INFORMATION LITERACY

Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.

Tutorial 1

Selecting a topic and type of resource to use

Tutorial 2

Finding resources efficiently and effectively

Tutorial 3

Evaluating resources

Tutorial 4

Documenting sources

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Tutorial 1
Selecting information

We should approach library research with a plan too. Below is a list of questions that will help walk you through the library research process

1. What are you looking for?

2. What resources will you use?

3. Where will you look?

4. How will you look?

5. Did you find what you need?

Selecting a Topic

Sometimes the most difficult hurdle you face when beginning research is selecting your topic.

When selecting your topic you want to make sure that:

It meets the requirements of the assignment. Make sure it is appropriate to the length and timeframe of the assignment.

It is something you are very interested in and want to learn more about.

It is broad enough that you will be able to find information on it, but narrow enough that you will be able to avoid a general treatment of the topic.

You want to be careful of topics that are too:

- **Broad**

- **Narrow**

- **Regional**

- **Controversial or emotional**

- **Recent**

This does not mean you can not pick topics that fall in to one or more of these categories. It just means it will be more difficult either to locate information or deal effectively with the information you find.

Tutorial 2
What are the sources available?

Books

Reference

Sources

Journals

Magazines

E-Resources

Newspapers

Database

Websites etc.
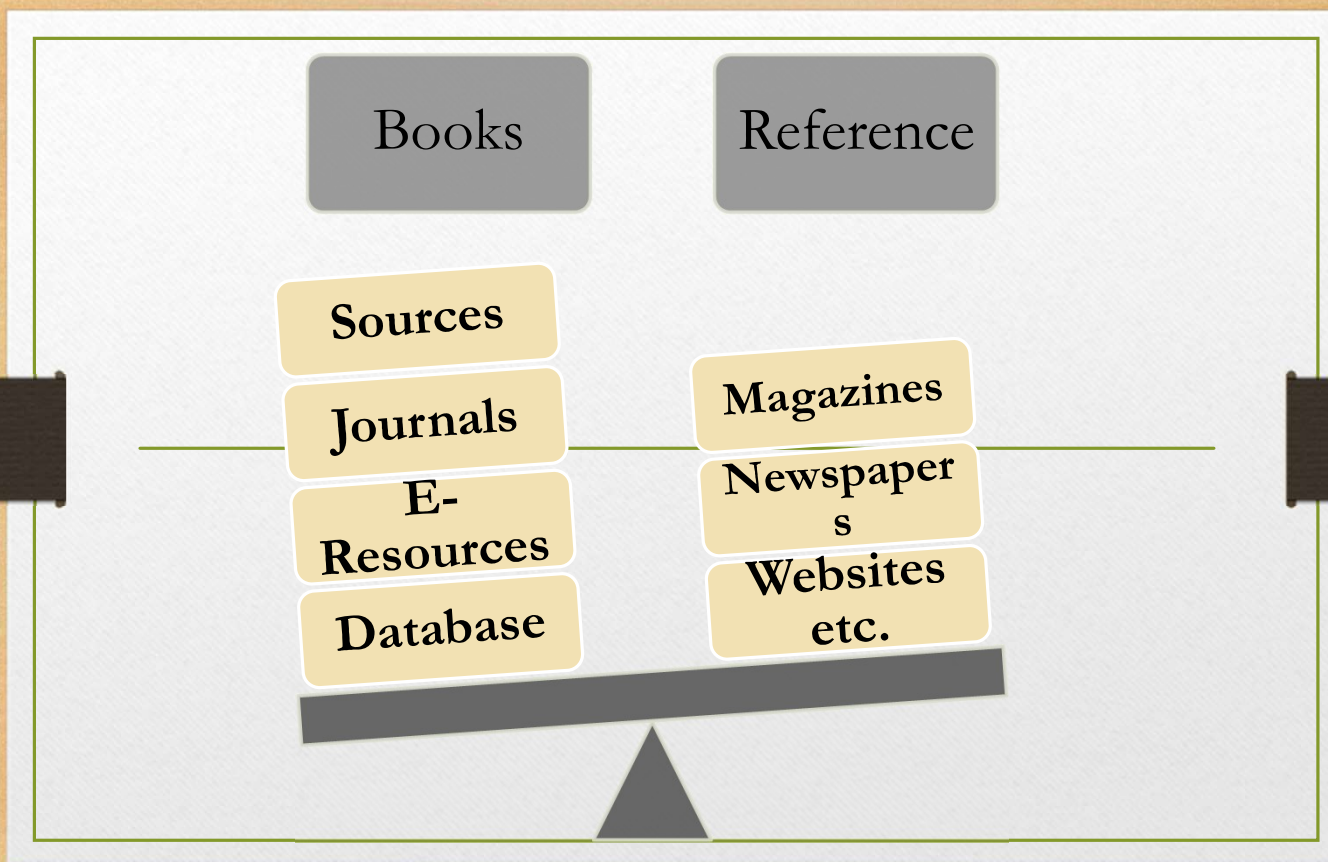
Library sources & Web Resources

Library resources

- Library resources go through a review process; in the case of scholarly publications, there is a peer review process.

- Library resources include all formats and types of information; books, periodicals, databases, audiovisual material, web resources, etc.

- Library resources are well organized; there is good access and "bibliographic control."

- Library resources are stable. There is continuing availability

Web resources

- The majority of web resources do not go through a review process. It may be difficult to verify authorship, expertise or false claims.

- A large majority of web resources are commercial.

- The web is not organized. Search engines are not comprehensive and in many cases are unreliable.

- Web resources are unstable, constantly changing and frequently disappear.

Finding Resources

- Keyword Search

- Boolean Search (And, And/Or, And/Not) Narrow & Broaden Search

- Field Search (Title, Author)

- Subject Heading Search

- You are ready to enter the second major phase of the research process; one in which you will develop effective strategies and tools for accessing selected information sources. Specifically, you will answer the following questions:

- Truncation

- Begin with a keyword search

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Tutorial 3 : Evaluation of Web sources

Unlike traditional print sources or library-based electronic resources, there is usually no process of peer review, nor is there an editor verifying the accuracy of information presented on the Web. You should not automatically accept the information you are retrieving at face value.

What are the different types of Web sites?

Web sites come from a variety of sources and contain an equally wide variety of types of information. It is important to know what type of site you are viewing and to understand any underlying biases that may make the site an inappropriate resource. Internet sites must be analyzed on an individual basis; not all government or educational sites will be appropriate for your research needs; likewise a commercial site is not necessarily an inappropriate source of information.

What are some things to look for when evaluating Web sites?

Authority/Source Questions
(known author, contact info, expert)

Currency/date Questions

Objectivity/Bias Questions
(Commercial org., Verifiable facts, inflammatory, misleading)

Accuracy Questions
(clear, concise, verifiable)
Design Questions (easy to read, navigate)

Any information or outside source used in a paper or speech which is not your own idea or creation must be cited or documented, giving credit to the original source.

- Document sources according to the **APA** (American Psychological Association)?

- Document sources according to the **MLA** (Modern Language Association)

Presenting another's words or ideas as your own (i.e., not documenting them) is called <u>plagiarism</u>.

- This form of intellectual theft may range from an intentional purchase of a research paper to an inadvertent failure to use proper documentation in a paper or speech.

- In any case, plagiarism is a serious academic offense and can lead to serious consequences.

- Closely related to <u>plagiarism</u> is the entire issue of copyright protection of intellectual property. You should consider everything you retrieve electronically as well as in print as copyright protected unless the item is in the public domain or the author expressly gives permission for duplication.

- "Fair use" allows for the educational use of copyrighted material without having to ask for permission from the author.

- You will be able to incorporate electronic items into reports and speeches as long as you properly document the source, the item used is a short excerpt of the whole and your usage of the source does not harm the commercial value of the source.