

Module 4: Evaluating

Now that you know something about the types of information sources and where to find them, we need to talk about how to use them effectively.

This module will teach you some skills for deciding whether a particular information source is right for your project.

Ask yourself about your information source

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it CURRENT?• When was it published or posted? Does its date influence its usefulness?	?
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it RELEVANT?• Does it relate to your topic or answer your question? Is the language level appropriate (e.g., not too technical?)	?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it AUTHORITATIVE?• Who is the author, publisher, or sponsor? What are the author's credentials?	?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is it ACCURATE?• Do the authors offer evidence to support claims they make? Has the information been peer-reviewed?	?
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is its PURPOSE?• Does it inform, sell, entertain, or persuade? Is it objective? Is it fact, opinion, or propaganda?	?

Sarah –
Perhaps
allow
each
letter and
the final
sentence
to reveal
one page
at a time.

CRAAP acronym & concept credit: CSU Chico, Meriam Library

If your information source does not meet these criteria, it might be CRAAP! In that case, you may want to find another source.

Using format to evaluate a source

Another way to evaluate a source is to look at its layout or format.

Features such as tables of contents can help you determine quickly whether a source might be appropriate for your topic.



⊖ Table of Contents

- [Contents](#)
- [Acknowledgments](#)
- [Introduction](#)
- [1 Background: Some Basic Facts about the Human Brain](#)
- [I Transgenerational Shaping of Human Brain Function](#)
- [2 Effects of Sensory Deprivation and Sensory Enrichment on](#)
- [3 Effects of the Social Environment on Brain Structure and F](#)
- [II The Neurobiology of Ideology](#)

Methodology

Sample

The data in this study are from (CIRP) 2000 Student Information (CSS) that is sponsored by the Hi



The format of scholarly articles usually contains standard sections for describing research.

Let's take a deeper look.

Video Placeholder: Parts of a Journal Article

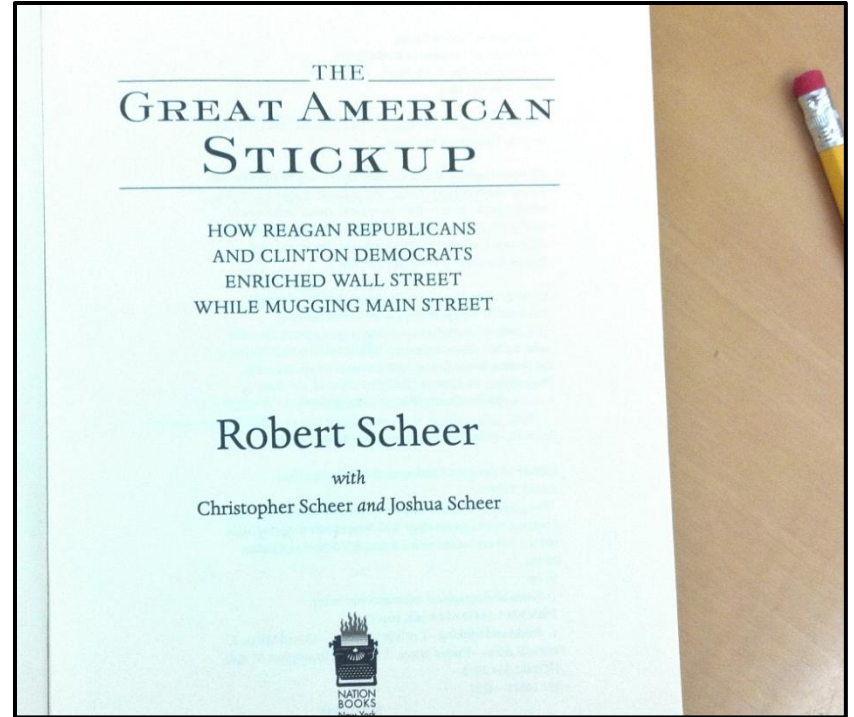
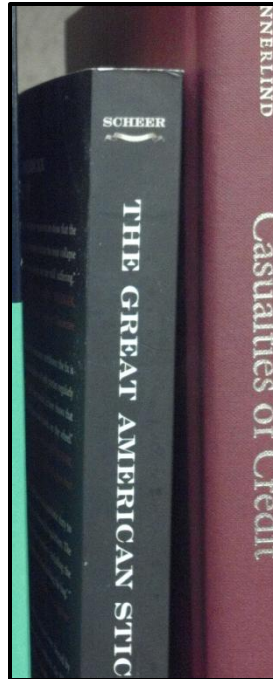


Using format to evaluate a source

Some of the criteria you use to scan an article can also help you evaluate books.

Let's begin with the title and title page.

A book's full title appears on the title page.



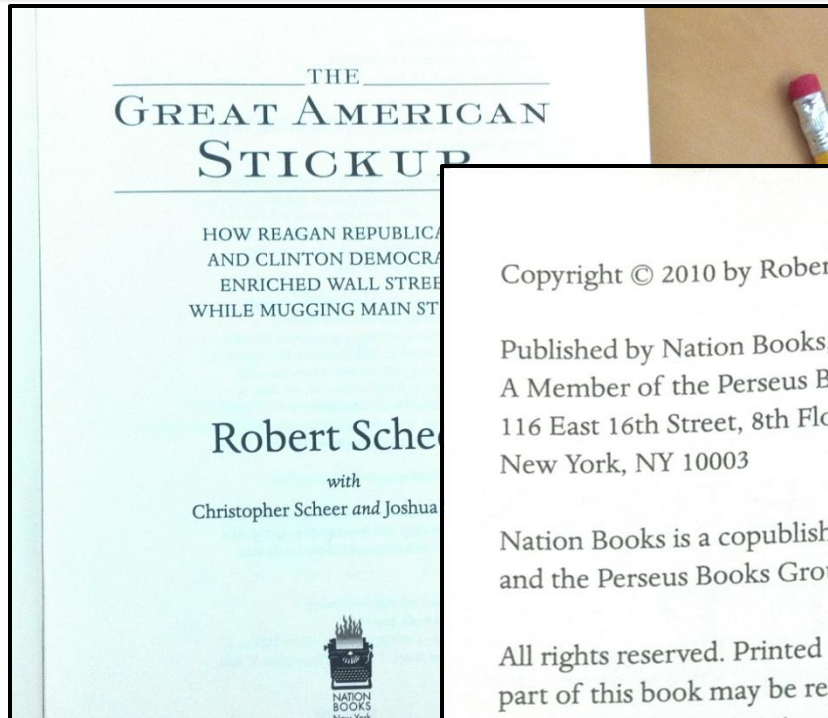
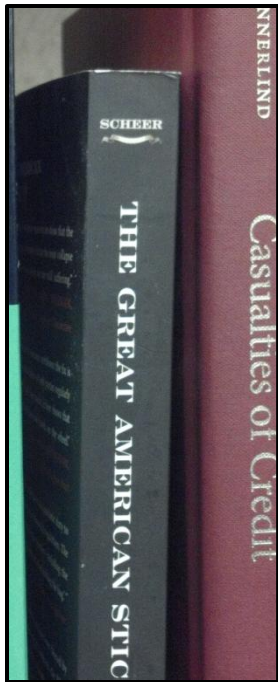
Full title

The Great American Stickup: How Reagan Republicans and Clinton Democrats Enriched Wall Street While Mugging Main Street

Using Format to Evaluate a Source

The back side of the title page is called the verso page. The verso page contains:

- the copyright date, or publishing date
- the publisher name
- the location of the publisher



Copyright © 2010 by Robert Scheer

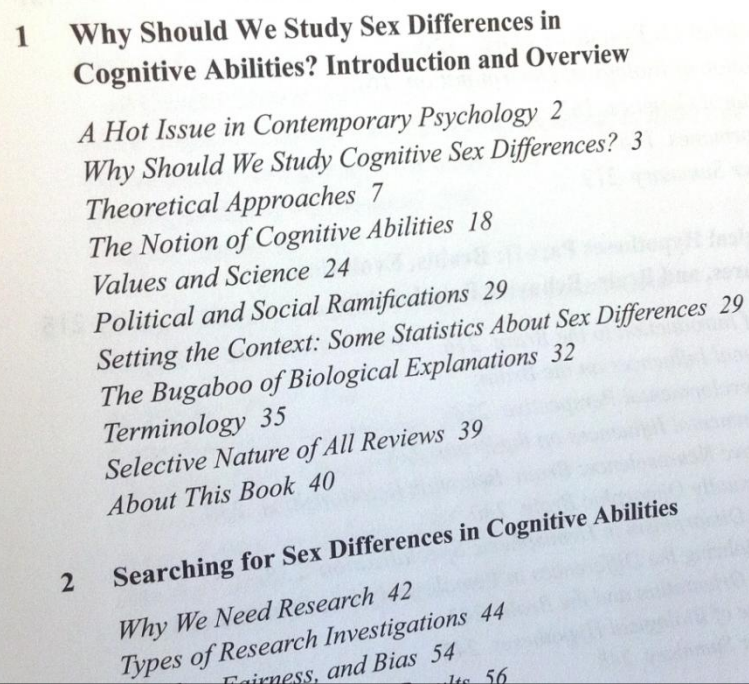
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Avenue South, New York, NY 10016-8810.

Using Format to Evaluate a Source

The table of contents at the front of the book will give you a good idea of what the book covers and how it is organized.

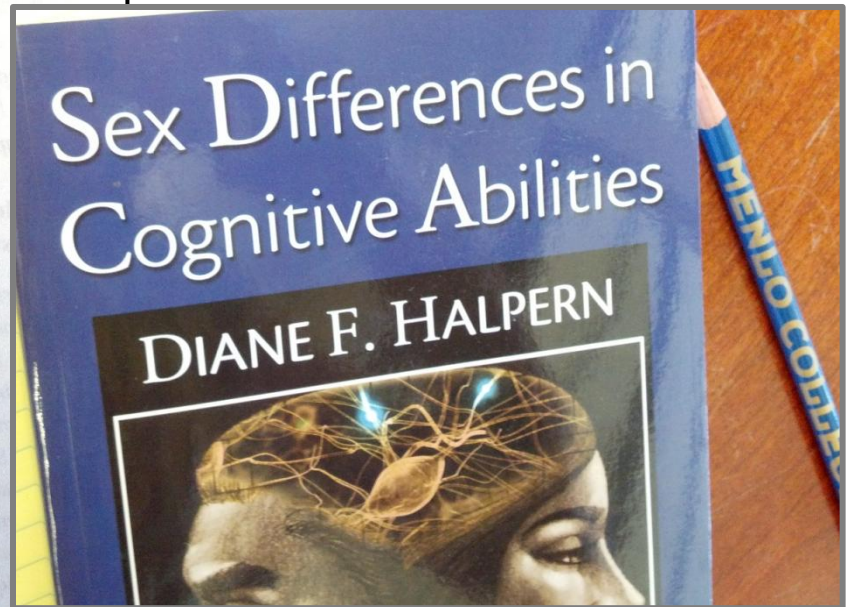


1 **Why Should We Study Sex Differences in Cognitive Abilities? Introduction and Overview**

- A Hot Issue in Contemporary Psychology* 2
- Why Should We Study Cognitive Sex Differences?* 3
- Theoretical Approaches* 7
- The Notion of Cognitive Abilities* 18
- Values and Science* 24
- Political and Social Ramifications* 29
- Setting the Context: Some Statistics About Sex Differences* 29
- The Bugaboo of Biological Explanations* 32
- Terminology* 35
- Selective Nature of All Reviews* 39
- About This Book* 40

2 **Searching for Sex Differences in Cognitive Abilities**

- Why We Need Research* 42
- Types of Research Investigations* 44
- Fairness, and Bias* 54
- Us* 56



Often the Introduction section will explain the contents in more detail and include historical background on the topic.

Using Format to Evaluate a Source

At the back of the book, the index helps you find specific names or topics in the book that may not be listed in the table of contents.

Index

absolute poverty 260–1
abusive sales practices 116
Accra 260
ADD (American Dream Demonstration) 238 n. 13
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AFI (Assets for Independence) program 272, 275
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basic knowledge index 95 n. 10
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and Compa

342 The Golden Game

Bibliography

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2000 San Diego Padres Media Guide. San Diego Padres Baseball.
2001 California Golden Bear Baseball Media Guide. Cal Berkeley.
2001 USC Baseball Media Guide. USC Sports Information I.
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Two Continents Publishing Group, 1976.
Allen, Maury. *Damn Yankee: The Billy Martin Story*. New York.
Almond, Elliott. “Baseball Breaks Another Barrier.” *San Jo*.
Ambrose, Stephen E. *Nothing Like It in the World: The Men*.
Simon and Schuster, 2000.
“Via, Ma

The bibliography contains references, or citations, to the sources of information that the authors used, so that readers can find the sources themselves.

Evaluating numeric and statistical data

16 of 16

Subject	Menlo Park city, California							
	Households		Families		Married-couple families		Nonfamily households	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total	12,630	+/-572	7,396	+/-436	N	N	5,234	+/-563
Less than \$10,000	4.5%	+/-1.7	2.0%	+/-1.2	N	N	8.3%	+/-3.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2.1%	+/-0.8	0.2%	+/-0.4	N	N	4.7%	+/-1.9
\$15,000 to \$24,999	3.3%	+/-1.1	2.5%	+/-1.5	N	N	5.2%	+/-2.0
\$25,000 to \$34,999	6.1%	+/-1.6	4.4%	+/-1.8	N	N	9.0%	+/-3.4
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9.6%	+/-2.5	7.1%	+/-3.0	N	N	13.0%	+/-4.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	9.6%	+/-2.1	8.8%	+/-2.7	N	N	10.4%	+/-4.3
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.7%	+/-2.6	9.1%	+/-2.8	N	N	14.9%	+/-4.7
\$100,000 to \$149,999	17.5%	+/-3.0	15.4%	+/-3.3	N	N	20.3%	+/-5.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12.5%	+/-2.6	14.9%	+/-3.1	N	N	9.0%	+/-3.8
\$200,000 or more	23.1%	+/-2.5	35.5%	+/-3.3	N	N	5.3%	+/-2.4
Household income in the past 12 months	24.5%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Family income in the past 12 months	(X)	(X)	25.6%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Nonfamily income in the past 12 months	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	23.7%	(X)

The publisher is the author, sponsor, or organization that is presenting the data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey

The sponsoring organization may be different from who compiled the data.

The name of the publisher or sponsor can help you evaluate possible bias or conflict of interest.



Evaluating



Bowman Library



Try it!



You found a journal article studying the incidence of concussions among NFL players. In what section can you learn the details about how they recruited study participants?

- abstract
- discussion
- methods**
- introduction

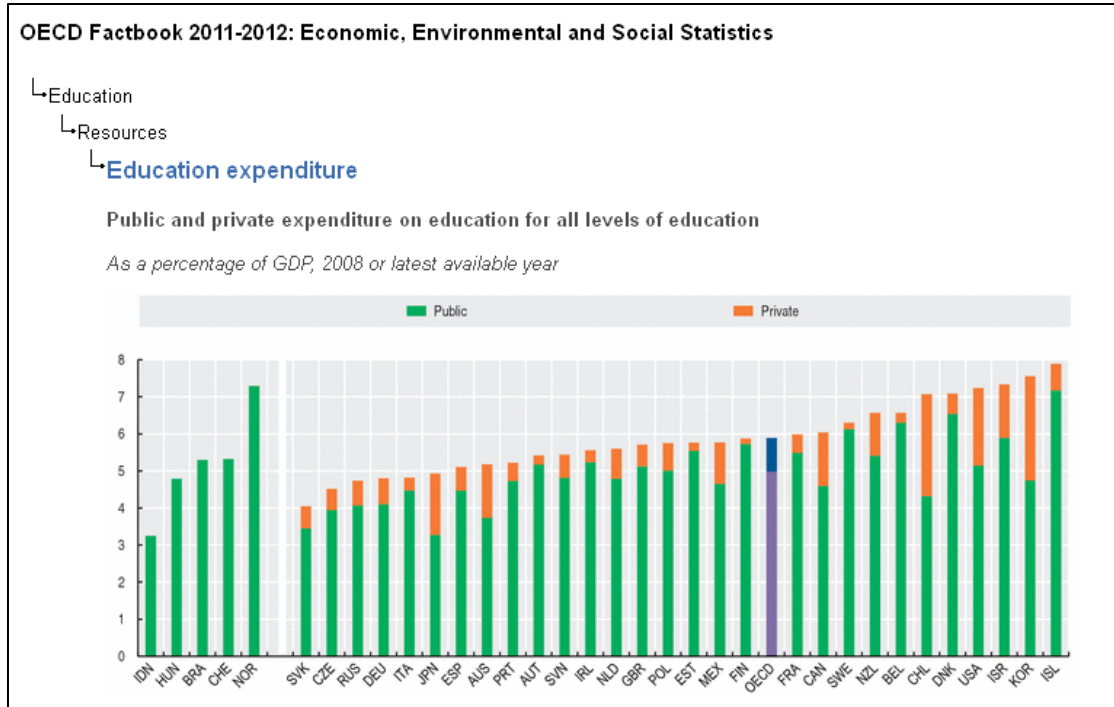
You found a book about how microfinance projects can help poor people in developing countries. Now you want to know whether Latin America is mentioned. Which section(s) will help you find out?

- title page
- table of contents**
- verso page
- index



Try it!

For your social science class, you are comparing spending on education between Korea and the U.S. Examine the data file below carefully.



Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Factbook 2011: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics. Education at a Glance, OECD Publishing. © OECD 2011. <http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2011>

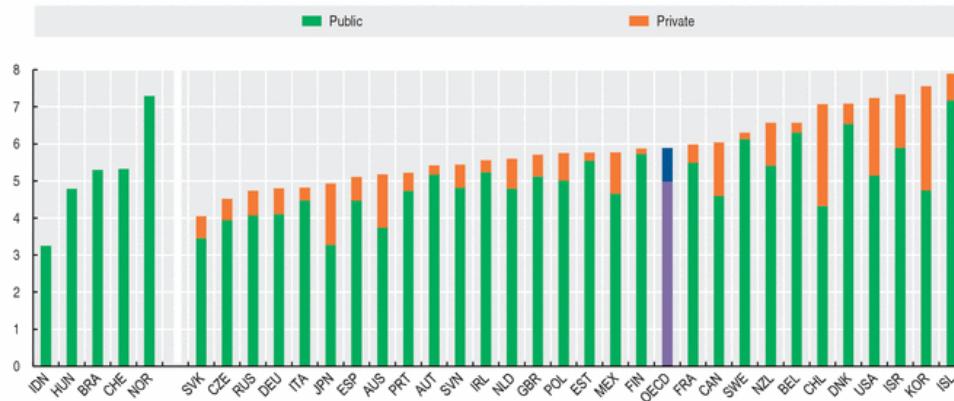
Try it!

OECD Factbook 2011-2012: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

Education
Resources
Education expenditure

Public and private expenditure on education for all levels of education

As a percentage of GDP, 2008 or latest available year



Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Factbook 2011: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics. Education at a Glance, OECD Publishing. © OECD 2011. <http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2011>

What is the source of these data?

- a. GDP
- b. Economic Institute
- c. OECD
- d. Factbook

What color represents public spending?

a. purple



b. green [corr.]



c. orange



d. black



Counting both public and private spending, Korea spends more on education. **True** or False?

No matter what information source you use...

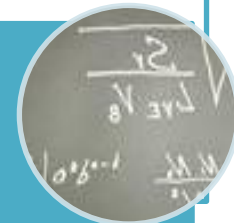
- Before reading, look at the section headings of an article, chapter, or website. Notice how it's organized.
- This will help your understanding of the content.

Before You
Read



- Make sure you understand the language level of the source.
- An article using language that is too technical may not help you, even if it is about your topic.

Before You
Read



No matter what information source you use...

- Write down the ideas, facts, and statistics that are important to your topic or argument.
- Keep track of the page numbers or section where you found your information.

As You
Read



- Write down as much citation information as possible.
- Writing things like the author's name, the title, the date, and exact web address will save you time and trouble later.

As You
Read



Sarah – Please allow each bar to reveal one page at a time.

Take your research to the next level.



Use a variety of sources.



Seek information that a skeptical reader will find convincing.



Be objective and seek unbiased sources. Be able to distance yourself from your topic.



Seek information on all sides of an issue to support your argument. Don't ignore conflicting information... acknowledge and respond to it.



When appropriate, consider using statistical data to strengthen your argument.

Recap of what you've learned

Now that you've completed this module, you should be able to:

- Use the CRAAP criteria to evaluate a source
- Identify the parts of a journal article
- Use the format (table of contents, sections) of a source to evaluate it
- Scan headings before you read
- Take detailed notes while you read
- Research objectively, and seek all sides of issues

In the next module, you'll learn about citing your sources.

Quiz for Module 4