Using Sources Effectively Strengthening Your Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism 5th edition Harris Solutions Manual

SKU: 9781138289666-SOLUTIONS

Chapter 2: Finding, Choosing, and Evaluating Sources

Commentary

This chapter will fit well with a unit or discussion about critical thinking.

This chapter stresses the ideas that there are no generic paper requirements, generic sources, or generic audiences. These things need to be defined before research can proceed.

Requiring students to submit electronic copies of all their sources is an excellent way to determine how effectively they are using sources and to discover whether they are plagiarizing from them. Making a requirement of the suggestion in Section 3.1 to "save your sources" will benefit both you and your students.

Table 2.1: Variety of Scholarliness in Sources

For a class discussion, ask students to give several examples of each category of scholarliness. Examples:

Professional	Substantive	Popular	Sensational
Clinical Psychology	*The Economist*	*Money Magazine*	*The National Enquirer*
Comparative Politics	*The Wilson Quarterly*	*Popular Science*	*Weekly World News*

Table 2.2: Sources of Information

For a class discussion, ask students to think of sources of information not listed in the table. Examples: A friend or neighbor who is an authority in a relevant area, a person on the street who has experienced a relevant event, a billboard, a DVD (movie, lecture, etc.), a video game, a phone call to a government agency.

Review Questions

1. See Section 2.3. Sample answer: The Ladder of Generalization is a continuum of words that describes something, ranging from very specific to very general. When a searcher does not locate the desired information because of too few hits, going up the ladder can help. If there are too many hits, going down the ladder can help. Example ladder from very general to more specific: computer part, circuit board component, integrated circuit, surface-mount integrated circuit, surface-mount application specific integrated circuit chip (ASIC). Example ladder from very specific to very general: ten-question single-response multiple-choice online opinion survey, multiple-choice online opinion survey, opinion survey, survey.
2. See Section 2.2. Sample answer: In addition to facts, valuable information includes interpretations, professional judgments, reasoned arguments, creative ideas, personal examples, accounts of events, experiments, and philosophical commentary.
3. See Section 2.2. Sample answer: A primary source is an original source of information such as a diary, a historical document, or literary work. A secondary source provides an interpretation or commentary on one or more primary sources. Encyclopedia articles and general histories are examples of secondary sources.
4. See Section 2.2. Sample answer: Dictionary definitions are not only often unhelpful, but they also imply that the writer does not know how to start a paper or continue a thought. Quoting dictionary definitions often appears high schoolish.
5. See Section 2.4. Sample answer: Look for organizational sites (institutes, foundations), find pages on sites that appear reputable (such as a university or government site), find articles from printed sources (using FindArticles.com, for example).
6. See Section 2.5. Sample answer: It is important to use sources that are authoritative, accurate, and reliable so that they will lend credibility to the argument in the paper.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Answers will vary. Questions 3 and 4 attempt to stimulate thinking about information quality as a means of helping students realize that information varies widely in value: credibility, accuracy, and

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so forth. Discussions about bias will also be valuable (Question 5). Too many students appear to view all information as similar in quality and accept whatever sources they first discover. Giving them some examples of very poor sources might be useful. The tabloids often have bizarre stories connected with dramatic news events, as well as simply unbelievable stories.

Chapter 2 Review: True-False Quiz

Use the quiz bank or photocopy the quiz.

1. False. (Remind students of the tabloids if they get this one wrong.)
2. True. In fact, it's a good idea to respond to sources that disagree with your own conclusions.
3. False. The deep or invisible Web contains many databases not indexed by search engines.
4. False. Reference librarians can help you focus your topic and direct your research.
5. True.
6. True. Media (TV, magazines) interested in ratings or circulation sometimes compromise accuracy in order to make the information more fun or exciting. (Mention concepts such as infotainment, factoids, and even urban legends.)
7. False. Those who quote dictionaries gain little respect.
8. True. Part of the accuracy test is timeliness. Knowing when a Web article was written is often important.
9. False. First, your instructor is an audience, who must be considered. Second, your peers are likely to be involved in reading and sharing. Third, you should perform an audience analysis for the sake of practice. Research papers usually assume a wide audience.
10. True. Any source of reliable information can be used in a research paper.

Mini-Research Projects: Source Evaluation Models

Pedagogical Purpose: These research projects are designed to:

- continue to improve students' search skills
- help students understand the necessity of robust source evaluation
- encourage students to develop their own models and expertise for evaluating sources

A Little Rhetoric: Anaphora

Pedagogical Purpose: Anaphora is a useful device for emphasis, and as such it helps students write clearer sentences—that is, it makes the idea under discussion clearer to the reader and emphasizes a point or stance or attitude the student wants to present.

Anaphora has been used by Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy, Elie Wiesel, Martin Luther King Jr., Steve Jobs, and many others.

You might emphasize at this point that although the term *rhetoric* is often used pejoratively, rhetoric is in fact not just a verbal flourish to be used by poets and avoided by serious writers but is a set of powerful tools that can enhance the impact and effectiveness of a writer's work.

Photocopyable Quiz

Following is a copyable master of the quiz for this chapter. You have permission to copy this masters for each class that requires the book.

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Name _____ Course _____

Chapter 2 Review: True-False Quiz

Directions: In each case, determine whether the statement is true or false.

1. The appearance of information in printed form is an indicator of its accuracy.
   ☐ True ☐ False

2. A source that disagrees with your own conclusions can still be useful.
   ☐ True ☐ False

3. Everything posted on the Web is indexed by the better search engines.
   ☐ True ☐ False

4. Reference librarians do not want to be bothered by vague and unfocused questions. Ask them only if you have a specific topic to research.
   ☐ True ☐ False

5. The Declaration of Independence is an example of a primary source.
   ☐ True ☐ False

6. The reliability of information sometimes suffers when the primary goal is to make the information entertaining.
   ☐ True ☐ False

7. Beginning a paper with a quotation from a dictionary is a good way to make a favorable impression on your reader.
   ☐ True ☐ False

8. An important consideration for the EAR test of source evaluation (Expertise, Accuracy, and Reliability) is whether or not there is a date on a Web page you might use.
   ☐ True ☐ False

9. Because you are writing for your instructor, you really don't need to think about your audience and how best to meet your audience's needs.
   ☐ True ☐ False

10. Carefully taken lecture notes can be used as a source in a research paper.
    ☐ True ☐ False

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