



Bowman Library Research Skills Tutorial

**The modules in this tutorial will put you on the right track
when you research information for your projects.**



Bowman Library Research Skills Tutorial

This tutorial consists of five modules. It is best to view the modules in the order they appear, but you do not have to do all of them at one time.

For the most interactive experience, it is best viewed on a laptop or desktop computer, but can be viewed on mobile devices.

Each module is followed by a quiz. More details on that before you begin the quiz.



Module 1: Asking

In this module, you'll be introduced to types of information sources, both popular and scholarly.

You'll also learn about the information process.

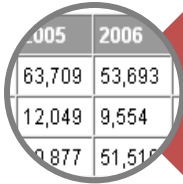
Research starts with a question

For each project, ask yourself:

- **What do I want to know?**
- **What is the information I need to find to answer my question?**

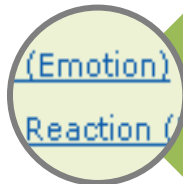


Some of your projects at Menlo might include:



2005	2006
63,709	53,693
12,049	9,554
9,877	51,510

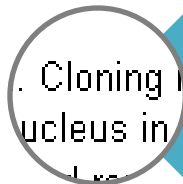
Doing market research on a product or company



Finding scholarly articles for a psychology assignment



Writing a paper about an ancient civilization

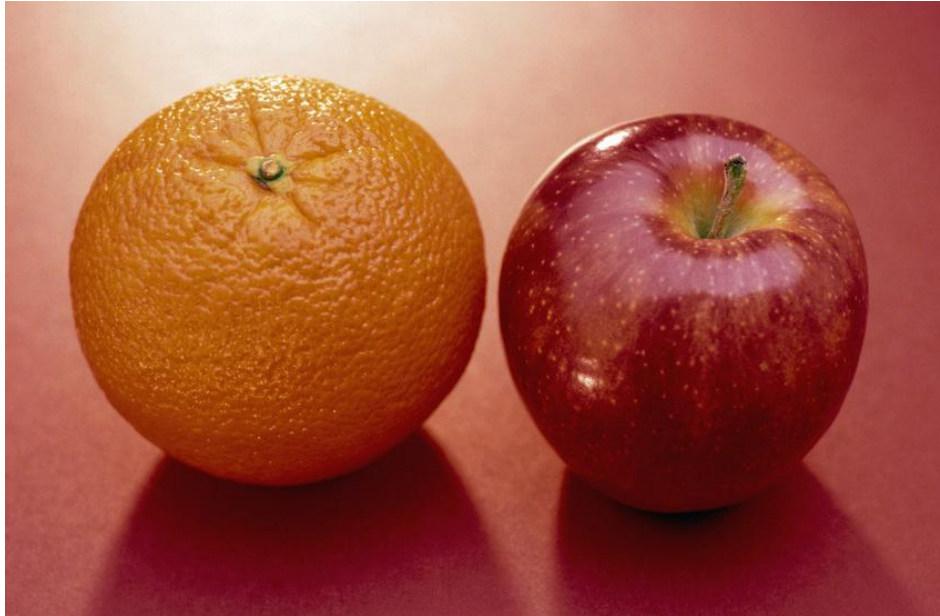


Researching a controversial issue for a debate



Creating a business plan

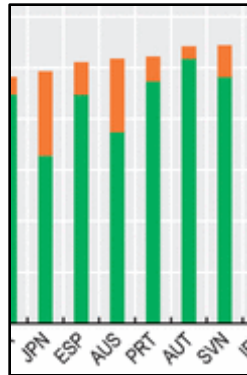
Types of information sources



In order to determine which sources are the most authoritative and will best meet your needs for a particular project, you have to understand something about the types of information sources that exist.

Types of information sources

- Some sources you'll use to answer research questions might be
 - data and statistics
 - magazine, newspaper, and journal articles
 - books
- You'll use information sources in print and online formats.



Types of information sources

- You'll use both popular and scholarly sources, depending on the project.
- Popular sources are written for a general audience. Scholarly sources are written for an academic audience. You'll hear about these sources in more detail later.

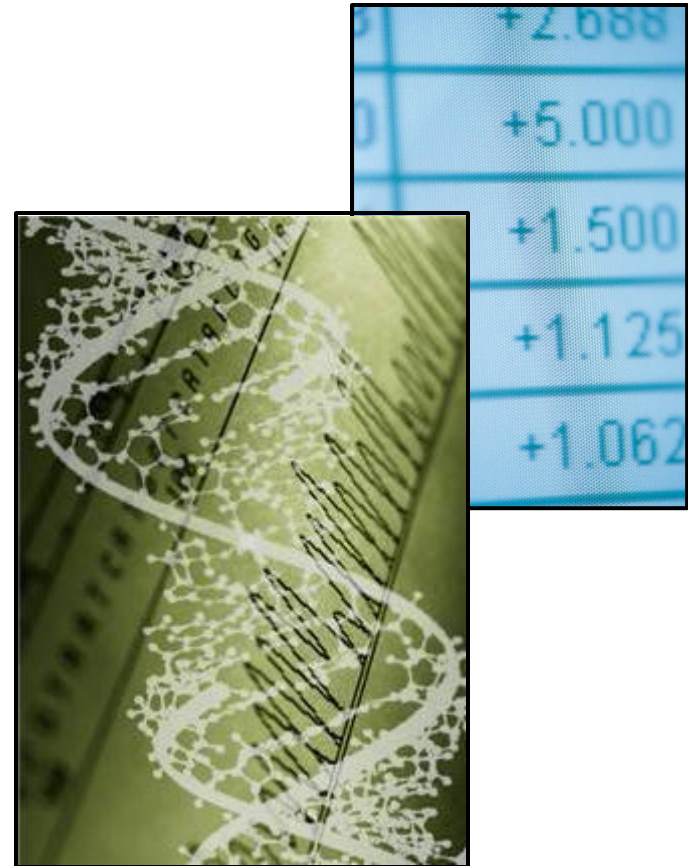


- Each type of information source is the product of a process involving varying amounts of research, writing, and review.
- Let's take a closer look, beginning with data and statistics.

Types of information sources:

Data and statistics

- Data interpretation and analysis lead to the creation of information and knowledge.
- Data collection can take minutes (such as weather data) or years (such as census data).
- Data are multidisciplinary; the same set of data can be used by researchers in many different fields.



Types of information sources:

Data and statistics



- Data can be in either numeric or non-numeric form. For example, statistics about traffic patterns are numeric data, while videos of runners at the finish line of a race are non-numeric data.
- Knowing how to find and make use of data will be a valuable skill long after you graduate.

Types of information sources:

Popular sources



Here, the word “popular” is used to describe something that is intended for use by the general public.

Popular information sources:

- May be online, in print, or both.
- Include some books, as well as magazines, newspapers, blogs, web sites, product catalogs and reviews, and company annual reports.
- Are published on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis and can take anywhere from a day (newspapers) to months (in-depth magazine articles) to produce.
- Are written by paid journalists or authors who may not have scholarly expertise.

Types of information sources:

Popular sources



Popular sources:

- May report on the original research of others, information from scholarly sources, current events, and include data or facts about events.
- Often do not include bibliographies or lists of sources.
- May be reviewed by editors or may be self-published.
- Are selected by librarians for the Library's collection based on subjects that students and faculty research here at Menlo.

Types of information sources:

Scholarly/academic sources

- Scholarly sources are also often called **academic, peer-reviewed, or refereed sources**.
- Scholarly sources can take months or years to produce and publish because of the **research and review process** that goes into creating them.
- Let's take a look at this research and review process.



The scholarly research and review process

Researchers identify a question or topic in need of further research.

Researchers conduct research or experiments, then write about their findings.

Researchers submit the article to a peer-reviewed journal or, if it's a book, to an academic press or publisher.

The article or book is reviewed by other experts (the researchers' peers) in the same field as the researcher.

Peer-reviewers may suggest or require changes, or they may reject the work entirely.

Researchers make changes based on the reviewers' comments.

The article or book is published by the journal or publisher in print and digital formats.

Librarians review, select, and subscribe to books, print journals, and online databases containing these scholarly works to support courses and research at Menlo. Access is provided on the Library's web site.

Sarah: please
reveal lines one
at a time, or use
other "process"
graphic

Scholarly information sources:

Textbooks and reference works

Textbooks and reference works:

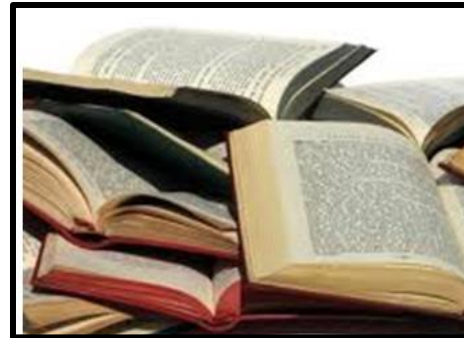
- **Compile and synthesize the most important information about a subject from other scholarly sources**
- **Provide an overview of essential knowledge on a subject**
- **May be general (World Encyclopedia) or subject specific (Dictionary of Psychology)**

Scholarly information sources:

Reference works

Reference works :

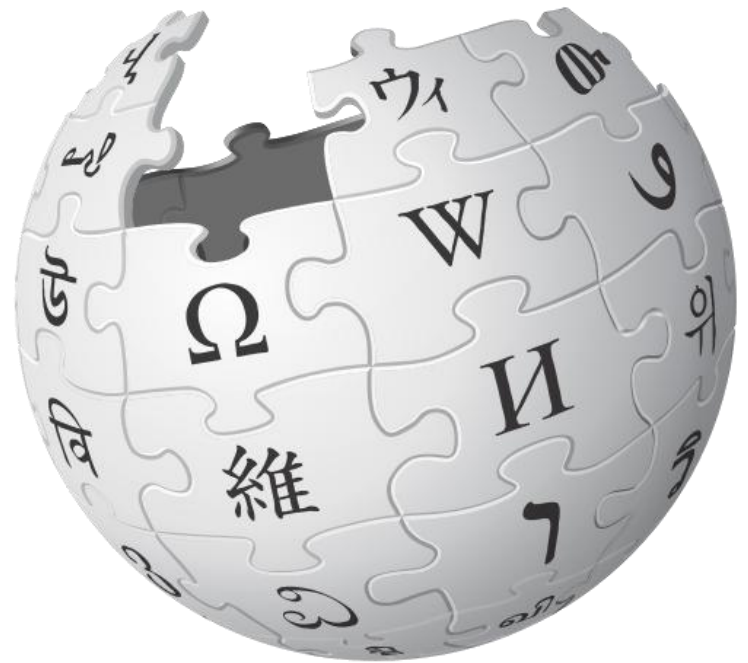
- Are an excellent place to begin your search
- Are not intended to be read cover to cover
- Provide background, main concepts, and organization of a topic
- Provide the important vocabulary and terms you'll use when you begin to search for more information
- Can be in print or online



Scholarly information sources:

Is Wikipedia one?

- You're familiar with Wikipedia, but it is not an academic source.
- Entries in Wikipedia are created by many contributors, many of whom are not experts.
- Information in Wikipedia is sometimes inaccurate or incomplete.
- But before disregarding Wikipedia, consider how it can be useful:
 - Offers an overview of an unfamiliar topic
 - Provides useful keywords or search terms
 - Might include a bibliography with sources that you can use to find more information



Sarah: Interactive thing allowing user to compare popular and scholarly sources by clicking on the questions and seeing the different answers, copied from <http://tip.uwyo.edu/searching/searching14.html>

Scholarly Resources: What's the difference?

Click a question to see the answer.

What's in them?

Who writes them?

Who reads them?

What do they look like?

What are their advantages?

What are their disadvantages?

Scholarly

Professors, researchers, or professionals; credentials are usually stated in article



©Blackwell Publishing

Popular

Staff writers or free-lancers; names or credentials often not stated

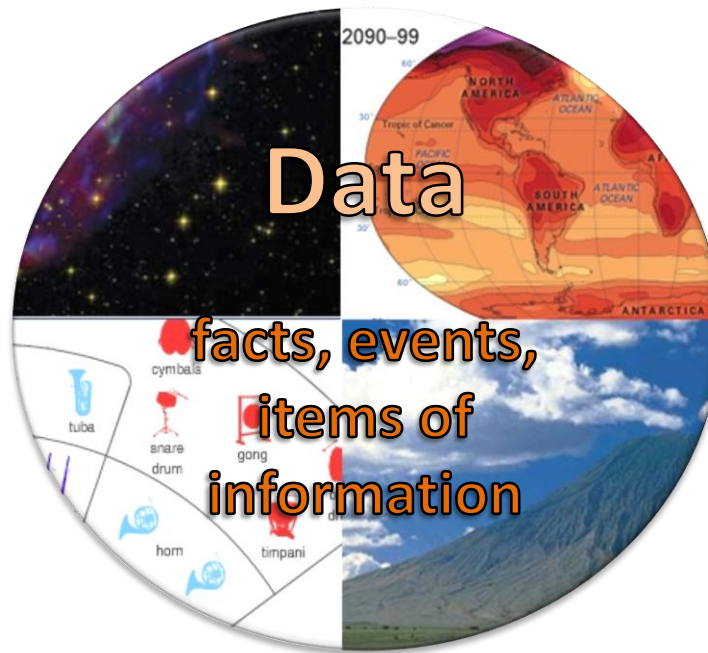


© Rolling Stone LLC

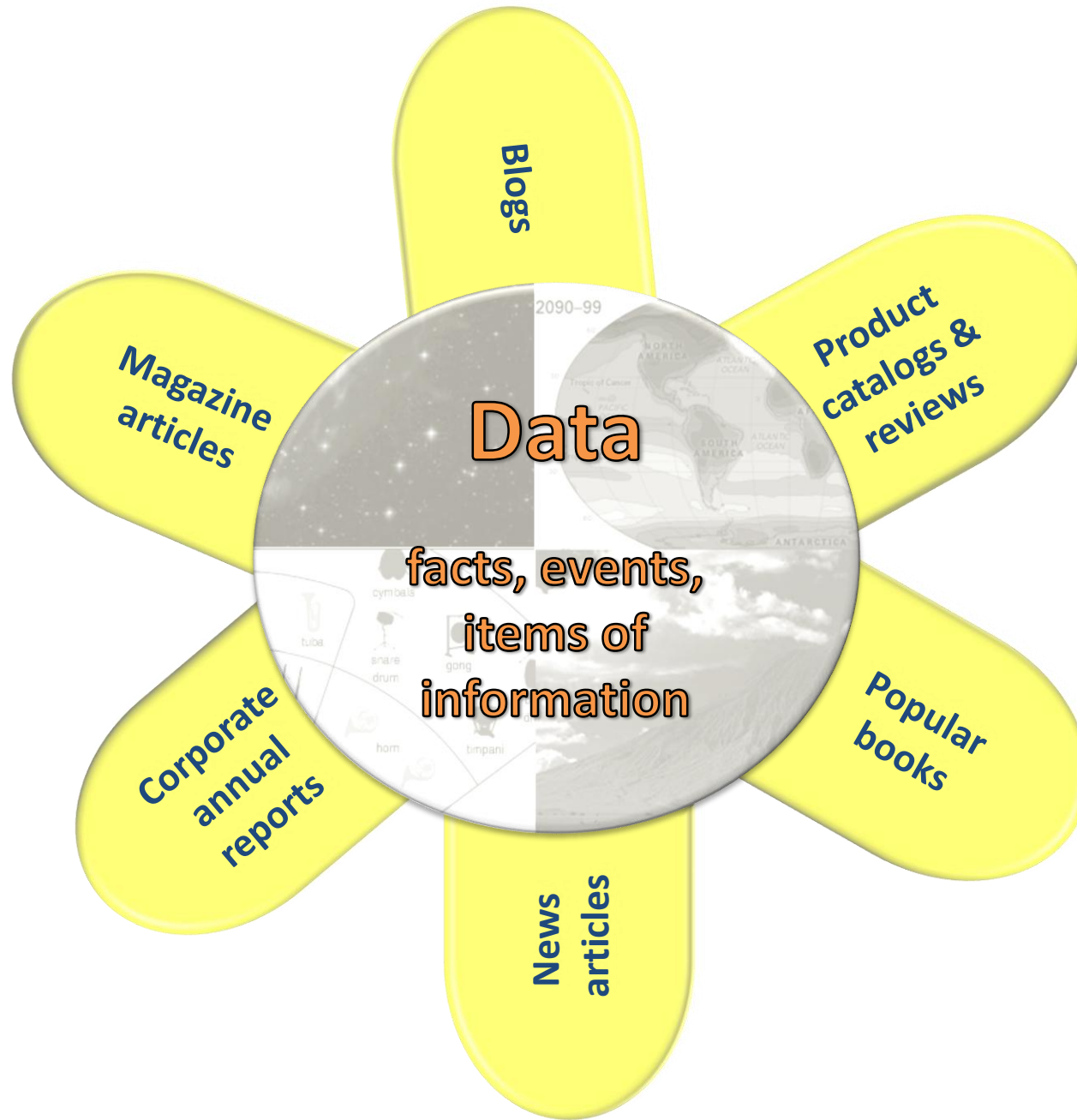
Credits for page concept and contents: Tutorial for Info Power (TIP), University of Wyoming, available at <http://tip.uwyo.edu/categories.html>

Overview of the information process

Although the various types of information sources are different in several ways, they also have something in common: the use of data. Data are the building blocks of information and include much more than numbers. Data are facts, events, and items of information presented in visible form.



Overview of the information process: Popular sources



Researchers and writers of popular sources such as news articles, blogs, and books often include data, facts, and details of events in their work.

Overview of the information process: Scholarly sources



Just as data form the basis for popular information sources, data play an even larger role in scholarly work. Scholarly information sources include things like journal articles, scholarly books, data sets, dissertations, textbooks, and reference works.

Overview of the information process: Scholarly & popular sources



We've talked about the research process from data to published work.

But where do YOU fit in?

Types of information sources: Where YOU fit into the process



- Understanding the differences between information types will help you decide which sources to use for your projects.
- This knowledge will also help you decide where to search.

Recap of what you've learned

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

- Recognize the central role of data in the information process
- Identify characteristics of popular and scholarly information sources
- Understand the scholarly research and review process

In the next module, we'll discuss the process of searching for information.

Quiz for Module 1