



Popular and Scholarly Sources – English Transcript

So, you have an assignment that calls for some scholarly and popular sources. There are so many articles out there, how do you tell the difference between popular and scholarly sources?

By the end of this tutorial, you'll be able to distinguish between the two. You'll learn about some of their characteristics and differences, and you'll learn about good ways to use popular and scholarly literature in your own work.

Popular literature appears in magazines and newspapers. Here you can see several of them. The covers are often glossy or eye-catching. These sources are geared toward a broad, general audience and can be purchased at bookstores, newsstands, or online.

You can also find popular sources at your school or public library and in their online library research databases. Before being published, the articles are usually checked by staff editors.

Let's look at some characteristics of popular sources. In this example, you can see that authors are journalists or staff writers and their experience is not necessarily indicated. They may include pictures, special layouts, and advertisements. They use language understood by the general population. And articles do not usually list references or notes.

So how are popular sources used? Popular sources might present news and current events. Since the review process to publish popular articles is short, they are a good place to look for current information.

Popular sources may tell human interest stories, convey emotional responses, or offer commentary or opinion pieces. They can also be useful for getting an overview of a topic. They can even include summaries of scholarly information written in everyday language.

Scholarly literature is published in subject-specific journals. Here you can see the Journal of the American Medical Association or JAMA, and International Studies Quarterly. Scholarly journals are typically available through subscription only. You usually can't find them in stores. However, you can find scholarly sources at university libraries and sometimes at your school or public library.

Many libraries subscribe to online library research databases that include scholarly sources. These articles are geared toward scholars and experts in the field and they undergo reviewing by other scholars in the field. This is known as the peer review process.

Let's look at some characteristics of scholarly sources. As you can see, articles appear in subject-specific journals. Authors are scholars and experts in the field. Articles may include graphs,



data, and statistics.

The language is subject-specific and may include jargon. And articles usually include a list of references or notes. And how are scholarly sources used? Scholarly literature can be useful for learning about subject-specific information, original research, and data.

It's a way for scholars to communicate their findings and to offer expert opinions about others' findings. Scholarly articles can present a summary of the research on a given topic.

OK, now it's your turn to try. Take a look at these two articles, and decide if each one is popular or scholarly. The article on the left is from a popular source. You can see in the upper left that this article is from a magazine called *The Economist*. *The Economist* is a popular magazine that can be purchased in regular newsstands or bookstores.

The language that this article is written in is generally easy to understand and is written for a broad audience. There's a large photo included in the layout of this article. And it includes a humorous caption. Also, note that there are not any notes or references included at the end of the article. These are some of the characteristics that give it away as a popular article.

The article on the right is from a scholarly source. Notice that it's from the *Journal of Behavioral Education*. The title of the source gives you a clue that it is a scholarly source. The authors cited for this article include their academic titles as well as their expertise in the field as indicated.

The language that this article is written in is geared towards other scholars in the field of education. You can tell by some of the subject-specific terms that it uses. Also note that this article includes a long list of references at the end. These are some of the characteristics that give it away as a scholarly article.

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