

Finding Resources

Identifying resources that contain enough meaningful, accurate, and useful information for your subject area can be challenging in itself. Grad Challenge research requires a minimum of three resources. Many students find having four or five resources makes it easier to write the paper. These may include:

- Newspaper articles
- Magazine or journal articles
- Books
- Videos
- Material taken from quality websites* (see below)
- Informational materials from an organization related to your topic

* Your three resources cannot all be websites.

Note: While grabbing the first three resources you can find may require the most minimal work, with a little more sustained searching, you can find resources that are actually interesting to read and useful.

At the CVU Library or your town library, you may access many of these resources. Library staff can assist you in your search. [Note: Most articles from the Library's subscription databases are NOT considered "websites."] Your Community Consultant may also be able to suggest reading material relevant to your project or organizations that do related work. ***Encyclopedias (including Wikipedia) cannot be counted as subject-specific resources.*** The information from them, however, may lead you to a more acceptable and effective resource.

To locate resources, there are several options:

1. Start at the CVU Library homepage. From there, you can:
 - a. use the Library catalog to find books that we own
 - b. use the Library's databases to find newspaper, magazine, journal articles (Articles from these sources are acceptable as sources for your topic research.)
2. Use the internet to search for quality information
 - a. Think of keywords or phrases that describe your topic.
 - b. Search using combinations of those keywords or a phrase placed in quotations marks.
 - c. When you examine your results, remember to check and determine if the site is up-to-date, reliable, appropriate, and has a clear point of view (U-RAP , see below).

Up-to-Date: The timeliness of the information

- When was the information published, posted, or updated?
- Is the information current or out-of date for your topic?

Reliable: The source of the information

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
- What are the author's or organization's qualifications/credentials to write on the topic? (Titles/education, expertise, published works, history, awards, reputation)

Appropriate: The importance of the information for your needs

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?

- Is the information at an appropriate level (i.e. not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
- Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is one you will use?

Point of View: The reason the information exists

- What is the purpose of the information? to inform? teach? sell? entertain? persuade?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, or personal biases?
- Is the information fact? opinion? propaganda?

Tip: Keep bibliography notes using EasyBib [www.easybib.com] or the CVU Library home page. This makes summarizing your bibliography tremendously easier when your paper is completed.