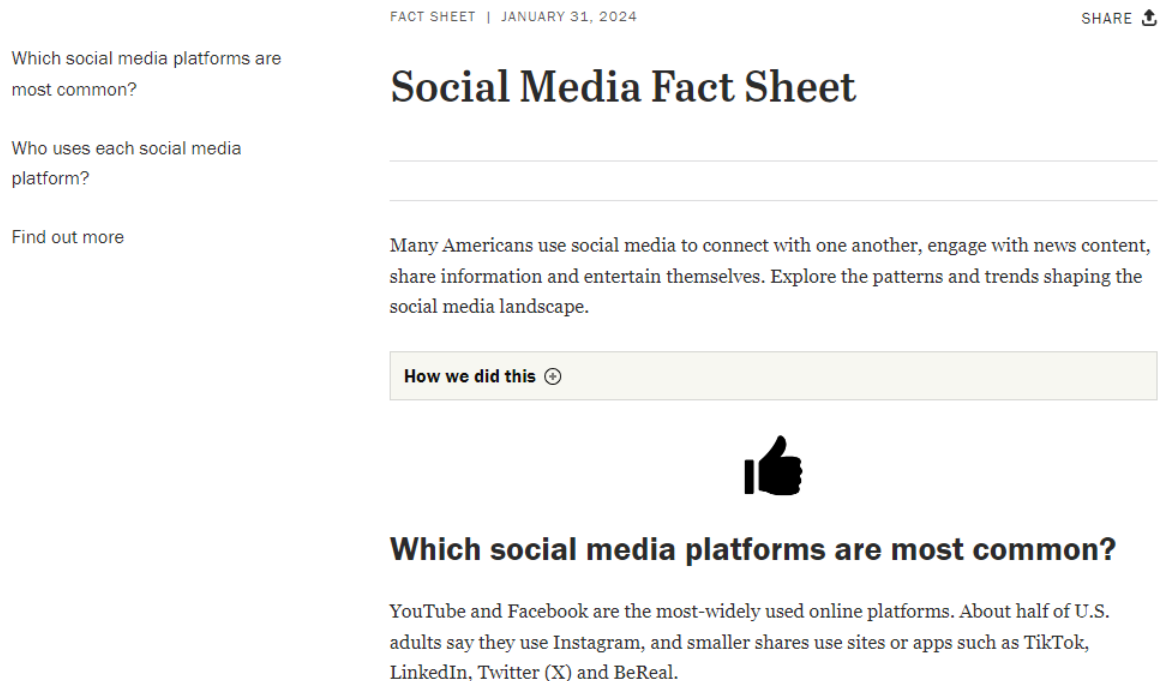


Figure 9.1.2.1: Social Media Fact Sheet (screenshot 24.6.26). (Copyright Pew Research Center)

Clearly social media is a huge part of most of our lives. It has a major effect on everything from politics, to the economy, to globalization of culture, to education, to individual identities, and much more. We’ll discuss this in module 9 when we look at big data, but it is important to be aware that the information we post on social media, and where we post it, is tracked in some capacity, somewhere. The impact of social media in our lives can be both positive and negative, from connecting people with friends and family, to the tragic outcomes of cases of cyberbullying.

One benefit of having social media in our lives, though, is that it makes it very simple for people with internet access to interact with other people no matter where they are, and vast amounts of information. Unfortunately, having this seemingly infinite access means that our engagement with people and information doesn’t go as deep as it did in the past. The Pew Research Center observed in 2020 that one in five American adults were getting their political news primarily through social media; they also observed that this group tended to be less politically engaged or knowledgeable ([Mitchell, et al.](#)).

You are most likely already aware of many of these, but here are some of the pros and cons related to using social media:

Pros	Cons
Social connections, peer support	Encourages the spread of mis- and disinformation
Encourages and facilitates civic, political, and social responsibility and action	Increases risk of sleep loss, isolation, anxiety and depression
Amplifies voices and facilitates inclusivity and diversity on- and offline	Increases risk of cyberbullying
Allows (some) freedom of self-expression	Increases risk of engaging in addictive behaviors
Ease of access to (some) information (for some people)	Increases personal privacy risks

When you're interacting with social media, just as with people in-person, keep in mind that you are still dealing with information sources, just as you would be with books, articles, and other content. Being responsible users of online information means keeping in mind that you are part of a much larger conversation; even though it's a casual and informal space that you're occupying, it's especially important to carefully evaluate and verify information on social media, read laterally, and reference your sources. See [Purdue OWL](#) for guidance on how to cite electronic sources including websites, Wikipedia, eBooks, blogs, podcasts, and social media posts.

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9.1.3: Big data

What is Big Data anyway? Researchers don't agree on an exact definition, partly because it is a relatively new field, and also because it's evolving so quickly; big data touches every part of our lives and is changing the ways we live. Generally speaking, "big data" refers to the information footprints we leave everywhere online, from data about our search habits to personal health information, as well as the underlying technology, machine learning (AI), data collection and processing, economy, and scholarship that is part of it and builds on it.

Like everything else, there are pros and cons related to big data. Ethical production, collection, management, analysis, and use of data are all important aspects of the issue that we should be concerned with, particularly when it comes to how it affects us personally.



Figure 9.1.3.1: Big Data word cloud. (Copyright [EpicTop10](#))

Data is everywhere online. Internet cookies are pieces of data that are automatically created when you access a network or site, and that can identify you and record your engagement with online content. Consider all of the times you've been asked if you will allow cookies when visiting a new website, or if you would like to save your username on a login page. The digital trail you create with cookies is one of the ways that search engines like Google try to make your browsing experience better and how websites and companies track usage for their own purposes. Essentially, these pieces of information become a commodity in the digital economy, and the basis for the success of technology, organizations, products and media, and more. There are both advantages and disadvantages to this; the most important thing is to be aware of how it affects you, and how you choose to deal with it.

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9.2: Classroom Activity

Real life/everyday information-seeking scenarios

Individually or in small groups, depending on class size, ask students to select an everyday scenario in which they would need to find information. For example:

- Finding a new apartment
- Deciding where to go on a date
- Fixing your car
- Buying a new printer
- Deciding which candidate to vote for in an election
- Finding health information
- etc.

Each individual or group should have a different scenario.

Discuss as a class:

- How did you decide where you might look for that information?
- Where did you look for the information?
- Why did you look in that place for the information? Do you trust one source over another? Why?
- What were your results?
- Would you look at more than one source for an answer? Why or why not?

ALA Frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Creation as a Process, Information Has Value

(Adapted from Douglas, et al. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.82.9.410>)

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9.3: Assignment

You are an information source

You often create knowledge, perhaps without even realizing it: you gather information and transform or extend it somehow, finding ideas and facts and then analyzing them, putting them together in new ways, adding your own ideas to them, and more. Often, when you've created knowledge, you share it with others. And often, when you've shared your knowledge, other people will give you feedback, or build on and extend the knowledge you've created. An everyday example of knowledge creation is finding a recipe, putting your own spin on it, then posting your tweaked recipe to a foodie website.

Select an example of information creation from your own life. Observe how you gather information and create knowledge in your life. Using complete sentences, and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation, respond to the following prompts. Each response should be at least 2 sentences.

- What is a situation at work, at home, or elsewhere, where you gather information and then create knowledge? Choose a specific example.
- In that situation, to gather info, what kinds of sources did you use? Give specific examples of a couple of resources.
- Where did you find or learn about these sources? Where did they come from originally? How do you know which sources are trustworthy? Why did you select these sources?
- How did you create knowledge from the information you gathered? How did you analyze the information, put it together in new ways, add your own ideas, etc.? Give specific examples.
- Did you share the knowledge you created? If so, how? How did the information impact others? Did they give you feedback? If you didn't share the information with others, how did you use it?

ALA Frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Creation as a Process, Information Has Value

(Adapted from Miller, R.
[https://human.libretexts.org/Courses/Moreno_Valley_College/Introduction_to_Information_Literacy_\(Wilson\)/01%3A_Information_and_its_Sources/1.10%3A_Types_of_Information_Sources/1.10.10%3A_People_as_Sources](https://human.libretexts.org/Courses/Moreno_Valley_College/Introduction_to_Information_Literacy_(Wilson)/01%3A_Information_and_its_Sources/1.10%3A_Types_of_Information_Sources/1.10.10%3A_People_as_Sources)).

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Visual Literacy

10.1: Readings

10.1.1: Visual images

10.1.2: Visual analysis

10.1.3: Graphics and advertising

10.1.4: Data visualization and infographics

10.1.5: Emojis

10.1.6: Memes

10.1.7: Citing visual works

10.2: Classroom Activity

10.3: Assignment

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10.1: Readings

Are images information in the same way that texts are? The answer is yes and no. Images, of course, communicate differently than written or spoken language, often conveying a large amount of information in a compact package. They are a form of nonverbal communication. After all, “a picture is worth a thousand words,” right?

From birth, one of the ways we usually begin learning about the world is through our visual experience, well before we have the ability to learn to read text, and for most of us this continues to be a primary way we encounter the world, and how we make sense of it. In fact, visual literacy skills can be extremely helpful for people who have difficulty processing written text. Visual literacy is essential for participating in the current information landscape.

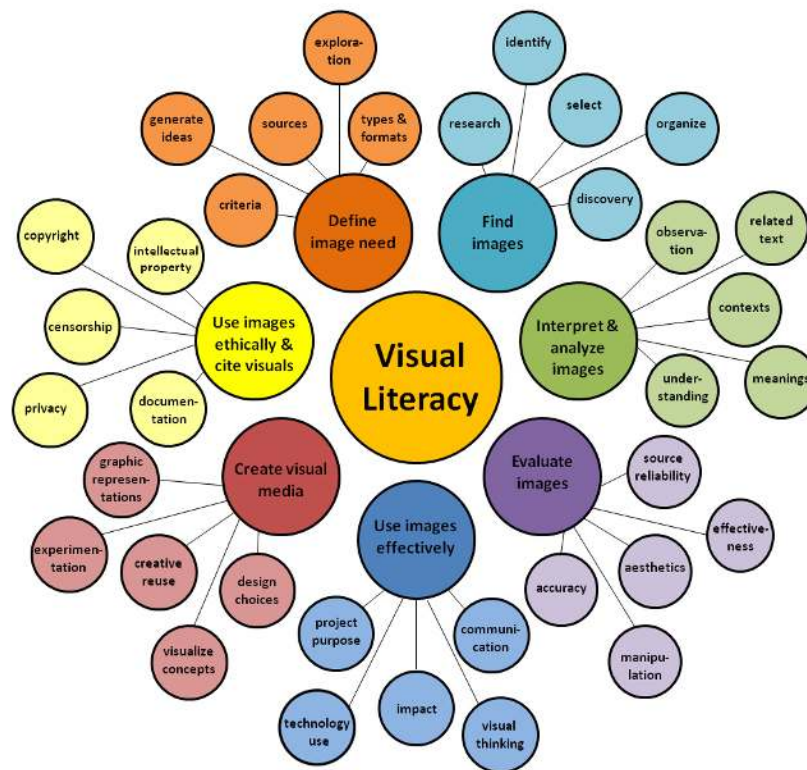


Figure 10.1.1: Visual Literacy Array based on ACRL’s Visual Literacy Standards by D. Hattwig, K. Bussert, and A. Medaille Copyright 2013 The Johns Hopkins University Press. This image first appeared in PORTAL: LIBRARIES AND THE ACADEMY, Volume 13, Issue 1, January 2013, p. 75. ([Brown, et al.](#))

First: what does visual literacy mean? The 2011 ACRL ([Association of College and Research Libraries](#)) definition of visual literacy essentially still holds true. They defined visual literacy as:

a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture ([ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#)).

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10.1.1: Visual images

The Mona Lisa. Girl with a Pearl Earring. Starry Night. The Scream.



Even if you don't know the titles or creators of these works of art, you most likely know these famous images from Western art history, and many more! ([Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci](#) - 1503, [Girl with a Pearl Earring by Johannes Vermeer](#) - 1665, [Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh](#) - 1889, and [The Scream by Edvard Munch](#) - 1893 are all in the public domain. However, you will still find citations for each of the images of these works in the references list - see module 8 for an explanation).

The Scream is one famous artwork that has even been turned into an emoji (more on emojis shortly).

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10.1.2: Visual analysis

The term seems fairly straightforward: the analysis of visual images. But what exactly does this entail? We can analyze images to learn about their meanings, an artist's intentions, cultural expressions and movements, and more through visual analysis. The basic building blocks for visual analysis are the elements and principles of composition. Learn more about these from [The Kennedy Center](#):

Elements	Principles
Line	Balance (harmonious relation of elements in art)
Value (degree of light and dark)	Contrast (uses elements to hold and guide the viewer's attention)
Shape (created using lines)	Movement (how a viewer's eye is directed through the artwork)
Form (3-dimensional shapes)	Emphasis (use of elements to focus the eye on a particular part of an image)
Space (the area around objects)	Pattern (repetition of shapes, forms, textures)
Color	Proportion (relative size of elements)
Texture (surface qualities)	Unity (coordinated use of elements and principles)

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10.1.3: Graphics and advertising

Of course visual analysis can be applied in our everyday lives, as well, in terms of how we understand elements of our common visual vocabulary. Below are “examples of broadly understood International symbols used to represent basic facilities, amenities, or instructions,” which you are certainly familiar with (Reynolds 28).



Figure 10.1.3.1: From Universal Symbols: The Pre-Cursors To Emojis? [Photograph] by the International Sign Alliance, in Reynolds. (Copyright International Sign Alliance)

Graphic design refers to the art of creating visual content using images and typography (the art and style of arranging text), as well as the principles of composition, to communicate messages. This is something we encounter all of the time. Common examples of graphic design include print and online content, packaging, branding, marketing, advertising, user interface design, motion graphics, and more. All of these are meant to clearly and effectively communicate a message, whether it focuses on the content of a news, entertainment, or scientific article, for example, or on persuading you to buy something through advertising.

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10.1.4: Data visualization and infographics

Graphic design includes the use of images, graphs, charts, and more to help deliver and explain content. This is helpful for communicating information in a more digestible fashion, especially when there is a lot of technical information or data to organize, and also for people who may have difficulty processing written text. (You have certainly noticed the large number of explanatory images in this instructive text; there is a method to the madness!).

Data visualization refers to the representation of data using graphs, charts, maps, and other graphic objects. Infographics combine visual representations of data in a clear and easily-digestible format. There are many examples of infographics throughout this text.

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10.1.5: Emojis

Our common global visual vocabulary has grown exponentially since the speed of communication has increased with use of the Internet and especially the character limits that are necessary for texting and social media posts. With only so many characters allowed for communicating a message, we use pictures in the form of emojis to convey emotional meaning that would otherwise be missing. Emojis were created in and for the digital world, originally appearing in Japanese mobile phones in the late 1990s (Pardes). The term comes from the Japanese words “e” (picture) and “moji” (letter or character), though it coincidentally sounds very much like it has a root word of “emotion” in English.

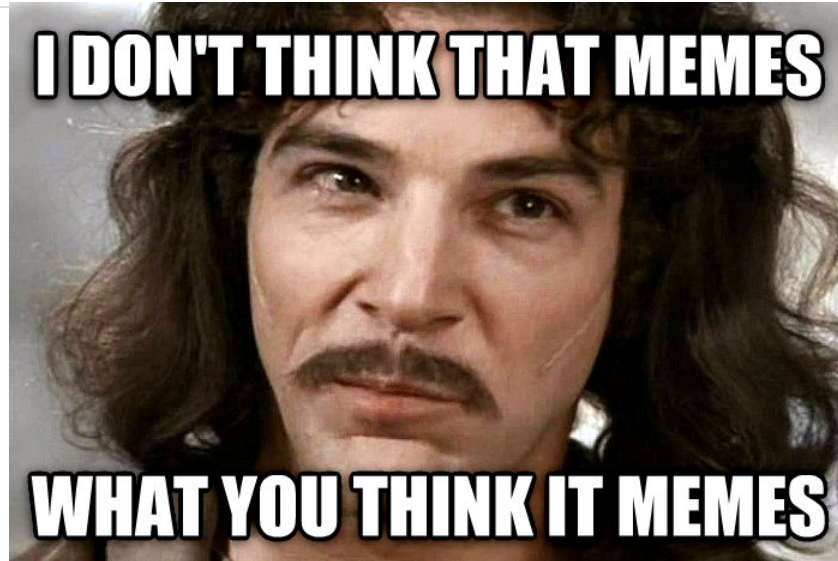
The scream emoji shown above directly references the figure in the famous composition *The Scream* by Edvard Munch (18930, further demonstrating the pervasiveness of our common visual vocabulary.



Figure 10.1.5.1: Scream emoji. (Copyright [Keymap9](#))

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10.1.6: Memes



Though it is typically used to refer to Internet memes, the term and idea of a “meme” are actually not just recent digital phenomena. The basic definition for “meme” refers to them as cultural artifacts and ideas that are imitated, altered, remixed, or reproduced and passed along; they have been used in communication since the beginnings of writing through pictographic symbols ([Benveniste](#)). Similarly to emojis, memes communicate quickly and effectively. According to journalist Alexis Benveniste, “the popular meme creator Saint Hoax, who has three million Instagram followers, defines a meme as a piece of media that is repurposed to deliver a cultural, social or political expression, mainly through humor” ([ibid](#)).

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10.1.7: Citing visual works

So, do we need to cite images the way we cite other information resources? Absolutely! It's part of responsible information use and academic integrity. For in-text style citations, you can cite an illustration in your document or on a slide in your deck, or in a presentation you can use a simple verbal acknowledgement ("This image is from..." "This work of art is by..."). You can learn how to cite digital images, paintings, sculptures, photographs, films or movies, TV shows, and more on the [Purdue OWL](#).

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10.2: Classroom Activity

Infographic critique

Using the website Daily Infographic (<https://www.dailyinfographic.com/>) or just a Google Image search for the word "infographic," find three that work for your class. Discuss the following:

- What is the message of this visual? Who is the audience?
- What is the author's purpose of creating this infographic?
- How does the author demonstrate their authority or knowledge of the subject? (If they do)
- How does the writer try to engage an audience, even an audience who may not initially care about the topic?
- Explain how specific visual elements support your understanding of the author's topic or their analysis of it. Analyze the text, font size and style, visual design, colors vs. white space, visual emphasis, etc.
- How is the infographic organized?
- Does the infographic make a claim or develop an argument? If so, how can you tell?
- Which of these communicates best? Why?
- If you could improve this infographic, what would you change?

ALA Frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value

(adapted from Vogelsinger, B. https://www.edutopia.org/blog/infographics-visual-literacy-written-content-brett-vogelsinger?qt-discussion_replies=1 and WCLN EN12... https://wcln.ca/LOR/course_files/EN12/Unit2/Assignment_%20Visual%20Literacy.pdf)

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10.3: Assignment

Using images : copyright and public domain

We are surrounded by pictures and images of all kinds – on signs, in galleries, on billboards, in magazines, on TV, and online. It has never been easier to make and share images, and to copy them and share images of images. When we see something exciting or interesting we want to share, we often don't stop to ask ourselves if we have the right to do so. This exercise will explore the ethics surrounding the use and sharing of images.

Think about your research topic and the type of images you need in order to provide illustrations for it. For example, if your topic is the history of cookbooks, you might want images from a 200-year-old cookbook. If your topic is capybaras, you might need some accurate photographs of capybaras in the wild.

- What is your research topic? What type of images will you need?

Find three images relevant to your research topic. List each image below, and then answer some questions about their ownership and the right to use them.

- Does the provider of the online image own the rights to it?
- What rights are the providers of the image extending to you, if any?
- If you are not sure about 1 and 2, who would you need to contact to find out?

Image 1:	Notes:
Image 2:	Notes:
Image 3:	Notes:

ALA Frameworks: Information Creation as a Process, Scholarship as Conversation, Searching as Strategic Exploration

(Adapted from Justice, A. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/using-images-copyright-and-public-domain>)

-OR-

Create an infographic related to your chosen research topic for this class. Begin with the template below from Canva, or create your own:



ALA frames: Information Creation as a Process

(Ruiz, M. <https://www.canva.com/design/DAGFiG3GdjQ/TbrnkqIHm8brxLr9o0HCyA/edit>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Science Literacy

11.1: Readings

11.1.1: The scientific method

11.1.2: Science literature

11.1.3: Using science literacy

11.2: Classroom Activity

11.3: Assignment

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11.1: Readings

What is science literacy? Why is it important? Science literacy refers to having a basic understanding of science for use in everyday decision making. According to Emily L. Howell and Dominique Brossard, science literacy includes three components:

- understanding how science is produced and how science relates to society
 - understanding how science information appears and moves through media systems
 - understanding how people interpret science information ([Howell & Brossard](#), 2).
-

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11.1.1.1: The scientific method

All science uses a logical approach called the scientific method, that involves carefully observing and recording information, and then analyzing the information supported by evidence, all in a particular procedural order. The scientific method has five basic steps, and is cyclical, much like the database research process we discussed in module 4:

- Make an observation
- Ask a question
- Form a hypothesis, or testable explanation
- Make a prediction based on the hypothesis
- Test the prediction

Just as you would repeat the series of steps in the research process, use your results to form new hypotheses and predictions that can also be tested.

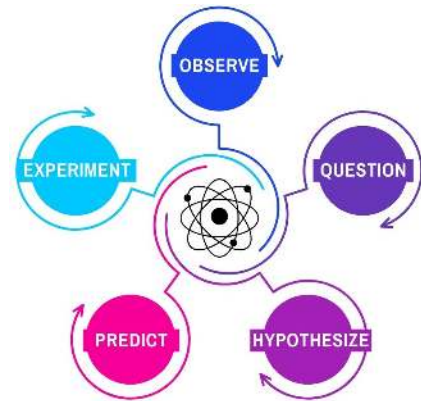


Figure 11.1.1.1: The scientific method. (Copyright Sara Klein)

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11.1.2: Science literature

Science literature includes everything from books to technical reports, to scholarly articles in specialized journals, to popular articles. Primary sources are especially important because they are written by scientists who have conducted the research they are reporting on. Secondary sources draw from this primary research and include articles published in periodicals such as *Scientific American* or the *New York Times*. Popular articles like these are meant to make the complex and/or technical language of science understandable for non-scientists. The authors of these popular sources usually cite their original sources so that they can be referenced by others who want to learn more. Citations can be found using library databases or simple internet searches, though they may be restricted behind paywalls.

Professional scientific papers usually have 5 sections:

- an introduction
- a narrative description of materials and methods used in the scientific investigation that the article is discussing
- the results of the experiment(s)
- a discussion of the results
- a conclusion

Reading one of these articles may feel overwhelming, especially if it is written in highly technical language. An efficient way to read professional scholarly articles is to follow these steps:

- Read the abstract and conclusion; skim the reference list
- Skim the article and look for the most relevant sections for your purposes
- Read important parts more closely
- If you decide to use the paper for your research, read select sections more closely and annotate them (preferably on a printed copy)

In addition, be prepared to do some lateral reading to find additional sources or conduct further research to verify the information you find. If you decide to quote information in a source that comes from another original resource, find the original to use for your quote.

Science relies on outside validation of reported findings and the acknowledgement that new results may change earlier interpretations. This is another instance where lateral reading is important. Also, keep in mind that scientists are humans, and their personal biases may influence their reports (“The cart leading the horse”). For example, an especially serious case has done profound damage on human health. In 1998 Andrew Wakefield, a British gastroenterologist, and several colleagues published an article in a well-respected medical journal that linked Autism Spectrum Disorder with a common childhood vaccine, which in turn caused the number of children who received the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine to decline ([Rao & Andrade](#)). Other scientists disproved Wakefield’s results, showing that the MMR vaccine could not be linked to Autism. The journal later retracted the original article due to the authors’ multiple “ethical violations” and “scientific misrepresentation” linked to their fraudulent interpretation of information and having received funding from “lawyers who had been engaged by parents in lawsuits against vaccine-producing companies” ([ibid.](#)). While this is far from common, it is essential to retain a healthy sense of skepticism (yet also be open to new ideas!) when reading primary scientific literature.

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11.1.3: Using science literacy

You don't have to be a career scientist to be able to research issues that are important to you, but knowing where to look for reliable information and being able to evaluate that information, as well as being able to find additional or differing information is essential. Dr. Google can give you a lot of search results, and so can library databases for that matter, but you will need to use the information evaluation skills you learned in module 6 to help you decide what information is best for your purposes and how to apply that information.

So how would you use science literacy in your daily life? We already engage with scientific information on a regular basis, probably without realizing it, including the simplest things like checking the weather on apps on our devices, inflating our car or bicycle tires with air with the appropriate level of air pressure, or understanding information in the news or in conversations about the effects of climate change or COVID-19, or astronomical phenomenon such as eclipses and the Northern Lights.

You might also have experience with a larger issue where science literacy has come in handy. For example, perhaps you noticed there are more floods in your neighborhood every time there is a heavy rain than there were 10 years ago. You also observed that your basement and neighbors' basements or basement apartments were flooding more often than before. You may have wondered why this was happening, and may have come up with some possible explanations. Based on your observations and what you know about conditions in different parts of the city, you thought about moving to another neighborhood where you would not experience flooding to the same degree. Rather than picking up and moving your entire household, you may have investigated the experiences of people who live in other parts of the city, which ultimately helped you to decide to move. Or you may have discovered that the city just needed to clear the storm drains!

Notice that the flooding scenario involves the scientific method, even if it's not stated clearly in the description above:

- **Observe:** You noticed increased flooding
- **Ask a question:** You wondered why this was happening, and what you could do about it
- **Hypothesize:** You theorized that flooding isn't as severe in other parts of the city, for various reasons such as elevation, proximity to a large body of water, or how well the local sewer system has been maintained
- **Make a prediction based on the hypothesis:** You considered moving based on the idea that there would be less flooding in other neighborhoods that were farther from a river or lake
- **Test the prediction:** You researched other peoples' experiences and local weather data from the last 10 years, analyzed the evidence, and used it to make a decision to move, as well as where to move to.

How will you apply science literacy in your everyday life?

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11.2: Classroom Activity

Scientific debate

Students should prepare for the debate by gathering, reading, understanding, and referencing sources to support their side of the issue (You may want to select 2 or more resources for each side of the debate or have students use a database such as Opposing Viewpoints in Context for their in-class research, to find easily digestible information).

Hold an in-class debate assigning two sides of a controversial scientific topic to the class. “This will help students understand different perspectives and how to support their arguments with scientific evidence” ([Matrix0](#)).

Referencing the controversial topic at hand, respond to the following prompts:

- State your position on the subject
- Present scientific evidence
- Discuss as a class, to try to come to an understanding on the topic

ALA Frame: Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation

(adapted from [Matrix0](#) <https://www.physicsforums.com/threads/improve-scientific-literacy-assignments-ideas-that-worked.711965/>)

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11.3: Assignment

Dissection: Popular vs. Scholarly

Compare and contrast a popular science article and one from a professional journal. Choose articles on the same subject, event, etc. Complete the worksheet below, and answer the question at the end using complete sentences and proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Scientific Research in Popular Sources

‘a’ questions can be answered by reading the article or with a quick Internet search

‘b’ questions require analysis of the article based on your experiences and knowledge

	Popular article	Scholarly article
a) Author info b) How do we know this author is authoritative?		
a) Publisher info b) How do we know this publication is authoritative?		
a) Citations/references (can be formal or informal) b) How is accuracy demonstrated for this type of source?		
a) Main point/ research question b) What is the purpose of this type of source?		
a) Content (language, images, format) b) Who is the intended audience of this type of source?		
a) Date of publication b) How long does it take to create this type of source (research, writing, editing)?	*Hint: How long after scholarly article was this one published?	*Hint: Look for hints about time periods or dates in the article.

And finally: did the popular article accurately represent the scholarly article? Why do you think this is?

ALA frames: Information Has Value, Scholarship as Conversation

(Bitter, J. <https://projectcora.org/assignment/scientific-research-popular-sources-classroom-activity>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

12: Censorship

12.1: Readings

12.1.1: Soft censorship

12.1.2: Direct censorship

12.1.3: Censorship on the internet

12.2: Classroom Activity

12.3: Assignment

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12.1: Readings

Read banned books! But why were they banned? What does it mean to ban a book? Or to read a banned book? The American Library Association defines censorship as “the suppression of ideas and information that some individuals, groups, or government officials find objectionable or dangerous” ([American Library Association, 2021](#)). There are many reasons that ideas and information are censored, including political or religious reasons, as value judgments, to restrict the spread of content, or to suppress unwanted social outcomes. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution states:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances ([U.S. Const. amend. 1](#)).

Like other legal issues, censorship is a complex topic. The First Amendment gives individuals and society the right to access information without government restrictions or limitations, and to address the government if they disagree with its laws or other issues. It allows for freedom of thought and expression in speech, publication, information receiving and consuming, social associations, and religion, and is interpreted as forbidding “government censorship of books, magazines, and newspapers as well as art, film, music and materials on the internet” ([American Library Association, 2021](#)).

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12.1.1.1: Soft censorship

Book banning and challenging, and keeping books in restricted areas are both forms of soft censorship. Soft censorship is more informal than direct censorship, which we'll discuss next, and typically occurs when certain individuals or groups put political or social pressure on libraries and other community institutions to restrict or block access to particular content or whole works. According to the American Library Association, "the number of titles targeted for censorship surged 65 percent in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching the highest levels ever documented by the American Library Association" ([American Library Association, 2024](#)). The majority of these cases involved books on race, racism, and LGBTQ+ topics in public and school libraries.

This is where reading a banned book has value. It is about exercising the rights that were laid out in the First Amendment and about having the freedom to gather any information on a topic, to come to your own conclusions about the topic.

There is a debate, however, on soft censorship in the context of materials children are able to access. Many people argue that some level of content restriction is appropriate (books about puberty or sexuality for pre-teens for example), but many others say that decisions about controlling this type of information should be made on an individual basis, giving parents the ability to decide what their children are allowed to access, rather than having an individual or group decide for them.

Self-censorship and film ratings from PG to NC-17 are forms of censorship in this same vein, overlapping some with direct censorship (below). The intent behind the film rating system was to help parents make informed decisions about movie viewing for their children, based on decisions by a board consisting of independent parents ([CARA](#)). Theaters are sometimes obligated by local laws to enforce who is allowed to attend different films, based on the rating criteria. Self-censorship refers to the choices individuals make regarding the content or type of information they create or share based on various pressures they experience. Examples of self-censorship include intentional use of "clean" language in the presence of a child, avoiding engaging with a controversial topic, and intentionally withholding information.

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12.1.2: Direct censorship

Direct censorship refers to preventing the use or spread of ideas, information, or works, including withholding or destroying them (either selectively or completely). As mentioned above, the First Amendment essentially forbids government censorship of ideas or information in the United States.

Some famous examples of this type of censorship come from the Nazi suppression and destruction of ideas, works, and information in the 1930s. Works that didn't align with Nazi values were considered "un-German," and works by Jewish, leftist, liberal, American, Black, LGBTQ+ authors, artists, and more were confiscated and often destroyed.

Thousands of books were burned in May 1933, inspiring protests by important authors, artists, and activists in the United States using the First Amendment as their platform. The 1937 "Degenerate Art" exhibit showed over 600 works that had been removed from publicly-accessible German museums because their contents, style, and/or creators were "un-German." This particular act of censorship and Nazi propaganda was intended to make an example of the supposed ignorance and lack of refined culture of "degenerate" art and artists. Ironically, however, people lined up around the block to see the exhibit, and over a million saw it in its first six weeks. Clearly it is still an important historical touchpoint.

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12.1.3: Censorship on the internet

As with many other things, the Internet has vastly expanded discussions about the freedom to access and use information, and of its censorship. Following the Arab Spring in the early 2010s, where a number of governments in the Middle East shut down the Internet and arrested citizens for reaching out online to share or gather information, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations adopted a resolution for “The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet” in 2016 ([Human Rights Council](#)). This statement of rights extends the same basic human rights people have in the real world to the online world, and calls on governments worldwide to uphold this policy. It builds on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers ([United Nations](#)).

Just like the parental censorship discussed above, however, internet censorship is often a complicated subject. Similar to the examples of organizational or parental censorship, it has shades of application and severity. Internet censorship may comprise restriction of information on individual internet domains, such as a company or school filtering certain websites on networked computers that are used for work at the company or for K-12 education; it may cover suppression of content that comes from outside of a particular jurisdiction, such as a nation-state blocking access to online content that doesn’t align with its government’s values, or blocking content on a topic that is highly problematic within a local social context. Anything in between and outside of these scenarios is included as well.

Use of and support for online censorship varies widely across the globe. In 2024 China and Russia provide prime examples of internet censorship. China has one of the most restrictive policies toward online censorship in the world, drastically limiting the information Chinese citizens are able to access. The Russian-Ukrainian war has provided the rationale for the Russian government to increase its restrictions and censorship of online content. Freedom House’s 2023 *Freedom on the Net* report ranks Iceland (94% free), Estonia (93%), and Canada (88%) highest in terms of internet freedom, meaning that they have the least restrictive policies regarding internet usage; the United States was given a score of 76% free ([Freedom House](#)).

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12.2: Classroom Activity

Debate

Students should prepare for the debate by gathering, reading, understanding and referencing sources to support their side of the issue. Have them use a database such as Opposing Viewpoints in Context for their in-class research, to find easily digestible information.

Hold an in-class debate assigning pro and con research to the class, dividing them into teams.

Referencing a banned or challenged book (have one for each small group), answer the questions:

- Are there valid reasons to ban books?
- Does bias against a certain group of people come into play when books are banned? How can you tell?
- Do the reasons listed for your book seem valid to you? Why or why not?
- What benefits, if any, are there to getting a book banned?
- What harm, if any, is caused by having a book banned?
- Is age-appropriateness a valid reason?

ALA frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value

(adapted from Hart, T. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/discrimination-in-banned-books>)

- **OR** -

“In today's world of rapid communication and social media do you think the government should have more or less power to exercise prior restraint and block publication or broadcast of material, even from citizens posting to social media sites, that it feels might hurt national security interests? What would some of the effects be, both positive and negative, if the government adopted your opinion?” (Pavlik & McIntosh <https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199859931/student/chapter13/dquestions/>)

ALA Frames: Information Has Value

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12.3: Assignment

A closer look at a banned book

Select a book from ALA's Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2023:

1. Gender Queer: A Memoir by Maia Kobabe
2. All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson
3. This Book Is Gay by Juno Dawson
4. The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
5. Flamer by Mike Curato
6. The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison
- 7/8. (tie) Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews
- 7/8. (tie) Tricks by Ellen Hopkins
9. Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being a Human by Erika Moen and Matthew
10. Sold by Patricia McCormick

Research the circumstances around the censorship of the book, and respond to the following prompts. Use complete sentences, correct grammar, and proper spelling and punctuation. Each of your responses should be at least 2 sentences in length.

- Give a brief summary of the book, including what type of book it is (fiction/non-fiction; young adult content; etc.). You don't have to read the book yourself, unless you want to!
- Explain why the book was challenged. Did bias against a certain group of people play a part in the challenge, either in relation to the book itself, or to the book owner (library, school, etc.)? How did the challengers explain their authority?
- Investigate the circumstances of challenges to the book. Who initiated the challenges and why? How did they go about challenging the book (did they circulate a petition? Go to library/school administration? Something else?)
- Describe responses to the challenge by libraries, schools, or other owners of the book.
- What is your opinion on the challenges and responses? Do you agree or disagree one way or the other?
- Could the situation have been handled differently? How?
- Don't forget to cite your sources!
-

ALA frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

13: Truth and Disorder- Mis-, Dis-, and Malinformation

13.1: Readings

13.1.1: Fake news

13.1.2: Clickbait

13.1.3: Deepfakes

13.1.4: Conspiracy theories

13.1.5: Restoring order- Information hygiene and information environmentalism

13.2: Classroom Activity

13.3: Assignment

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13.1: Readings

 Illustration of a heart outweighing a brain on a scale

Figure 13.1.1: Illustration of a hear outweighing a brain on a scale. (Copyright [Butler, et al., 10 Information Disorder, Truth, and Trust](#))

"We tend to think that we have rational relationships to information, but we don't. **We have emotional relationships to information**, which is why the most effective disinformation draws on our underlying fears and worldviews....We're less likely to be critical of information that reinforces our worldview or taps into our deep-seated emotional responses" (Wardle, qtd. in Vongkiatkajorn; emphasis added). ([ibid.](#)).

"In an information environment shaped by pervasive algorithms, the attention economy, engagement, and polarization, how do we determine truth? How do we know which sources of information to trust? These questions are becoming increasingly difficult to answer, and even more so as "disinformation that is designed to provoke an emotional reaction can flourish in these spaces" (Wardle).

Indeed, in 2016, Oxford Dictionaries selected post-truth as the Word of the Year, defining this as: "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."

...

Essential Definitions

First, it is important to establish a shared vocabulary and terminology so that we can better understand and discuss these concepts. Claire Wardle, a world-renowned expert in this field, has used "information disorder" as an umbrella term for the various types of false, misleading, manipulated, or deceptive information we have seen flourish in recent years. She also created an [essential glossary for information disorder](#), with definitions for related words and phrases. For example, you will find helpful definitions for terms like algorithm, bots, data mining, deepfakes, doxing, sock puppet, and trolling.

The graphic below illustrates the scale and range of intent behind false information, from unintentionally inaccurate to deliberately deceptive and harmful. For a much more detailed explanation of each form of information disorder, from "satire" to "fabricated content" to "false context," see [First Draft's Essential Guide to Understanding Information Disorder](#)" ([ibid.](#)).

 Information disorder Venn diagram: Misinformation, Disinformation, Malinformation

Figure 13.1.1: Types of Information Disorder. (Copyright [Butler, et al., 10 Information Disorder, Truth, and Trust](#))

Let's briefly take a closer look at some special topics in information disorder:

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13.1.1: Fake news

Fake news is a form of disinformation. It describes news that is intentionally fabricated to manipulate an audience. It does not include news that someone disagrees with or finds personally offensive, as in the case of former president Donald Trump referring to legitimate news media outlets as “fake news.” It also does not include satire, as found in *The Onion* or on *The Daily Show*; though some people might be misled by them, these works are meant to playfully criticize foolish or corrupt ideas or individuals, often in a political context ([CITS](#)).

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13.1.2: Clickbait

Using attention-grabbing sensational language and/or images that stimulate our natural curiosity or play on our emotions, clickbait is meant to “bait” and entice users to click on targeted content. Fake news is often spread this way ([CITS](#)).

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13.1.3: Deepfakes

Deepfakes are “an artificial image or video (a series of images) generated by a special kind of machine learning called “deep” learning (hence the name)” ([UVA Information Security](#)). These images are produced by artificial intelligence (more on AI in the next module) and are different from the fake or digitally-altered images you might come across online, that are usually fairly obvious. While they aren’t a major concern yet, deepfakes are highly problematic because they can fool viewers into mistaking them for real, making it easy for them to be used to spread and magnify disinformation or malinformation, and for exploitation ([ibid.](#)).

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13.1.4: Conspiracy theories

Another term that is difficult to define is “conspiracy theory.” Generally speaking, conspiracy theories are meant to explain a historical event or events (Keeley, cited in [Cassam 191](#)), often involving elaborate descriptions of secret behind-the-scenes manipulations against the greater good, with little or no hard evidence, and little or no flexibility in beliefs about the particular explanation of events.

Conspiracy theories may seem relatively harmless, but in fact they can be incredibly dangerous. During the COVID-19 pandemic when the use of social media increased globally, dis- and misinformation about the disease and interventions spread quickly, causing “a significant threat to public health” ([Jabkowski et al.](#) Introduction). Conspiracy theories about COVID-19 included bad information about the origins of the virus as well as the effectiveness of vaccines and their side effects. As a result, people disregarded information and recommendations about preventative measures such as the use of “personal protective equipment, social distancing, testing, isolation, quarantine, and lockdown,” which threatened the health not only of individuals, but of entire communities ([ibid.](#)). Even in 2024 some people argue that the coronavirus is just another kind of cold or flu, despite abundant scientific evidence to the contrary.

While these conspiracy theories lead to serious public health dangers, they and others negatively impacted particular ethnic and social groups. Prominent antisemitic, xenophobic, and other hateful theories suggested that the coronavirus was manufactured as a bioweapon by Jews or the Chinese to increase power or to profit from vaccine sales, or even that it was created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); other theories included that the virus was created in order for Bill Gates to make money selling vaccines, or as a way to target Black celebrities or former president Trump’s administration ([Anti-Defamation League](#)).

In the U. S. the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities were especially harmed by the hate that this disinformation spread. AAPI citizens were harassed and assaulted, and their businesses and traditions were attacked because they had been perceived to have been part of a plot by the Chinese government, regardless of their specific Asian heritage, or the fact that they were in no way connected to the origin of the virus.

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13.1.5: Restoring order- Information hygiene and information environmentalism

[Research has shown many times that the degree to which people believe and spread disinformation correlates to their level of education. An excellent way to avoid perpetuating information disorder is to educate yourself about these issues, think critically, and act responsibly.]

Information Hygiene

The term **information hygiene** refers to the “metaphorical handwashing you engage in to prevent the spread of misinformation” (Caulfield, “It Can Take”).

This idea has gained prominence in recent years, and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, as we have witnessed a massive outbreak of misinformation, disinformation, hoaxes, and conspiracies surrounding this coronavirus. The World Health Organization (WHO) and other experts have even referred to the COVID-19 pandemic as an “**infodemic**”—an epidemic of information. In their February 2020 Novel Coronavirus Situation Report, the WHO noted that the COVID-19 outbreak and response “has been accompanied by a massive ‘infodemic’—an over-abundance of information—some accurate and some not—that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it.”

This is a stark example of the real-world impact that our online information can have. In this case, false information that we view, “like,” and share can actually help to shape the public perceptions about the pandemic, as well as our responses and decisions about how to behave. Can you think of any other recent examples that demonstrate the **real-world impact** of disinformation?



Figure 13.1.5.1: Information hygiene. (Copyright [Wilson](#))

So, the message here is that, in addition to actual hygiene, we also need to focus on information hygiene and “flattening the curve of dangerous falsehoods online by taking proactive steps to reduce their spread” (“Practice Information Hygiene”). Fact-checking, which we will discuss in the next chapter, is an example of good information hygiene. Much like hand sanitizer or hand washing, it isn’t a cure, but rather a prevention for the spread of misinformation (Caulfield, “Misinformation”).

Info-Environmentalism

The idea behind “info-environmentalism” is that if our information environment is polluted, we shouldn’t abandon it—instead, we should help to clean it up. That is, if we are frustrated with the content posted on platforms like Facebook or YouTube or with low-quality Google search results, why not clean it up by posting as much reliable information as we can?

Of course, a big part of this movement will involve putting pressure on the platforms themselves to act responsibly. But because the Web is a collectively-maintained and produced environment, we, as consumers and creators, can also participate in the process through direct action. Here are some examples of actions you might take to improve the information environment (Caulfield, “Info-Environmentalism”):



Figure 13.1.5.1: Info-environmentalism. (Copyright [Wilson](#))

- Minimize your own “misinformation footprint” by being more thoughtful about what you post and share on social media. Do a quick fact-check first.
- Shift your focus from arguing points to explaining things to others.
- Edit and improve Wikipedia articles.
- Create explanatory YouTube videos.

- Post pages on blogs or wikis that provide helpful guidance on important issues.
- Post better answers on question-and-answer websites like Quora or StackExchange.
- When you do share information, use evidence and cite your sources.

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13.2: Classroom Activity

Practice identifying deepfakes

Review seven strategies that you and your students can use to identify deepfakes, listed at <https://avidopenaccess.org/resource/strategies-for-identifying-deepfakes/>, and incorporate them into your lesson.

1. Use deepfake detectors.
2. Listen with your eyes.
3. Listen with your ears.
4. Practice.
5. Use your background knowledge.
6. Consider the source.
7. Approach media with a healthy dose of skepticism.

ALA Frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Information Creation as a Process

(AVID <https://avidopenaccess.org/resource/strategies-for-identifying-deepfakes/>)

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13.3: Assignment

Refuting a conspiracy theory or fake news

Select a conspiracy theory or piece of fake news and refute it. Research the event that is central to the topic you choose, then use what you find to write a brief essay (1-2 pages/250-500 words). Be sure to include a detailed description and summary of the item you're researching, and cite all of your sources. Use complete sentences, and proper grammar and punctuation.

ALA frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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14.1: Readings

Generally speaking, artificial intelligence is a branch of computer science, where humans design technology to simulate human activities including thought, speech, learning, and problem-solving. AI tools often amaze (or frighten) us with their lifelike capabilities, but their functionality is limited by the content they were trained on.

We may not realize it, but we engage with AI frequently, and it is changing how we live. Common examples of AI include:

- search engines such as Google, which use natural language processing (NLP) to retrieve search results
- assistants such as Alexa and Siri, which understand human speech through NLP
- the function in Zoom that allows recognition of human actions such as hand gestures
- fitness trackers
- recommendation functions and targeted advertising such as content or purchase recommendations based on search or watch histories, as found on Google, Netflix, YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, etc.
- facial recognition software
- language and text processing tools such as Google Translate, Grammarly, and ChatGPT
- word choice autocomplete and grammar suggestions in writing and text messaging apps
- chatbots that respond to customer questions

and much more!

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14.1.1: Generative AI

Using AI tools can be both good and bad. Generative AI (GAI) specifically describes a group of tools that can be used to create all sorts of digital content. Here are some pros and cons of using generative AI:

Pros	Cons
GAI be used for tasks such as analyzing data, helping people do their work more effectively and efficiently	Using GAI can prevent you from understanding what your instructor is teaching, and can cause you to violate ethics and policies of academic integrity including earning a 0 on an assignment, failing a class, or worse
ChatGPT can be used to help build research strategies by creating or refining a Boolean search query	ChatGPT summaries of information may lead to resources that are behind paywalls, defeating the purpose of a search query
ChatGPT can be used as an assistant to improve writing	Using ChatGPT for writing has drawbacks, coming from its training on content that incorporates bias such as sexism, racism, and other harmful terminology
ChatGPT can be used to help write citations and reference lists	Citations generated by ChatGPT may fill in unknown information with “hallucinations” or information that seems like it could be correct, but is completely incorrect; this can include totally made up citations
ChatGPT can be used to help non-native English speakers write in clearer English	Generative AI tools often plagiarize peoples’ work to “create” content

A good practice is to treat AI like an assistant who is trying to help you, but doesn’t always have the best ideas. You can use AI for limited purposes, like those described above, but in the end your work needs to be your own. If you decide to use AI in your daily life or occasionally for an assignment, here are some suggestions for how to do it ethically:

- “Read your course syllabus. A syllabus lays out the rules and expectations for a course. Many teachers include AI statements that will provide information on what types of AI they will and will not allow in their class.
- Read the instructions for each assignment. Assignment instructions may mention tools that are allowed or expected to be used, or tools that should be avoided.
- Avoid using AI to complete an assignment (unless explicitly instructed to do so). Focus on using AI to help you. For example using:
 - Goblin.Tools to help you create to-do lists or judge the tone of your writing so that you can improve on it.
 - ChatPDF to analyze a scholarly article and summarize information from it.
 - Bing Chat to brainstorm ideas for an essay topic or get suggestions for related topics.
 - Grammarly to get suggestions for correcting your grammar while writing.

Remember that AI can be a useful tool, but it is no substitute to learning how to do things yourself! Your course assignments are created to help you learn and you learn by doing” (adapted from [Wilson, et al.](#)).

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14.1.2: ChatGPT

What is ChatGPT exactly? How does it work? Where does it get the information it uses? ChatGPT is an AI tool that has been getting a lot of attention since it was released in November 2022. It uses natural language processing techniques to respond to user-generated prompts. The "GPT" initials stand for generative pretrained transformer. Put simply: You ask ChatGPT a question or provide a prompt, it replies using natural language.

What do you need to know about ChatGPT?

- OpenAI (the company that designed ChatGPT) collects a lot of data from ChatGPT users.
 - The privacy policy states that this data can be shared with third-party vendors, law enforcement, affiliates, and other users.
- This tool should not be used by children under 13 (data collection from children under 13 violates the United States' Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule - COPPA).
- The Terms of Use (End-User License Agreement) state that "You must be at least 13 years old to use the Services. If you are under 18, you must have your parent or legal guardian's permission to use the Services" (OpenAI, 2022, para. 2).
- While you can request to have your ChatGPT account deleted, the prompts that you input into ChatGPT cannot be deleted. If you, or your students, were to ask ChatGPT about sensitive or controversial topics, this data cannot be removed.
- ChatGPT is not always trustworthy.
 - ChatGPT was trained using a massive dataset of text written by humans that was pulled from the Internet.
 - Thus, the responses can reflect the biases of the humans who wrote the text used in the training dataset.
 - ChatGPT is not connected to the Internet and the data used to train it was collected prior to 2021.
 - According to the FAQs, ChatGPT "has limited knowledge of world and events after 2021 and may also occasionally produce harmful instructions or biased content" (Natalie, para. 4).
- ChatGPT makes stuff up!
 - To make up for knowledge gaps (e.g., lack of training data to pull information from), ChatGPT will provide a response to the best of its ability (often made up) rather than say "error" or "cannot compute."
 - The dialogue format "answer followup questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests," according to OpenAI (para. 1).

(This section adapted from [Trust](#), pp. 3, 6, 8, & 10).

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14.1.3: AI and ethics

AI is human-made, and it does not have the intellectual or emotional capacity for demonstrating a sense of ethics, or a moral code, for itself. In this section, we should consider the ethics of the humans who have created and trained AI, as well as how AI is used, and by whom.

We touched on a few of the drawbacks of using AI for classwork earlier, including how it can affect your grades, information literacy, and learning overall; here are a few additional deeper issues and questions to consider:

- Cybersecurity threats: AI can create new privacy issues, while making existing intrusions worse ([Das, et al.](#)).
- Intellectual property rights: Copyright law can't keep pace with rapid advancements in the use of AI to create works of visual art and music, making some ownership rights and infringements unclear
- Responsibility for problems resulting from AI use: Who can be held accountable for these issues?
- Bias and human rights: AI is trained using data that already exists online, and that is not filtered to eliminate biases, so that language and those attitudes come through in AI generated content, which can perpetuate harm done when it goes unchecked by people evaluating online content.
- Can AI surpass human intelligence? What then?

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14.2: Classroom Activity

AI Experiment

Read Turk, V. (2023, October 10). How AI reduces the world to stereotypes. *Rest of World*. <https://restofworld.org/2023/ai-image-stereotypes/> and replicate the experiment described. *Note:* Midjourney requires a Discord account and a paid subscription.

“Using Midjourney, we chose five prompts, based on the generic concepts of “a person,” “a woman,” “a house,” “a street,” and “a plate of food.” We then adapted them for different countries: China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and Nigeria. We also included the U.S. in the survey for comparison, given Midjourney (like most of the biggest generative AI companies) is based in the country.

For each prompt and country combination (e.g., “an Indian person,” “a house in Mexico,” “a plate of Nigerian food”), we generated 100 images, resulting in a data set of 3,000 images. The results show a hugely stereotypical view of the world.”

-OR-

For an unplugged activity, “(print and) cut out the *Semantic Network* card deck and have students use the cards to build their own semantic network. The square cards represent objects or ideas. The arrow cards represent relationships. Blank arrows and squares can be used to write-in custom relationships and concepts. Use glue and paper to make your own network to teach an AI agent” ([AI Unplugged](#)).

ALA frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value, Information Creation as a Process

(Turk <https://restofworld.org/2023/ai-image-stereotypes/>; AI Unplugged <https://aiunplugged.lmc.gatech.edu/unplugged-activities/semantic-network/>)

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14.3: Assignment

Evaluating AI

Have students prompt generative AI to make an annotated bibliography on their chosen topic. Ask them to compare the result to the annotated bibliography they have written for this class and evaluate what the GAI produces. Reflections should be approximately 250-500 words, using complete sentences, and proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

ALA frames: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Has Value, Information Creation as a Process

(adapted from The New School <https://guidetoteaching.newschool.org/using-generative-ai-in-student-assignment/>)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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15.1.3: Sharing information online

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15.1: Readings

There has been a lot of discussion in this text about negative facets of the information landscape, from harmful biases to censorship, to plagiarism, to information disorder and unethical uses of information, and more. In fact, our brains evolved to focus on the negative. This is a great survival tool when you're being chased by a saber-toothed tiger, but not so much in our current information landscape. There is a lot of good out there as well, and a lot of good to be done with information. We'll take a look at some of this in this last module.

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15.1.1: Information ethics

Ethical behavior includes acting honestly, fairly, respectfully, and equitably in the information landscape, whether in our personal, academic, or professional lives. We've discussed ethics and ethical behavior throughout this text, from information organization and classification systems to citing sources, to social media, to censorship, to AI and more, because it is vital to creating a world that we all want to live in. As UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) observes, "information ethics cover the ethical, legal and societal aspects of the applications of ICT [(information and communication technologies)] and are derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" ([UNESCO](#)).

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15.1.2: Information equity

In module 6 we touched on the issue of information access and the digital divide, and in module 13 on the correlation between education levels to susceptibility to information disorder. According to the nonprofit Information Equity Initiative (IEI), in the U. S.,

internet access is inaccessible, unreliable, or unaffordable for nearly 1 out of every 4 American students, or 15 million children. Internationally, half the world's population, or 3.7 billion people, lacks internet access. The majority of the world's offline population are women, and most live in developing countries ([IEI](#)).

The IEI is working “to ensure everyone, regardless of geography or income, has access to high quality digital learning resources” ([ibid.](#)). Just being aware of issues related to unequal information access can help us to be better global citizens and to practice good info-environmentalism (see module 13).

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15.1.3: Sharing information online

Because we are, of course, increasingly engaged in the online world, we can practice information hygiene to help create a better information ecosystem (also see module 13). This is where social media can be used for a very positive effect, by encouraging and facilitating civic, political, and social responsibility and action, and by amplifying voices to facilitate inclusivity and diversity both on- and offline (see module 9, social media). We can contribute to the greater good by carefully evaluating information we encounter and by taking time to analyze and reflect on the source of the information before deciding to share it online.

If we do decide to share information on social media or elsewhere, an especially effective tool is hashtags (#). Hashtags refer to a type of metadata tag used on social media to identify, locate, and promote particular topics. Metadata is data about data, and is an important part of organizing large amounts of information for easier access (see module 2). We've seen a lot of examples of the good that hashtagging can do in promoting awareness and social change for the #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter movements on social media, for example. Bringing attention to sexual violence has led to criminal convictions of high-profile sex abusers and the beginnings of cultural change around the world. Black Lives Matter is a movement, and now an international organization, dedicated to breaking down systemic racism and improving the lives of Black people, that began as a hashtag on social media in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer.

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15.1.4: Ways to make a difference

Here are some simple things you can do every day:

- Support initiatives to:
 - keep or make information accessible, in the real world and online
 - prevent censorship
 - promote literacy of all kinds
- Ask questions
- Educate yourself and others: investigate and learn; explain, don't argue
- Always cite your sources
- Use information to protect and raise others up, not to do harm
- Practice information hygiene and information environmentalism
- Think critically and read laterally
- Pay attention to your emotions when engaging with information
- Notice inequities and injustices in the information landscape, and help to address them

Now that you have all of this knowledge, go out there and do some
good!

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15.2: Classroom Activity

Social Justice in Information

Do the following activity as a class or in small groups:

Part I.

Do a Google image search on a population. (Can't think of one? Try Poverty, Smart kids, Juveniles, Successful people, Researchers, Teacher, Superintendent, Senior citizen, CEO)

Terms searched: _____

- What do you see?
- What might you expect to see that is missing/what's missing?
- What does this tell us about how our society represents this population?

Part II.

Discuss how this changes the way you think/feel/know about seeking information on the internet.

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Searching as Strategic Exploration

(Brown-Salazar <https://projectcora.org/assignment/social-justice-information-first-year-high-potential-students>)

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15.3: Assignment

Local justice

Research what is being done to promote a social justice cause in your community. How could you use information or research to help support that cause?

Write a brief essay (1-2 pages/250-500 words) on your topic. Be sure to include a detailed description and summary of the item you're researching, and cite all of your sources. Use complete sentences, and proper grammar and punctuation.

ALA Frames: Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation

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