

Module 1: Introduction to Research

Introduction

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1. To review the interactive tutorials and take notes.
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If you have questions or comments about this document, please email Mollie Peuler, eLearning Librarian, at peulerme@appstate.edu.

Welcome to Introduction to Research

This module will cover the following topics:

1. **Understanding the Assignment:** During this section you will explore what to consider when beginning your research assignment.
2. **Scholarly and Popular Sources:** During this section you will learn the similarities and differences between primary and secondary sources.
3. **Primary and Secondary Sources:** During this section you will learn the similarities and differences between primary and secondary sources.

Module 1, Section 01, Understanding the Assignment

It can be tempting to jump into an assignment quickly, but thoroughly reading your assignment first will set you up for success. During this section you will explore what to consider when planning to begin your research project.

One of the biggest challenges that students have when beginning a research paper is that they do not understand the assignment. In order to avoid confusion:

- Read the instructions carefully and ask for clarification on anything you do not understand.
- Always start with your professor, but you can also ask classmates, librarians, or the writing center

There are a lot of factors to consider when completing a research assignment, including paper or project length, citation style, number and type of sources, formatting, and due date.

Here is an overview of some things to consider when reading your assignment. Keep in mind that all assignments may not contain all of these components:

1. **Due Dates:** What is the due date? Is the entire assignment due at once or are pieces of it broken up over time?
 - a. It is a good idea to put due dates on your calendar so you can begin to make a plan.
2. **Source Information:** What type of sources and how many of each are required?
 - a. You will learn more about source types in the next two sections, but now is a good time to ask questions if you are unsure about what your professor means by “use three library sources”
3. **Consult Rubric:** Consulting an assignment rubric prior to beginning your work will guide your planning and decision making. A rubric can inform you on how you will be graded on a completed assignment.
 - a. Keep in mind that not all professors provide rubrics.
4. **Other Considerations:** Every assignment is different, here are some other items to pay attention to when reading and assignment:
 - a. What is the purpose of the assignment?
 - b. What citation style are you required to use?
 - c. Does your professor provide assignment examples that you can consult?

Now let’s talk about time management. Don’t get seduced by that idea that you work best under pressure and wait until the last minute to get started. According to the American Psychological Association, students may think they get a thrill out of delaying their work and believe they work best under pressure, though that is not born out in the data. The APA goes on to say that procrastination is negatively related to overall GPA, final exam scores and assignment grades. In light of this information, try to set a schedule and develop a plan.

Get started by looking at the assignment due dates and work backwards with a timeline of milestones. For example, have a rough draft completed, finish your research, choose a topic, and craft a research question, all by specific dates.

Here is an example of what an assignment schedule could look like during a Fall semester:

September 7: Choose a topic. Now is the time to get started! This is the first step to beginning your research project or paper.

October 1: Develop a research question. This can take more time than you think. Make sure you look back over the assignment for guidance.

October 15: Complete your research: It takes time to find and read resources. Make sure you allow yourself plenty of time for this.

November 12: Complete a rough draft. Finishing a rough draft can take time. But if you plan appropriately, you will have plenty of time to reach out for help if you need it.

December 8: Due date. You did it! You completed your assignment on time. Was setting a schedule easier than procrastinating?

And if you have trouble setting a schedule on your own, consider using tools like a research assignment calculator, online calendar, or a paper planner to assist you.

[Research paper assignment dates calculator](#)

Assignment Examples Practice Question

Question: You're given your First Year Seminar research assignment. What approach might you take with the assignment?

Approach 01

The assignment is not due for two months, so I can wait to read the assignment instructions.

Approach 02

I will read the assignment as soon as possible. This way I can ask questions and pace myself.

Approach 03

I have written papers before; I am sure that I can knock this assignment out in no time. I don't mind if I have to write it the night before.

This is the end of Understanding the Assignment, Module 1, Section 01.

Module 1 Section 02, Scholarly and Popular Sources

As you work on your research project(s), you will hear the terms 'scholarly' and 'popular' sources. During this section we will learn what these terms mean.

Good research requires that you use the right sources for the question you are trying to answer. So let's focus on how researchers characterize sources, and then we will look at how we determine whether or not to use a specific source

As you have been looking at research assignments from your professor(s), you have probably come across instructions like 'use at least three scholarly sources, summarize 10 primary sources, include citations for five peer-reviewed articles, avoid using popular sources, etc. You may have some idea of what these terms mean or they may be completely new to you, but understanding the difference will make life much easier for you as you start the research process.

So, let's look at that now.

1. But first let's clear up what a source is. A source is a unit of information such as an article, a news report, a book, a photograph, or a film.
 - a. Sources come in many formats, but the types of sources you choose will usually be determined by the project you are working on.
 - b. When researchers talk about which types of sources to use, we use two major distinctions to categorize them. We draw the link between primary and secondary sources and we also distinguish between scholarly and popular sources.
2. Let's look at the difference between scholarly and popular sources.
 - a. Scholarly sources usually come in the form of scholarly articles and academic peer-reviewed journals. You can find these in research databases or listed in indexes like Google Scholar. Scholarly research is also published in book form.
 - b. Popular publications will vary a lot more in format, but will include articles in newspapers, magazines, books, websites, tv shows, etcetera.

Practice 1

Based on the cover, which of these is a scholarly source?

Option 1: An image of the black and white cover of the journal *Mass Communication and Society*. The publisher, Routledge, is visible.

Option 2: An image of the cover of *OK! Magazine*. There are several images and headlines from popular culture, including the breakup of Kanye West and Kim Kardashian.

Practice 2

Based on the cover, which of these is a scholarly source?

Option 1: An image of the cover of Vogue magazine. The cover image includes an image of Kanye West and Kim Kardashian’s wedding photo and a headline about their fashionable life.

Option 2: An image of the cover of the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology. The publisher, Routledge, is visible.

This chart highlights some of the major differences between scholarly and popular sources. Take a few minutes to consider the major differences between scholarly and popular sources and review how they are each typically published, who the authors typically are, who the intended audience typically is, and the typical writing style.

	Scholarly Sources	Popular Sources
How is it published?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The peer-review process is the key difference between scholarly and popular sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have editors and fact-checkers. • Blogs or other self-published sources may or may not have editors or publishing oversight.
Who are the authors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts in the area of study; including professors, lab researchers, grad students, accomplished specialists, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone from experts to staff writers, freelancers, and the general public
Who is the intended audience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other experts and researchers in the same area of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general public, or a segment of the general public.

What is the writing style?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is dense and technical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing style is varied. Often uses plain language, visually attractive layouts. Short content is sometimes featured to attract a larger audience.
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We just learned that scholarly sources are typically published via a peer-review process. Watch this video, or read the transcript to learn about the peer-review process.

[Peer Review in Three Minutes video](#)

[Peer Review in Three Minutes transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 02 Section 02, Scholarly and Popular Sources.

Module 1, Section 03, Primary and Secondary Sources

You may hear the terms ‘primary source’ and ‘secondary source’ as you work on your research project. During this section you will learn what these terms mean.

First we will spend some time learning about primary and secondary sources. To get started watch this video or read the transcript on primary and secondary sources.

[Primary and Secondary Sources video](#)

[Primary and Secondary Sources transcript](#)

So, to figure out whether a source is primary or secondary, ask yourself, where does the information come from? Is it from personal experience? An eyewitness account? Or is it someone’s interpretation of someone else’s experience, account, or data? Is the source presenting original information? Or original creative work? Is it commenting on or evaluating the work of someone else?

Next, take a look at this chart. It provides examples of primary, secondary, and background sources for a variety of subjects.

	Primary source example	Secondary source example	Background source example
History subject	Martin Luther King Junior's letters from Birmingham Jail	Book about the Birmingham movement	
Business subject	Global gender gap report	Book about the history of wage gaps in America	Economics textbook
Literature subject	Book of poetry	Review book of poetry	Biography of the author
Science subject	Original research on climate change	Literature review on the topic of climate change	Wikipedia article on climate change

Practice 1

Would you consider a video and transcript of an interview with a film director to be a primary or secondary source?

Answer 1: Primary

Answer 2: Secondary

Practice 1

Would you consider a letter from a missionary to a religious newspaper from the early 19th century to be a primary or secondary source?

Answer 1: Primary

Answer 2: Secondary

When is it appropriate to use a scholarly source versus a popular source? Or a primary source rather than a secondary source? This chart lays out some of the differences and why you might choose one over the other.

I need...	Sources to look for:
Evidence/research from experts in a specific area of study...	Peer-reviewed articles, books from an academic publisher, statistical data
Basic facts about an event...	Online newspapers, magazines, reliable websites, news databases, books

Eye-witness accounts of an event or events...	Newspapers from the time period, various primary source databases, memoirs, autobiographies, and interviews
General topical overview...	General or subject encyclopedias or other reference sources
Public opinion, informed opinion, uninformed opinions...	Current newspapers, magazines, websites, media programs, polling organizations and sources
Original historical documents...	Primary source collections, primary source databases
Information published for or about a particular industry, profession, or government organization...	Trade journals, organizational reports, gray literature, white papers, government documents

This is the end of Module 1.

Module 2: Choose a Research Topic and Locate Background Information

Introduction

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Welcome to Choose a Research Topic and Develop Keywords

This module will cover the following topics:

- 1. Choosing a Topic:** During this section you will learn about what factors to consider when choosing a research topic.

2. **Locating Background Research:** During this section you will learn what background research is and how to locate it.

Module 2, Section 01, Choosing a Topic

When beginning a research assignment, one of the first steps is to choose a topic. While this may seem like an easy step, there are several things to consider when choosing a topic. First we will look at what to consider when selecting a topic.

- When beginning to consider a research topic, you should consider assignment requirements, interest and scope.
- First, double check the assignment instructions to see if your instructor has included any topic selection requirements. For example, is there a list of topics to choose from, a list of topics you aren't allowed to research, or do you have free rein? Does your topic need to be approved first?
- Next, don't forget to choose a topic that is interesting to you or that you want to learn more about. It makes the assignment more engaging.
- Finally, consider the scope of your topic. If your topic is too broad it may be hard to find information that is focused and relevant; if your topic is too narrow, it may be hard to find any information at all. Let's look a little closer at scope.
 - Consider the scope of your research. Broad topics might have too much information available, while narrow topics might not have enough information available.
 - For example, these topics that are generally too broad: 'body image,' 'campus violence,' or 'learning disabilities.'
 - For example, these topics are generally too narrow: 'the impact of snapchat on the body image of seventeen year old women,' 'the legal, social, and security impact of automatic gun violence on private college campuses,' and 'the impact of special education on adolescent boys with ADD in Watauga County.'
 - For example, these topics are generally balanced: 'The impact of social media on the body image of young adults,' 'the role journalists play in portraying mass shootings that take place on college campuses,' and 'effective teaching strategies for college students with ADD.'

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn more about picking a research topic:

[Picking Your Topic IS Research video](#)

[Picking Your Topic IS Research transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 02, Section 01, Choosing a Topic.

Module 2, Section 02, Locating Background Research

Locating background information is an important part of the research process. If done correctly, locating background information will assist you in editing your research topic and also developing keywords. So let's spend some time considering what background information is and how to locate this information.

- Background sources can be helpful when beginning the research process. These sources can give you working knowledge of your selected topic or subject area.
- Background sources allow you to gain a broad and general understanding of a topic, learn important names, key facts, issues and debates, and answers to common questions, get familiar with the vocabulary related to the topic so you can effectively search the scholarly literature.

So how do you find background information? Sources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, and Google are all sources that can provide you with background information on a topic. Wikipedia, for example, can be a tool used for locating background information.

The University Libraries has a number of online resources you can use to search for background information.

The University Library website has a number of tools and resources you can use to locate background sources. Follow these steps, to explore the library's website:

1. Visit the library website, library.appstate.edu.
2. In the center of the homepage, under the Research heading, click on 'Databases-Browse by subject or type'
3. Under the 'By type' heading, click on 'Encyclopedias and Dictionaries'
4. Click on the database, 'Credo Reference'
5. Enter in any search term(s) you would like to practice with and press search
6. Consider the results page, including the synonyms that are presented to you on the left hand side of the page.

Google and Wikipedia can also be used to locate background information. Remember that the sources you use for background research, won't necessarily be an official source for your final research project or paper.

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn more about searching with Google:

[Google Like a Pro video](#)

[Google Like a Pro transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 02.

Module 3: Doing Research and Finding Sources

Introduction

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Welcome to Doing Research and Finding Sources

This module will cover the following topics:

1. **Developing Keywords:** During this section you will learn about how to develop keywords for your research project.
2. **Searching the Web:** During this section you will learn tips on what to consider when searching the web for a research project.
3. **Searching the University Libraries:** During this section you will learn about using the library's website to locate sources.

Module 3, Section 01: Developing Keywords

So now that you have a research topic, what's next? The next step of your research process is to develop keywords and find sources. This section will focus on how to find sources for your search, including developing keywords for your search, exploring your search options, and a brief overview of using those tools.

So what is a keyword? Each research topic has its own unique vocabulary. Keywords are search terms that represent components of a research topic that you will use when searching library databases or search engines on the open web. This section will show you how to think through the different words or language unique to your topic.

The best way to learn about the different words and language of a particular topic is by reading or listening to people who are experts in the topic. Sometimes, different people who are involved with or impacted by your topic may think about and subsequently talk about the topic differently. For example, consider the topic of climate change. Think about the different ways that scientists, politicians, activists, farmers, and the general public may talk about that topic, and for what reason(s). Scientists are likely to use more jargon, whereas activists will likely use more passionate but simpler language. Being aware of those differences will matter as you search for sources from different points of view. Some sources will be written in more technical language and some with more political language.

Remember back in module 2, when we learned about background research? If you spent time finding ample background research and reading, then hopefully you paid attention to the language of the sources and wrote down interesting, important, and/or recurring words or phrases that you can use as you begin to research. If there are Wikipedia articles on your topic they may offer a wealth of ideas as well.

The next step is to identify the main concepts in the research topic. This may seem simple, and is very important for a successful search.

- Consider This topic: The impact social media has on the self-image of young adults.
 - It has three main concepts: social media, self-image, and young adults. These keywords will be the building blocks of the search.
 - It is best to search by keyword rather than by phrase or sentence because the more words you add to the search box, the less likely you are to get useful search results. You can always add more keywords later.

But we can't stop with three keywords. There may be synonyms for your keywords that can broaden your search or better describe your topic, not only to make your search more comprehensive, but also to improve your search results. This step can require some creativity, it can be useful to brainstorm with a classmate or use your background research skills. What other words can describe your research topic? Start making a list of alternative keywords and have them ready when you begin your search—you may need them.

For example, if you think about the keyword 'social media,' it might bring to mind many different kinds of social media. Each of these could become the focus of your research topic if there are enough sources for any of them.

You never know what terms or language the authors of an article might be using to describe what you are interested in.

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn more about choosing and using keywords:

[Choosing and Using Keywords video](#)

[Choosing and Using Keywords transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 03, Section 01, Developing Keywords

Module 3 Section 02, Searching the Web

You have many options when it comes to finding sources for your research assignment, not to mention finding information for questions that come up in your everyday life. First, let's put the library's online resources into context with the rest of the web.

The web can be divided into the open and deep web. What do these terms mean and why are they so relevant to you?

The open web is the part of the world wide web that anyone with the internet can access for free. People often use a search engine like Google to access content on the open web, such as weather reports, shopping, and movie reviews.

The deep web is the part of the world wide web that is not freely available. Often, individuals, companies, or institutions pay for content on the deep web through subscriptions. The library pays for subscriptions to online journals and databases that students, faculty, and staff can use for research.

Here is a graphic depicting the Deep Web. Take a look and think about what it means to you:

[Deep Web PDF](#)

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn more about the Deep Web.

[What's the Deep Web video](#)

[What's the Deep Web transcript](#)

The open web is a rich and often messy place with ads, opinions, mis- and disinformation published alongside great research, journalism, and art. It is built on a complicated set of algorithms largely run by artificial intelligence. So what can you do? Consider using other search engines such as DuckDuckGo, a search engine that prioritizes protecting privacy. Talk to a librarian about options for utilizing the Deep Web and library resources.

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn more about algorithmic bias:

[Algorithmic Bias Explained video](#)

[Algorithmic Bias Explained transcript](#)

Practice

What would you do in this scenario?

Question: You are reviewing your First Year Seminar research assignment. What approach would you take when searching the open web/Google for sources?

Approach 01

Google is what I am used to and it is easy to use, so I am going to use Google to find all of my sources

Approach 02

The open web sounds like a bad place. I think I'll stay away.

Approach 03

I would like to incorporate Google into my research process. I think I will use some advanced search tips to help me find the popular sources required for my assignment.

This is the end of Module 02, Section 01, Choosing a Topic.

Module 3 Section 02, Searching the Web

Next, we will learn about using the library to locate sources.

Appalachian State University has 3 physical library locations: Belk Library & Information Commons, Hickory Library & Information Commons, and the Nicholas Erneston Music Library. The materials and services provided by the University libraries are designed to support the academic programs, faculty, and students at the University.

APPsearch is the University Libraries' single search portal. You can only receive physical items during our normal hours of operation, but the digital materials are accessible anytime, anywhere, as long as you have a device with an internet connection and know your APP State username and password.

APPsearch allows you to locate books, eBooks, streaming films, both popular and scholarly articles, and much more.

Let's take a closer look at using APPsearch. Follow these steps to explore:

1. Navigate to the library's website at library.appstate.edu.
2. You will see a search box for APPsearch in the center of the page. Click 'Advanced Search.'
3. Separate your keywords into different boxes to retrieve better results. Advanced search is a great place to start because the boxes are automatically separated by 'and' in this instance.
4. Click 'Search.'
5. From here you can view the results for your search.

Do you want to level up your library search skills? There are many ways to do that. Review the following tips. And when in doubt, ask a librarian.:

1. **Use keywords:** Remember, keywords work best when searching the University Library databases. Do not type a question into a search box
2. **Find@ASU:** During a search you might see a 'Find@ASU' link. Click the link and it will sometimes take you to the item. If you are not taken to the item, you can try searching for it via Google Scholar OR you can request the item via ILL.
 - a. [ILL Link](#)
3. **Use filters:** Library databases have built in filters that allow you to narrow your results by date, source type, and much more.
4. **Save search:** There are several ways to save a search.
 - a. Email the source to yourself.
 - b. Download the source to your device.
 - c. Do not bookmark or copy/paste URLs. Instead, copy and paste the Permalink.
5. **Automatic citations:** Most University Library databases can create citations for you. Be sure to double check them for errors.

The University Libraries' have much more to offer in addition to APPsearch, watch this video or read the transcript, to learn more:

[Introduction to Resources and Services video](#)

[Introduction to Resources and Services transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 03.

Module 4: The Value of Information

Introduction

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Welcome to The Value of Information

This module will cover the following topics:

1. **Evaluating Sources:** During this section you will consider how to evaluate sources to find the best sources for your project.
2. **An Introduction to Citations and Plagiarism:** During this section you will consider the value of information. This section will provide an overview of plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Module 4 Section 01: Evaluating Sources

Now that you understand how to find and consider sources, you need to evaluate them. You owe it to yourself and anyone reading your research to use the best of all possible sources. Next, we'll spend some time considering how to do this.

Evaluating a source is an important part of the research process and is one that will serve you well in other areas of your digital life. However, it does not have to be time consuming. Initially it means asking yourself two questions when you find a potential source: 1. Is the source suitable? 2. Is the source trustworthy? Remember, not every suitable source is trustworthy and not every trustworthy source is suitable. You are not looking for the perfect source, but rather sources that best fit your research needs.

First, we will consider how to answer the first question: Is the source suitable for my research topic? Your task as a researcher is to determine the appropriateness of the information your source contains for your particular research project. It is a simple question, really: Will this source help me to answer the research question that I am posing in my project? Will the source help me write an interesting, convincing essay for my readers? However, this comes with strings

attached. It is tempting to look for and use sources whose authors make the arguments you should be making or who share your opinions and beliefs about the topic. Try to avoid this if you can, rather, you should strive to identify sources that challenge your perspective and present new ideas and information.

The trustworthiness of a source might not be as easy to determine, especially if you are researching on the open web, if you are in a hurry, are not paying attention, or have not checked your own biases at the door. This goes for both library and non-library sources. Before we get into the criteria to apply when determining trustworthiness, it is important to understand authority and how information is created.

Watch this video or read the transcript to learn about the concept of authority:

[Understanding Authority video](#)

[Understanding Authority transcript](#)

Next, you will want to pay attention to things like, ‘when was the source published or last updated?’ Look for the most recent research on your topic, but newer is not always better. Depending on the topic, it might be fine to consult older sources. Historical and literary research are examples of when this might be appropriate. By comparison, newer research is typically better for topics related to health, science, or technology. A good publication time frame to consider is within the last 5-10 years.

Also consider whether or not the author(s) supports what they are saying with evidence. If the author is making lots of claims without citing them, consider looking for something else. This criterion is fairly easy to determine. The author does not have to use a formal citation style, but they should strive to offer credible, non-anonymous evidence to support any claims they make. For example, for news articles published on the web, it is common practice for journalists to highlight written passages and link out to other sources or attribute quotations to people they have interviewed for stories.

Next, you should consider the degree of bias in the source. Is the author making an attempt to stay objective and include various points of view or are they pushing a point of view for other reasons? Strategies to determine bias include learning about the reputation of the organization or publication that publishes the source you are considering as well as the author of the source. Some quick web searching can give you lots of information about your source, especially if the publisher, website, or author has a Wikipedia page.

Other tools include allsides.com's media bias chart and fact checking sites like Snopes.com or politifact.com. And sometimes just paying attention to the type of language the author uses or the other sources they cite can be clues.

Visit the following websites to explore these other tools:

- [Media Bias Chart website](#)
- [Snopes website](#)
- [PolitiFact website](#)

Additionally, there are other ways to evaluate sources when you use sites on the open web or information you see on social media. One of these ways is the SIFT method, which is regularly used by journalists and fact checkers. SIFT offers four simple and proven strategies to quickly verify information on the web:

1. **STOP:** Do you know the website source of information? Start with a plan. Check your bearings and consider what you want to know and your purpose. Usually a quick check is enough. Sometimes you will want a deep investigation.
2. **Investigate the Source:** Know the expertise and agenda of your source so you can interpret it. Look p your source in Wikipedia. Consider what other sites say about your source. A fact checking site may help. Read carefully and consider while you click.
3. **Find Trusted Coverage:** Find trusted reporting or analysis, look for the best information on a topic, or scan multiple sources to see what the consensus is. Find something more in-depth and read about more points of view.
4. **Trace the Original:** Trace claims, quotes, and media back to the source. What was clipped out of the story, photo, and/or video and what happened before or after?

You can learn more about the SIFT method at this website: [The SIFT Method explained](#)

This is the end of Module 04, Section 01, Evaluating Sources.

Module 4 Section 02: An Introduction to Citations and Plagiarism

The information you encounter has value and takes time and effort to be created. With this in mind, the is section will provide you with an overview of plagiarism and how to avoid it.

You have probably heard of plagiarism. It takes on different forms and even if it is unintentional can have serious consequences. So what is plagiarism? Plagiarism is the unauthorized or uncredited use of the writings or ideas of another in your writing. While it might not be as tangible as auto theft or burglary, plagiarism is still a form of theft.

Plagiarism can take many different forms. The most well-known, intentional or purposeful plagiarism, is handing in an essay written by someone else and presenting it as your own, copying your essay word for word from a magazine or journal, or downloading an essay from the internet. Spend a few minutes reviewing these other examples of plagiarism:

1. Turning in someone else's paper as your own.
2. Using the exact words of a source without quotation marks and/or citation.
3. Taking an image, chart, or statistics from a source without telling where originated.
4. Copying and pasting material from the internet without quotation marks and/or citation.
5. Including another person's idea without crediting the author.

A much more common and less understood phenomenon is unintentional plagiarism. Accidental plagiarism is the result of improperly paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, or citing evidence in your academic writing. Generally, writers accidentally plagiarize because they simply do not know how or they fail to follow the rules for giving credit to the ideas of others in their writing.

- It is important to make the best effort to give credit when credit is due.

You may have heard about ChatGPT and/or other generative artificial intelligence. If you're considering using ChatGPT, please review the following student guide: [ChatGPT: A Student Guide](#).

Are you still unsure what constitutes plagiarism? Take a look at this graphic and review the questions: [A General Guide to Understanding Written Plagiarism](#).

Now that you understand what plagiarism is, how do you avoid it? Consider the steps below to explore how to avoid plagiarism.

1. **Understand what is considered plagiarism:** Still unsure what counts as plagiarism? [Watch this video](#) or read the transcript
2. **Include time in your research plan:**
 - a. Give yourself plenty of time to complete the assignment. Running out of time is the #1 cause of plagiarism.
 - b. If you need help with time management, refer back to Module 1, where this is covered.
3. **Document everything:**
 - a. You will be researching over time. Make sure you take notes of where you gather information from.
 - b. It can be challenging to hunt down the source of information after the fact.
 - c. Your research tools will grow over time, but for now you can simply keep track of your sources with a simple Google or Word Doc.

4. **When in doubt, cite:**

- a. Generally, the only information you do not need to cite is common knowledge.
- b. If you are wondering if you need to cite, you likely do.
- c. If you are in doubt, you can always consult with your instructor, [a librarian](#), or the [University Writing Center](#).

You may be new to citing sources and citation styles, watch this video for an overview:

[Citation: A Very Brief Introduction video](#)

[Citation: A Very Brief Introduction transcript](#)

This is the end of Module 04.

Answer Key

Module 01 Section 01: Approach 02, I will read the assignment as soon as possible. This way I can ask questions and pace myself.

- This is the best approach. You will have plenty of time to complete the assignment and can ask for clarification as needed.

Module 01, Section 02, Practice 1: Option 1, An image of the black and white cover of the journal Mass Communication and Society. The publisher, Routledge, is visible.

Module 01, Section 02, Practice 2: Option 2, An image of the cover of the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology. The publisher, Routledge, is visible.

Module 01, Section 03, Practice 1: Option 1, Primary Source. An interview would be considered a primary source.

Module 01, Section 03, Practice 2: Option 1, Primary Source. This would be a primary source for several reasons, including: it is a personal account, it is a letter, it was printed in the early 19th century.

Module 03 Section 02: Approach 03, I would like to incorporate Google into my research process. I think I will use some advanced search tips to help me find the popular sources required for my assignment.

- This is the best approach. Google can be a part of your research process if your assignment requirements allow for it. Just be sure to think critically about your search results.

