Research Success Tutorial – Citing & Evaluating (Module 5)

In this module you are going to learn how to:

• Evaluate information
• Cite information in APA style

By the time you are finished reviewing these two topics, you will know how to evaluate the information you have found, and how to cite it properly in an APA Works Cited list. **Remember to always defer to your instructor’s preferences regarding formatting or citation requirements.

When you are collecting information for a research project, you should **always** evaluate the information you find.

**However, judging the quality of information is not always easy!**

Do not wait until you are finished your research to begin the evaluation process. Information should be evaluated throughout the research process.

This will:

• save you time
• help you to avoid using information that you do not need or cannot use

Remember: Review all of the information you find before saving it. This will save you time!

You will not be able to use all of the information you locate. Narrowing down what you find to only the most useful information can only be done through the process of evaluation.

**Effective evaluation is an essential part of the research process!**
The following is a set of criteria you can use when evaluating various sources of information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Books, Magazine &amp; Newspaper Articles</th>
<th>Web</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Relevant       | ● Is the majority of information in the book (e.g. at least a full chapter) or article related to your research topic?  
                  ● Does the information address some aspect of your research question? | ● Is the information connected to your research topic?               |
| Authoritative  | ● Is the author’s name frequently mentioned in your research?  
                  ● Does the author have expertise in the subject area he/she is writing about?  
                  ● Does the article appear in a scholarly (peer reviewed journal) or a major trade publication?  
                  ● Is there an author listed? (if not, be cautious!)  
                  ● Is the information written by a well-established organization?  
                  ● Can anyone, no matter his or her level of expertise, edit the information on the website (as with Wikipedia)? | ● Is there an author listed? (if not, be cautious!)  
                  ● Is the information written by a well-established organization?  
                  ● Can anyone, no matter his or her level of expertise, edit the information on the website (as with Wikipedia)? |
| Reliable       | ● Is the information supported with sufficient evidence?  
                  ● Is the evidence included in a Works Cited list at the end of the book or article? | ● Is the information supported with sufficient evidence?  
                  ● Is the evidence documented somewhere on the page?  
                  ● How does the URL (web address) end? Check the end of the URL - web sites that end in .gov or gc.ca (government) or .edu (educational) are generally more reliable than web sites that end in .com (commercial) |
| Current        | ● Information recently written or revised is generally more accurate than material that is out of date, so determine:  
                  > Is the information up to date?  
                  > When was it written? | ● Is the information up to date?  
                  ● Can you find a “last updated” or “last modified” date at the bottom of the page?  
                  ● If you don’t know when the information was written, you need to be careful! It may be either inaccurate or out of date. |
Citing Information

When you are working on a research paper and decide to use ideas that were either written or created by another person, it is critical that you give credit to that person.

Giving credit to another person in your assignment is referred to as citing.

Hint: If you fail to give credit to someone else's ideas in your research paper, and do not explain where the information came from, it is considered plagiarism!

Citing Information & Plagiarism

Plagiarism is considered a very serious offence.

In order to avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you:

• use another person's idea, opinion, or theory
• use any pieces of information that are not common knowledge
• use quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words
• paraphrase (see definition below) another person's spoken or written words.

Paraphrasing means restating a text, passage, or work in your own words. For example:

Original passage:
Students frequently overuse direct quotations when taking notes from a reading, and as a result they overuse quotations in their final research papers.

An acceptable paraphrase:
When writing their research papers students often insert too many quotations that they take from their reading notes.

How do you give credit?

You must include both In-Text Citations and a Works Cited list in your research paper.

Let's look at these one at a time.
Works Cited List (APA Format)

The Works Cited list is placed at the end of your research paper. It includes a list of all the sources you used when writing your research paper.

This is an example of a Works Cited list in APA format:

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Works Cited

Gray, L. (2010, November 27). Global warmingslowdown... thanks to more pollution in our atmosphere. The Vancouver Sun, B.8. Retrieved December 2, 2010, from Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies


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- The title is "Works Cited" and is centered at the top of the page.
- Below it is a list of citations.
- Each citation is its own paragraph with a half inch overhang, and is double spaced.
- The citations are organized alphabetically according to the first element in each citation, which is usually the last name of the author, or if that is unavailable the title of the organization responsible for the work.
- Within each citation are all of the various details of the publication in a particular order specified by APA style rules.
In-Text Citations

In-text citations are located in the body of your paper. Each refers to a specific source included in your Works Cited list.

For example, imagine that this line was somewhere in the body of your paper...

As Guterl suggests in his article, “what counts is not only what humans do to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gases, but also how the earth responds” (Guterl 58).

(Guterl 58) is the in-text citation that refers the reader to a source included in the Works Cited list at the end of your paper.

Works Cited List and In-Text Citations

When thinking about Works Cited lists and In-Text Citations, it is sometimes easiest to keep this simple rule in mind:

RULE

If it is in your paper, it is on the Works Cited list.

If it is on the Works Cited list, it is in your paper.

Citing Information

Remember, when you use a source in your assignment - such as a book, a newspaper or a magazine article - you have to place information about that source in your Works Cited List.

But how do you know what information about the source you need to record?

That depends on the Style Guide you are told to use by your instructor.
Style Guides

In order to create your Works Cited list and In-Text Citations properly, you must follow the instructions from a Style Guide.

There are several different style guides including:

• APA Style Manual
• MLA Style Manual
• Chicago Manual of Style

This tutorial and assignment use the APA Style Manual.

Hint: Before you begin to prepare your Works Cited list, be sure to ask your instructor which Style Guide they want you to use!

When you are completing your assignment, you will be asked to write down certain pieces of information from articles you find in order to create your own Works Cited list.

Recording Information from a Magazine Article

On the left side on the next page, is a citation. To the right are the parts of the citation you need to record in order to create an APA citation in your Works Cited list (i.e. the title of the magazine article, the author or editor (if available), the title of the magazine, the date of the magazine article, the volume and issue (if available), and the pages.)

Hint: Most citations also contain a brief summary of the article. This is called an abstract. Abstracts can help you quickly assess how relevant the article is to your research.
Review the citation below. Make sure you are comfortable with how to record the appropriate information from an article citation in order to create a Works Cited list. This can also be used as an example of how to fill out the worksheet for your own assignment: Magazine Article Worksheet

IT'S TOO LATE TO STOP GLOBAL WARMING.

Authors: Guterl, Fred
Source: Newsweek; 8/24/2009, Vol. 154 Issue 8/9, p58-58, 1p, 1 Color Photograph
Document Type: Article
Subject Terms: *ENVIRONMENTAL protection -- International cooperation
*EMISSIONS trading -- Law & legislation
*CARBON dioxide mitigation
*GREENHOUSE gas mitigation -- International cooperation

Title of the magazine article: It’s too late to stop global warming
Author or editor (if available): Guterl, Fred
Title of the magazine: Newsweek
Date of magazine article: 8/24/2009
Page(s): 58

Geographic Terms: COPENHAGEN (Denmark)
DENMARK

Products: 1997 Dec. 11

NAICS/Industry Codes: 924110 Administration of Air and Water Resource and Solid Waste Management

Abstract: The article examines international environmental discussions that are taking place in Copenhagen, Denmark. During the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, the U.S. failed to act as a leader and China was exempt from cutting carbon dioxide emissions. It is attested that the Copenhagen summit will develop differently, as the U.S. has proposed legislation for capping and reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.
Recording Information from a Newspaper Article

On the left side below, is a citation. To the right are the parts of the citation you need to record in order to create an APA citation in your Works Cited list (i.e. the title of the newspaper article, the author or editor (if available), the title of the newspaper, the date of the newspaper article, and the pages, if available.)

Global warming slows down ... thanks to more pollution in our atmosphere

Abstract (Summary)
Global warming has slowed in the past decade, figures from Britain’s meteorological office suggest.

Review the citation below. Make sure you are comfortable with how to record the appropriate information from an article citation in order to create a Works Cited list. This can also be used as an example of how to fill out the worksheet for your own assignment: Newspaper Article Worksheet.
George Brown College Resources

When you begin to write your own Works Cited list and In-Text Citations, George Brown College has a variety of resources to help you.

Have a look at George Brown's APA/MLA Research Guides to see the various resources available to you when preparing your Works Cited list.

Hint: Many of the George Brown online databases generate APA and MLA citations. Visit the George Brown Library staff to find out how to use this online tool.