



IDENTIFYING SOURCES



SCHOLARLY VS POPULAR GREY LITERATURE

SCHOLARLY		GREY LITERATURE		POPULAR	
PURPOSE	Articles or books that inform or report original research, theory, experimentation, or application and practice. Also referred to as academic sources.	Documents published for a specific audience and purpose - e.g., stakeholder updates, professional guidance, etc.		Articles and media that entertain and present information of general interest, generalized discipline specific content, and current events.	PURPOSE
VISUAL APPEAL	Little or no advertising, colour, or graphics; illustrations are used to explain research.	May include illustrations, infographics, and other such elements to increase visual appeal.		Often includes advertisements, illustrations, and colour to add visual interest and marketing appeal.	VISUAL APPEAL
EXPERTISE	Discipline specific content and vocabulary written by experts (researchers or specialists) in their fields; for students and academics in the discipline.	Experts in fields not represented in traditionally published literature. Practical knowledge.		Information for general audience written by anonymous, staff, or freelance author(s). May have general or specialized knowledge on topic.	EXPERTISE
CITATIONS	Sources are cited both in-text (e.g., in the body of paper) and with a corresponding reference section (at end of paper).	Sources may be partially cited or hyperlinked. Formal citation styles are not typically used.		Sources may be partially cited or cite only non-academic sources.	CITATIONS
EDITING	Subject to higher standard of quality content, research, and writing, via the peer-review process.	Level of editing varies depending on the publication.		Content may be subject to an editorial process, but not guaranteed.	EDITING
PUBLICATION	Often published by a professional organization or university publisher.	Published outside of mainstream academic and commercial publishers- e.g. government, businesses.		Published by companies, media, associations, or individuals for public awareness, profit, or influence.	PUBLICATION

When To Use Scholarly Sources

- Read original research and/or resources written by experts
- Help support an idea or argument in an assignment
- Provide supporting evidence by academic or peer-reviewed sources

Examples of Scholarly Sources:

- Journal of Consumer Research
- Canadian Journal of Nursing Research
- Canadian Social Work Review
- BMC Medicine
- Psychological Bulletin

PEER REVIEW

What is Peer Review?

- When a researcher completes a study, they submit their findings for publication.
- Subject experts in the field blind-review the findings to determine quality of writing, content, and research.
 - Blind-review = reviewers do not know the researcher's identity and provide an unbiased assessment.
- Peer reviewed materials must meet a high standard in order to be published.

Tips for Finding Peer Reviewed Materials:

- When searching in Discovery, use the "Peer Reviewed" filter option.
- When considering a source, review the author's credentials, and look into the journal's submission process.

When To Use Grey Literature

- Keep up with recent advances in the field
- Learn about trends in a specific industry/sector
- Find information on specific organizations

Examples of Grey Literature:

- Government reports and policies
- Market research
- Financial statements
- Annual reports
- Clinical trials
- White papers
- Health policies



When To Use Popular Sources

- Gain general and background information before establishing a thesis or research topic
- Find ideas when creating a search strategy for research of scholarly sources
- Become familiar with current trends and issues in society or in a specific field

Examples of Popular Sources:

- Wikipedia
- Healthline
- Wall Street Journal
- ChatGPT
- Scientific American
- CBC
- YouTube

