



## Know your information sources quiz

There are a wide range of information sources available, all of which have their own characteristics and strengths and weaknesses.

The following quiz will get you thinking about some of the most common information sources you might use while studying at university.

### Matching quiz part one

Here are six potential information sources:

- a) Academic journals
- b) Archives
- c) Blogs
- d) Dictionaries
- e) Encyclopaedias
- f) Images

Match each description to **one** of these sources. The answers are given at the end of this document.

#### Description 1:

- A useful source for defining terms, subjects or topics.
- Can be general or subject specific.
- Provides a concise (short) definition of a term, subject or topic.

#### Description 2:

- Represents a particular moment in time, or an idea in a visual form.
- Much easier to access, create and share than in the past, for example using a smartphone.
- Important to evaluate this source as it could have been manipulated (digitally or physically) or could be biased.

#### Description 3:

- Freely available online.
- Usually kept up to date with new posts – like an online diary.
- Quality varies by author.
- Can include personal opinion and recent research developments.

#### Description 4:

- Like an academic magazine, published regularly (online and in print).
- Generally reporting research in detail, including research methods and results.
- Often peer-reviewed (checked by other experts in a field).
- May be expensive to access.

#### Description 5:

- A useful source for getting an overview of a topic.
- Entries can help you identify and define key concepts in a topic.
- Can be general or subject specific.
- Wikipedia is an 'openly-editable' example of this information source (this means you must be especially careful to evaluate the information you find there).

#### Description 6:

- A primary source.
- A collection of historical documents or records about a given topic or from a particular person or organisation.
- Can be found online, or in libraries, museums, or other notable places.

Finished matching each description to a source? [Check your answers here.](#)

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## Matching quiz part two

Here are seven more potential information sources:

- a) Newspapers
- b) Reports
- c) Social Media
- d) Statistics
- e) Textbooks
- f) Videos
- g) Websites

Match each description to **one** of these sources. The answers are given at the end of this document.

Description 1:

- A primary source of data about a specific topic.
- Often numerical or in graph form.
- Published on their own or in reports.
- Can be used to back up arguments.

Description 2:

- Produced by agencies, charities, government departments and organisations.
- Often commissioned for a specific reason and focused on a specific topic.
- Contains up to date information, statistics and interpretation.

Description 3:

- Reputable organisations and businesses are likely to publish via this medium.
- Of variable quality and content can change without warning.
- Can be created by anyone, and it may be difficult to find out who has written the content.
- Easy to access with an internet connection.

Description 4:

- A good information source for opinion and comment on a wide range of topics.
- Likely to be written from a particular political view.
- May highlight outcomes of research but will lack detail.
- Most commonly published daily – can be online or in tabloid or broadsheet form.

#### Description 5:

- Information found via this source comes from the networks you choose to like and follow.
- Gives access to a wide range of voices.
- Posts may capture instant responses to events.
- It is especially important to be critical of this source and evaluate it as anyone can publish content through this medium.

#### Description 6:

- Best for when you're first approaching a new subject or want a good overview of a topic.
- Takes time to publish so is unlikely to include most recent research.
- Introduces key theories, authors and facts.

#### Description 7:

- Can provide a good overview of a topic in audio/visual format.
- Easy to produce and distribute.
- May be created to inform (could include contributions from experts) or entertain (could lack detail and accuracy).
- Easy to access and view.

Finished matching each description to a source? [Check your answers here.](#)

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## Answers for part one

1. The correct answer is **d) Dictionaries**. Dictionaries are a useful source for defining terms, subjects or topics.
2. The correct answer is **f) Images**. Images are an easy to access source, however it is important to be critical as they could be biased or manipulated.
3. The correct answer is **c) Blogs**. Blogs are a useful way to find up to date information, but the quality varies by author.
4. The correct answer is **a) Academic Journals**. Academic journals are a great source for finding the latest information on a specific topic but often aren't publicly accessible for free.
5. The correct answer is **e) Encyclopaedias**. Encyclopaedias are a great starting point. However, you should evaluate content found on Wikipedia before you use it.
6. The correct answer is **b) Archives**. Archives are a primary source available in collections both online and within institutions.

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## Answers for part two

1. The correct answer is **d) Statistics**. Statistics are a primary source and a great way to back up your arguments.
2. The correct answer is **b) Reports**. Reports are a great source of specific information, statistics and interpretation produced by various organisations.
3. The correct answer is **g) Websites**. Websites are of varying quality but are easy to access and many reputable organisations publish information on their websites.
4. The correct answer is **a) Newspapers**. Newspapers are good for opinion, but likely to lack details and have a particular political bias.
5. The correct answer is **c) Social Media**. Social media is a great way to access a wide range of voices and instant responses to events. However, you should be careful to evaluate any information you find from this source.
6. The correct answer is **e) Textbooks**. Textbooks provide a good overview and introduce key facts; however, they take time to publish.
7. The correct answer is **f) Videos**. Videos are an easy to access source, that provide a broad overview.

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## Summary

You have reached the end of this resource. This information has been adapted from the [Know Your Information Sources tutorial](#).

Why not look at some of our other [Pre-entry Research Skills and Critical Thinking resources](#)?

Watch these videos to help with your literature searches: [Search Planning](#) and [Using Google Scholar](#).

Visit our FAQs: [Library FAQs](#)

Get in touch: [library@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:library@sheffield.ac.uk)

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## Full URLs

Know Your Information Sources tutorial:

[https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/preentry/know-your-information-sources/story\\_html5.html](https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/preentry/know-your-information-sources/story_html5.html)

Pre-entry Research Skills and Critical Thinking Tutorials:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/pre-entry>

Search Planning: [https://digitalmedia.sheffield.ac.uk/media/Apprentices+and+Pre-universityA+Search+planning/0\\_s1szytn](https://digitalmedia.sheffield.ac.uk/media/Apprentices+and+Pre-universityA+Search+planning/0_s1szytn)

Using Google Scholar: [https://digitalmedia.sheffield.ac.uk/media/Apprentices+and+Pre-universityA+Using+Google+Scholar/1\\_6nae1vy1](https://digitalmedia.sheffield.ac.uk/media/Apprentices+and+Pre-universityA+Using+Google+Scholar/1_6nae1vy1)

Library FAQs: <https://libraryhelp.shef.ac.uk/>

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