



**Title: Selecting appropriate information sources**

**Outcome:** Students will be able to recognize that different information needs lead to different information sources in order to select the best sources for their topics.

**Curriculum:** characteristics of books, magazines/newspapers, journals

**Learning Activity #1:** Instructor prompts discussion with students about different information needs in a typical student's life, different information sources they might use to fill that need, and why a source is useful: Example: Where do you look when you need info about:

- A movie you might like to see?
- The weather for the upcoming weekend?
- Information about a celebrity or political figure?

Instructor explains that, similarly, there are different sources of academic information and each has its uses. List each source on the board with some characteristics under it.

**Magazines/newspapers**

Most current

Good for topics "in the news"

**Books**

Thorough

Written by experts, edited  
 Long to publish

**Scholarly journals**

Present research/ review articles

Very specialized  
 Long to publish

**Learning Activity 2:**

Break the class into small groups. For each of two research topics, have them recommend two types of sources and give a reason why for each each. See attached sheet to distribute.

**Assessment:** Students complete web assessment form with the following text,

<p><b>Information Need:</b>                  What are the major causes of World War II?</p>	<p><b>Information Sources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Current Newspaper Article</b>                      Is / is not (circle one) a good source for this topic because...</li>   <li>• <b>Book</b>                      Is/ is not (circle one) a good source for this topic because....</li> </ul>
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**Criteria:** Students select "is" or "is not" for each possible source and list one reason from the criteria listed on the board.



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Imagine you are researching the following topic:

**Discuss the controversy surrounding cell cloning research from several perspectives. e.g. (a scientist, a conservative, a doctor).**

With your group members, list 2 appropriate sources of information for this topic (Refer to the list of sources on the board). For each, list a reason why it would be useful.

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Now pretend you have the following assignment:

**Report on various aspects of the life and work of the 20<sup>th</sup> century painter Georgia O'Keeffe.**

Again, pick two sources and list why they would be useful for this topic.

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ reason: \_\_\_\_\_