



POPULAR VS. SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

You've found some resources for your assignment, but are they appropriate for your research? Not all information is sound, valid information. You should always evaluate any information source you use. Evaluation means that you need to look carefully at your sources to determine whether they are reliable and appropriate for your information needs.

For many research assignments, professors will specify the types of sources that you are required to use. Therefore, it is important to understand the differences between these types of publications.

The most important skill needed to evaluate periodicals is the ability to distinguish between popular and academic, or scholarly journals. The most important thing to remember about popular articles is that they may have illustrations or charts but will not have a bibliography at the end. They are intended as overviews for general readers and are not in-depth enough to be scholarly. Authors may or may not be named in a popular article. Scholarly articles, however, are written by professionals in the field and may be original research or an extension of previous research. They are usually illustrated with graphs or tables, have a list of references at the end and are reviewed by other scholars in the field before publication.

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Use the following criteria to evaluate the following articles that you are using for your research. Just click on the hyperlinks above for full-text of the articles.

“Relative Happiness” by Amy Rosenberg Psychology Today, Vol. 43, Issue 4, July/August, 2010, p. 62-69. (POPULAR ARTICLE)

“Is the Study of Happiness a Worthy Scientific Pursuit?” by Jacolyn M. Norrish and Dianne A. Vella-Brodick Soc. Indic. Res. Vol. 87, 2008, p. 393-407 (SCHOLARLY ARTICLE)