

# Choosing Good Research Sources for Your Reflections

1. Choose from a variety of mediums for your sources:
  - Internet research
  - Professional journals (articles written by scientists reporting the research)
  - Books (not textbooks)
  - Newspaper articles
  - Science magazines such as “Scientific American”
  - Other reputable periodicals that have dedicated science writers, such as “Mcleans”
  - Science programs that report research, such as “The Nature of Things”
2. Know the difference between primary and secondary sources; use as many primary sources as you can find.
  - Secondary resources rely heavily on the research and experiences of others .
  - Primary sources include first-hand research and experiences.
  - Use primary sources as much as possible.
3. Make good use of references you might find in professional journals, books, or other articles.
  - Most articles in professional journals and/or peer-reviewed research publications will normally include long lists of references.
  - Often, these references are primary sources.
4. Know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable Internet research.
  - Internet research can be tricky.
  - Acceptable Internet research includes professional on-line journals, professional on-line articles that have been peer reviewed, and information published on-line by professional organizations.
  - You will not want to rely on sources such as blogs, commentary, and self-published articles such as this.
5. Severely limit your use of encyclopedias, especially your use of Internet encyclopedias such as Wikipedia.org; they should only be used in very specific circumstances.
  - You should only use information from encyclopedias as a way to either illustrate a point or provide the reader with information on a concept or technique that is not well known.
  - Encyclopedias should not be used as your primary source for research.
6. Cite your sources.
  - Try EasyBib. Many librarians will be glad to help you locate additional information regarding certain techniques for citing sources.