



VIC151 Library Research Seminar

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Research Resources in Education

- **VIC151 Research Guide:**
<http://uoft.me/VIC151/>
- **University of Toronto Libraries:**
<http://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/>.

What Are “Research-Based” Sources?

Professional Philosophy

- Identify a set of personal values, beliefs and attitudes that are important to you as a teacher and which reflect your own philosophy of teaching and learning—what are the theories and perspectives I want to incorporate in my teaching strategies, classroom practices, and approaches to class content?
- Locate and incorporate academic sources that describe and support your professional philosophy of teaching—this is the “research lens” of reflective practice (Edmunds, Nickel, Badley, & Edmunds, 2015).

Reflective Practice

- Reflective practice is “the process of purposefully thinking about one’s teaching practice and actively considering whether it can be changed” (Edmunds, Nickel, Badley, & Edmunds, 2015).
- Consulting and discussing course readings, participating in the class discussion for this course, and your professional journal entries are examples of engaging in reflective practice.

High School vs. University Research

- The process of academic research and writing requires you to identify a specific issue, analyze it from a critical perspective, and, by extent, advance knowledge within the discipline.
- Therefore, your arguments should answer the questions raised in the assignment description and be informed by the best sources that you can find.

Reference Books

- Reference sources contain entries which provide an overviews of specific topics.
- Authored by expert writers and reviewed by an editor prior to their publication.
- Provide such introductory information as definitions, major works and scholars who study the topic and the cultural and social importance of studying a particular issue or idea.
- Reference sources contain have bibliographies or works cited list, which may point you to other reference on the subject.

Professional Philosophy

- What do you believe are the primary aims of education?
- What do you believe are the most appropriate activities and methods of engaging students in the curriculum?
- What do you believe is your role in moral education and classroom management?

What is a “Peer Reviewed” Journal Article?

- the **peer review process** means that manuscripts are evaluated by other scholars in the field in order to determine whether they are worthy of being published
- search *Ulrichs Web* to determine whether a journal is academic and/or peer-reviewed.

Identifying the Best Sources

- Currency and Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Documentation.

Currency & Relevance

- 1) Does the source provide a basic overview of my topic? Does it place my topic within the context of a larger subject area?
- 2) Does it cover a time period that I am interested in?
- 3) Is the article too basic or elementary for my needs? Is it too specialized or technical for my needs? Who is this resource geared towards?
- 4) When was this resource published? Do I need the most current information or analysis on this topic, or is older information appropriate for my needs?

Authority

- 1) Who wrote and/or published this source?
- 2) What credentials qualify him/her to write on this topic? What else has he/she written?
- 3) Do I require scholarly information, or is more popular material also appropriate?

Accuracy

- 1) Is the information fact, opinion, or propaganda?
- 2) Is the author trying to advance a particular position?
- 3) Is there a clearly supported argument or is the argument inflammatory and unsupported?
- 4) Is the publication or organization providing the information known for having a particular philosophical or political position?

Documentation

- 1) What sources does the author cite to back up her points?
- 2) Is a bibliography included with the source?
- 3) If the information relies heavily on statistics, where did those statistics come from? Were they gathered in a methodologically appropriate manner? Were they pulled from another reputable source (e.g., Statistics Canada)?

Exercise: Identifying the Best Sources

- 1) Identify the type of publication (reference source, book, edited book, peer-reviewed academic journal article or book review).
- 2) Using the four evaluation criteria, explain whether you would (or would not) cite the publication in your essay (the topic is "history of treatment for autism").