



When You Have to Write a Research Paper...

INTERACTIVE TOOLS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

[CORE](#) - online interactive tutorial from Purdue that takes you through the research process, including budgeting your time; register as guest.

[TILT](#) - interactive tutorial helps you determine validity of different sources.

[Thesis Builder](#) - interactive tool that helps generate a thesis and helps with outlining.

[SIRS Database](#)-use the notecard and research guide features to help keep track of your information and avoid plagiarizing.

[ipl2 for Teens Research & Writing](#) – Step by Step guide to research.

TYPES OF SOURCES: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary

Primary: original materials from the time period involved; can be reprinted in books or posted on the Internet (diaries, photos, speeches, letters, interviews, works of literature, e-mails, newspaper accounts--sources that contain original, unevaluated information--are examples).


Secondary: accounts written after the fact with the benefit of hindsight; these describe or analyze primary information--written with a persuasive or analytical aim (books, textbooks, magazines and journals that interpret or review research are examples).


Tertiary: works that list, compile, or index primary or secondary sources (encyclopedias, almanacs, digests, indexes, and reference books are examples).

PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TERTIARY
cases correspondence description and travel diaries fiction interview personal narrative pictorial works poetry short stories sources	criticism and interpretation history history and criticism government policy law and legislation moral and ethical aspects political aspects politics and government psychological aspects public opinion religion religious aspects social policy study and teaching	abstracts bibliography chronology classification dictionaries directories encyclopedias guidebooks handbooks, manuals, etc. identification indexes registers statistics index
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SO HOW DO I KNOW WHERE TO LOOK?


Information can come from anywhere--from the web, from magazines, from journals, from newspapers, from books --even from a telephone book. How do you know where to start? That depends on the question, or questions, you are trying to answer--what your specific information need is.

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use GENERAL REFERENCES for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> background information key ideas, important dates or concepts synonyms or key words to help with Internet searching 	 <p>ENCYCLOPEDIAS and REFERENCE BOOKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> current events or up-to-date news opinions or editorials depth on your topic
<p>ENCYCLOPEDIAS & SPECIALIZED REFERENCE BOOKS CAN BE FOUND IN THE <u>LIBRARY REFERENCE AREA</u> AND IN <u>SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES</u> TERTIARY SOURCE</p>		


IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use BOOKS or SPECIALIZED REFERENCES for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • context for your topic • literary criticism (800s) • historical information • in-depth information on a topic • summaries of research to support an argument 	 <p style="text-align: center;">BOOKS and SPECIALIZED REFERENCE BOOKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • something that happened within the year
<p style="text-align: center;">BOOKS CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY (ONLINE CATALOG), THE PUBLIC LIBRARY (ONLINE CATALOG) AND IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES GENERALLY SECONDARY SOURCE (CAN CONTAIN REPRINTED PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS)</p>		

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use SCHOLARLY JOURNALS for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scholarly research • articles written by specialists • "peer reviewed" articles (specialists determine the article is worthy of publication) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • popular materials • information on current events
<p style="text-align: center;">JOURNALS CAN BE FOUND AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES AND/OR BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE JOURNAL'S WEBSITE (CAN USUALLY GET CONTENTS OF CURRENT ISSUE; SOME HAVE BACK ISSUES ARCHIVE) GENERALLY SECONDARY SOURCE</p>		

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use MAGAZINES for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> articles written for the general public, not for or by specialists information about current events information about popular culture opinions about popular culture 	 <p style="text-align: center;">MAGAZINES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> scholarly information for extensive research results or studies
<p>MAGAZINES CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY (MAGAZINE AREA), AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES AND/OR BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE MAGAZINE'S WEBSITE (CAN USUALLY GET CONTENTS OF CURRENT ISSUE; SOME HAVE BACK ISSUES ARCHIVE)</p> <p>CAN BE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE</p>		



IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use NEWSPAPERS for ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> current information about international, national and local events editorials, commentaries, expert or popular opinions 	 <p style="text-align: center;">NEWSPAPERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> scholarly information for extensive research results or studies
<p>NEWSPAPERS CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY (MAGAZINE AREA), AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES AND/OR BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE NEWSPAPER'S WEBSITE (CAN USUALLY GET CONTENTS OF CURRENT ISSUE; SOME HAVE BACK ISSUES ARCHIVE)</p> <p>CAN BE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE</p>		

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK IN ...	DO NOT use GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS for ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> information from all levels of government - federal to local health information statistics laws and court decisions expert testimony on a topic 	 <p style="text-align: center;">GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> today's news editorials/commentaries
<p>GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES, GOING DIRECTLY TO THE GOVERNMENT'S WEBSITE OR SEARCHING THE WEB</p> <p>CAN BE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE</p>		

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND ...	LOOK ON THE ...	DO NOT use a WEB SITE if ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current information • breaking news • historic documents / speeches • product information • political cartoons • personal interest items 	 <p style="text-align: center;">WORLD WIDE WEB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you cannot verify the credentials of the author OR if you cannot verify the information in another credible source • it is a personal website (includes those ending .edu with a ~ in the URL) unless you can verify the credibility of the author
<p>REMEMBER, MORE RELIABLE AND TARGETED INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS CAN BE FOUND IN SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES.</p> <p>THE WEB CAN BE A USEFUL TOOL TO FILL GAPS. USE THE MORE RELIABLE WEBSITE URLs THAT END .ORG or .GOV CAN BE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE</p>		

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Here are two sites that do a great and entertaining job of explaining exactly what plagiarism is and how to avoid it in your writing:

	<p>An amusing four-part plagiarism video series featuring a bobblehead professor (think Jib Jab) produced by Robeson Library.</p>
	<p>Empower: an entertaining and informative interactive site published by Wichita State University Libraries--follow the Citing Sources module and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognize different parts of a citation 2. describe when to cite sources used in your work 3. list ways to avoid plagiarism 4. understand the reasons for copyright



Guide to Online Schools presents ["The Ultimate Plagiarism Resource: Detecting Plagiarism & Preventing It."](#) Offers a definition of plagiarism, links to plagiarism detection sites, links to plagiarism tutorials, and a sampling of plagiarism policies.

Defining Plagiarism

Definition: Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of someone else as your own without proper acknowledgement of the source. If you don't credit the author, you are committing a type of theft called plagiarism. In fact the word plagiarism comes from the Latin term for kidnapping.

Plagiarism ranges from copyright word-for-word to paraphrasing a passage without credit and changing only a few words.

Below is a sentence from Daniel J. Boorstin's book *The Americans: the Democratic Experience* page 390. New York, Random House, 1992.

The following three students have included a passage from this book in their paper. These examples will show you how to avoid plagiarism.

Original Passage:

"Still the telephone was only a convenience, permitting Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before."

Steve writes:

The telephone was a convenience, enabling Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before.

This is plagiarism in its worst form. Steve doesn't indicate that the words belong to Mr. Boorstin leaving his readers to believe the words are his. He has stolen the words and ideas and attempted to cover the theft by changing or omitting an occasional word.

Shane writes:

David J. Boorstin argues that the telephone was only a convenience, permitting Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before.

Although Shane acknowledges the source, this is still plagiarism. The original is copied almost word for word, yet no quotation marks were supplied. Quotation marks indicate which words are used from another author's work.

Amanda writes:

Daniel J. Boorstin has noted that most Americans considered the telephone as simply “a convenience,” an instrument that allowed them to “do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before.”

Amanda has identified her source at the beginning of the paragraph, letting readers know who is being quoted and has provided a footnote directing them to the exact source of the statement. She has paraphrased some of Mr. Boorstin’s words and quoted others, but makes it clear which words are hers and which belong to the author.

Source: Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Cambridge, Adapted

Booleans – Expand or Narrow Your Search

Boolean logic defines logical relationships between terms in a search. The *Boolean search operators* are **and**, **or** and **not**. You can use these operators to create a very broad or very narrow search.

- **And** combines search terms so that each search result contains all of the terms. For example, **travel and Europe** finds articles that contain *both* travel and Europe.
- **Or** combines search terms so that each search result contains at least one of the terms. For example, **college or university** finds results that contain *either* college or university.
- **Not** excludes terms so that each search result does not contain any of the terms that follow it. For example, **television not cable** finds results that contain television but *not* cable.

Note: When executing a search, **And** takes precedence over **Or**.

The following table illustrates the operation of Boolean terms:

And	Or	Not
Each result contains all search terms.	Each result contains at least one search term.	Results do not contain the specified terms.
The search <i>heart and lung</i> finds items that contain both heart and lung .	The search <i>heart or lung</i> finds items that contain either heart or items that contain <i>lung</i> .	The search <i>heart not lung</i> finds items that contain <i>heart</i> but do not contain lung .

Using Booleans and Parentheses

To make even better use of Boolean operators, you can use *parentheses* to nest query terms within other query terms.

You can enclose search terms and their operators in parentheses to specify the *order in which they are interpreted*. Information *within* parentheses is read *first*, then information *outside* parentheses is read *next*. For example,

When you enter **(mouse OR rat) AND trap**, the search engine retrieves results containing the word mouse or the word rat together with the word trap in the fields searched by default.

If there are nested parentheses, the search engine processes the *innermost* parenthetical expression first, then the next, and so on until the entire query has been interpreted. For example,

((mouse OR rat) AND trap) OR mousetrap

Using Booleans When Phrase Searching

When Boolean operators are contained within a phrase that is enclosed in quotation marks, the operator is treated as a stop word. When this is the case, any single word will be searched for in its place.

Rubric for the Research / Inquiry Process

Note: This rubric gives you an idea of what your teachers will be looking for when they grade research projects. They will have their own rubric based on the assignment, but it will contain the same components.

	3	2	1
Question	Constructs a thoughtful and creative question that required challenging or provocative research. The work breaks new ground or contributes to knowledge in the area.	Constructed a focused question that involved challenging research.	Used a question requiring little creative thought and minimal research.
Gather	Gathered a great deal of information with a great deal of criteria in mind. Used authoritative sources in a variety of formats.	Gathered sufficient information with criteria in mind. Found authoritative sources in at least two formats.	Minimal information gathered. Connection to research question is weak. Little attention to the authority of the sources.
Conclude	Shows insight in drawing conclusions from information gathered. Information is organized in a logical manner to support the conclusion.	Draws conclusions from the information. Information is organized. Shows skill in approaching problem in a logical manner.	Draws no conclusions and/or demonstrates little purpose for gathering data. Lacks organization.
Communicate	Communicates ideas persuasively to a specific audience. Demonstrates precise and effective use of the medium, artistically and technically.	Communicates ideas to a specific audience. Demonstrates effective use of the medium.	Communicates minimal information. Format has technical errors.
Evaluate	Reflects on research process and product and identifies creative and insightful areas for improvement.	Reflects on research process and product and identifies areas of improvement.	Minimal reflection on research process or product. No areas for improvement identified.

Adapted from: Research Project Calculator <http://sdst.libguides.com/researchtools>