

Module 4 – Evaluating information - Graded assignment

Part I. Books

Using the topic that you have decided upon in module three, search Voyager or another library catalog. Select three books from the results that you think most likely to provide the information you need and explain why you selected them. The bibliographic record will give sufficient information about each document for you to answer the questions. However, it is best that you come in the library and examine the books. For each book selected, give detailed description of the book and its appropriateness for your topic. Factors that weight in your decision should include:

- What do you know about the author? Is he a specialist in the field and has written many books? The Library catalog gives links to an author's other works in the Library collection. *Books in Print*, *Book Review Digest*, *Contemporary Authors* are excellent sources to learn about an author's body of works; search under the author's last name.
- What does the subject content of the book tell you about its relevancy for your topic?
- Does the title reflect the book's subject?
- Is the publisher a respected and well-known publishing house? (Again, search the library catalog to find out how many books by this publisher currently in the library collection. Does the publisher produce many books on a certain subject?)
- Is currency important with this topic and why is it so?
- Does the document provide serious information or is it propaganda with an agenda? (Oftentimes, the book's jacket gives good indication of the nature of a book).

Part II. Periodicals

You will make comparisons between a popular magazine and a scholarly journal. The main purpose of this assignment is to compare the contents (type, length, and quality of articles) and the presentation (type and quality of graphics, advertisements) of the two different types of periodicals.

Select one scholarly journal and one popular magazine of your choice.

- A. Leaf through the whole issue of each periodical and briefly scan through the articles in both periodicals.
- B. Make comparisons by listing characteristics of each periodical. You may create two separate columns, one for each periodical, or you may write a paragraph for each periodical. Whatever format you chose, answer the following questions about each periodical:
 1. Is information such as expertise and qualifications of the article's author included?
 2. Evaluate the nature and the length of most articles.
 3. Are there advertisements? What kind and how many?
 4. Is there a bibliography at the end of each article?
 5. Evaluate the graphics (i.e. educational, promotional, or decorative.)
 6. Discuss similarities and differences between the two publications.