



FINDING AND USING CREDIBLE SOURCES

LANGUAGE ARTS 1



WHY GATHERING RELIABLE INFORMATION MATTERS

Gathering reliable information is an important step in creating a strong **research paper**. When you choose trustworthy sources, you can make **smart decisions** about what to include in your research and feel confident that your **facts are correct**.

Reliable information not only improves the quality of your work but also **helps your audience trust what you share**.

WHAT IS A CREDIBLE SOURCE?



A credible source is **free** from **bias** and backed by **evidence**. The **author** is an **expert** in their field, and the information is **published** by a **trustworthy organization**.



WHAT MAKES A SOURCE RELIABLE?

- **Written by Experts** – Created by authors who know the topic well.
- **Fact-Focused** – Shares information based on evidence, not just opinion.
- **Accurate and Up-to-Date** – Provides current, correct details.
- **Free From Bias** – Avoids strong personal feelings or one-sided views.

CREDIBILITY IS NOT:



A well-designed website/logo



Professional photography



A domain name that ends with .org



References and citations

TYPES OF SOURCES

Traditional Sources

- **Books** – Nonfiction, encyclopedias, and textbooks
- **Newspapers & Magazines** – Current events, features, and opinion pieces
- **Scholarly Journals & Articles** – Peer-reviewed research and studies

Digital & Media Sources

- **Websites & Blogs** – Organization sites, news outlets, educational blogs
- **Videos & Documentaries** – Educational content and visual explanations
- **Podcasts & Audio Programs** – Expert interviews and discussions

Primary Sources

(Original Information)

- Diaries, letters, speeches
- Historical documents and government records
- Original research, surveys, and experiments
- Photos, artifacts, or firsthand interviews

Secondary Sources

(Explanations or Summaries)

- Textbooks, encyclopedias
- Reviews and critiques
- News articles summarizing events or research

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The publications and sources you evaluate should come from trustworthy institutions, such as academic organizations and reputable news outlets.

Ask yourself, “**What is the author’s intended purpose?**”

Can you find examples of **bias**? Is the information **slanted** toward a particular viewpoint?

Remember, information is made by people who are **flawed** and **biased**, even with the best intentions. **No source** is completely objective, but that doesn’t mean it is **unreliable**.



QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do you know **who** wrote it?
- Is the **author** an **expert**?
- When was it **published**?
- Is it **supported** by evidence?
- Is it **free** from **bias**?





HOW TO TAKE NOTES FROM SOURCE

- **Focus on Key Facts and Ideas:** Only write down the most important points.
- **Use Your Own Words:** Paraphrase instead of copying to show you understand.
- **Record Your Source:** Keep track of where you found each piece of information.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH PROJECT

- **Pick a Topic You Care About:** Research is easier and more fun when it interests you.
- **Use Multiple Sources:** Combine books, articles, and websites for stronger information.
- **Stay Organized:** Keep your notes and sources neat so nothing gets lost.
- **Check Source Reliability:** Make sure the information you use is accurate and trustworthy.

COMMON RESEARCH MISTAKES TO AVOID



Don't copy directly → Instead, take notes in your own words.



Don't rely on a single source → Use several to confirm your facts.



Don't trust a site just because it looks professional → Always check the author and evidence.



Don't skip recording your sources → Keep track so you can cite them later.