Types of Resources:

Print
Why is it important to know the difference between different types of resources?

- You will find different kinds of information in different resources.
- You do not want to waste time searching for a resource that will not give you the information you need.
Types of Print Sources

- There are 2 types of print sources:
  - Primary Sources
  - Secondary Sources

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What is a Primary Source?

- **Original information** when it first appears or first happens that is *unedited*.
- **Examples of Primary Sources:**
  - Interviews
  - Letters
  - Events
  - Speeches
  - Manuscripts
  - Community Meeting
  - Diaries, personal journals, and blogs

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What is a Secondary Source?

- **Edited** or **interpreted** primary sources. These are re-packaged versions of the actual event or document.

- **Examples of Secondary Sources:**
  - Books
  - Encyclopedias
  - Reference materials
  - Periodicals
  - Audio & Video materials
  - TV documentaries
  - Photographs
  - CD-ROM
  - Web sites & wikis

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Tips on Primary and Secondary Sources:

- Sometimes a source can be either primary or secondary. (i.e. a photo) The content will then determine which type of source it is.

- **Most information you will find in a library will be secondary sources.**

- Sometimes primary sources are available in libraries if they have archive materials, or the primary source materials are accessible in an electronic format.

- Be sure a source is **original** information that is **unedited** and **un-interpreted** to verify that it is a primary source.
Formats of Sources

- **Print** (books, periodicals, documents)
- **Audio** (tapes, CDs)
- **Video** (VHS tapes, DVDs)
- **Visual** (photographs, slides)
- **Microform** (microfilm, microfiche)
- **3-Dimensional** (globes, artifacts)
- **Electronic** (e-books, Internet, research databases, PDF files, MP3 files)

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Tips on Formats of Sources

- The same information can be available in more than one format!
- Primary sources can be available in electronic format so that more people have access to the sources without damaging the original or traveling far to see it. (Primary sources are also more rare than secondary sources.)
- Secondary sources can be available in electronic format so that more people have access to the sources for convenience. Many periodical articles are accessible in online databases.
- Access is the key!

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Types of Secondary Sources in the Library:

- Books
- Reference Books
- Periodicals
About Books

- Books give you in-depth information on a topic.
- Books are good sources for information that happened in the past, or interpretive information for an on-going event or problem.
- It takes a long time to compile all the information for a book and then to publish it. So books will not have information on events that happened very recently.

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Types of Reference Books

- General Encyclopedias
- Subject Encyclopedias
- Dictionaries & Thesauri
- Almanacs & Yearbooks
- Handbooks & Manuals
- Indexes & Bibliographies
- Atlases

**Tip:** Always begin your research with an encyclopedia to get general background information on your subject. This will help you decide where to look next.

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About Periodicals

- Periodicals are **published on a regular basis** (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Since they are published more often, they will have more **current information** in them at the time of publication.
- The more frequently it is published, the more current the information is.
- Periodicals are excellent for researching current events.
- Since periodical articles are shorter in length than books, the information will not be as in depth as a book.

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Types of Periodicals

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Scholarly Journals

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Newspapers

- Present the main facts or highlights of an event.
- Are usually published close to the time of the actual event (depending on how often the newspaper is printed).
- Articles are usually short and to the point, while magazines and scholarly journals give a little more detail.
- Are usually published more frequently than a magazine or scholarly journal.

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Magazine Verses Scholarly Journal

- **Magazines** are intended for general interest reading, not scholarly research.

- **Scholarly journals** are written by professors, researchers, or other experts in a specific subject area.

- *Can you tell the difference between a magazine and a scholarly journal only by the title of the periodical?*
Compare These Examples

- **Magazines:**
  - Time
  - Newsweek
  - Southern Living
  - People Weekly
  - Consumer Reports
  - National Geographic
  - Rolling Stone

- **Scholarly Journals:**
  - Geriatric Nursing
  - NC Law Review
  - Radiologic Technology
  - Community College Journal
  - Heart and Lung
  - New England Journal of Medicine

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Why do I need to know all of this?

- Now that you know what types of resources are out there, you will be able to recognize them when you begin your research.
- You will also know which resources to try searching first since you know what information can be found in each. Or you will know which resources will not give you the information you need.
Ready to start searching?

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