

Resource Types

Encyclopaedia entries

- Concise texts that provide **overviews and background information** on a topic.
- Good when you are unfamiliar with a topic:
 - Discover keywords, terminology, and key personages for further searching.
 - Follow up on references for more comprehensive information.
- Wikipedia is the encyclopaedia you are probably most familiar with. Most tutors will not accept it in assignments, but you can still use it strategically for the above purposes.
- [Credo database](#) is an academic alternative to Wikipedia that tutors will allow you to cite in your assignments

Introductory books

- Most topics will have some form of introductory book available to help you get to grips with the topic at hand.
- Useful when you're new to a subject, but need more depth than an encyclopaedia entry can provide.
- They will often have a bibliography (a list of relevant works) that can lead you to further reading.
- Introductory books are, to a greater or lesser degree, an interpretation. It is also a good idea to expand your reading to other scholarly texts for a more well-rounded understanding.
- When searching Primo or one of our eBook databases, try adding keywords such as introduction, beginner's, or guide. As these words can be used in other contexts, you will need to evaluate your results.

Primary literature books

- Monographs provide a more in-depth look at a subject or an aspect thereof
- Contain original information which is not derived from interpretation, summarising, or analysing someone else's work.
- For example, books where theorists put forward their own ideas.
- Good if you want information from those most closely associated with a topic or subject. I.e. if you want it straight from the horse's mouth.
- If researching a topic, you should also inform yourself of any relevant critiques, interpretations, and analyses of the primary literature you are using. I.e. any relevant secondary literature.
- Often encyclopaedia entries and introductory books will provide references for key primary literature. Use Primo or our eBook databases to find relevant books.

Secondary literature books

- Texts that have been based on primary, and/or other secondary, sources. They might summarise a topic, critique or interpret it, examine specific aspects of it, or compare/contrast it with other relevant literature.
- Can range from introductory texts to in-depth scholarly analyses.
- Useful to get other perspectives, provide comparison and contrast of different theories and ideas.

Edited books

- Usually focus on a specific aspect of a theorist/subject, such as introducing a theorist's work or applying it to specific issues.
- Chapters are written by different authors providing various perspectives on the topic at hand.
- Unless it is an introductory edited book, you will probably need some basic knowledge of the topic in order to critically assess the information.
- The contents, i.e. the specific focus of individual chapters, cannot usually be searched in Primo. Any print copies held in the library may need to be consulted on the shelf, or you may be able to view the contents on Amazon or Google books. This does not apply if using one of our eBook databases, which allow searches of the full content.
- You should only reference the chapter(s) used and not the whole book. See page 4 of our [APA Referencing Guide: Examples](#) for details.

Scholarly Journals/ Articles

- Published at regular intervals throughout the year.
- Often **peer reviewed** providing an assurance of credibility. Most databases should have a limiter to restrict your results to peer reviewed articles.
- Focus on a particular subject, or specific aspects of a subject.
- Usually more in-depth and focused information than books.
- Provide the most up-to-date primary research and information on a subject.
- Written for an academic audience. You may need some background understanding to make sense of them.
- **Review articles (secondary literature)** survey research on a particular topic and provide references for other relevant literature. Useful for providing a current picture with relevant background information.
- Most are available online through the databases we subscribe to. However, we still have a number of print journals available. New Zealand based journals are often still in print. See your Subject Guide for a list of any relevant print journals.

Trade Journals

- Written to inform people working in a particular profession.
- Usually written by those in the trade, not academics.
- May not be referenced as thoroughly as what is considered common knowledge differs for those in a particular profession.
- Examples: Computerworld, Marketing, NZ Engineering News.
- Can be a good source for up to date information, trends and practices in an industry.
- Use the resource type limiter in databases to restrict your results to trade journals.

Theses

- Primary research which explores a specific aspect or a previously unanswered question on a topic.
- Can be a great way to get a different perspective on a topic, but can often be too narrow in scope if you are not already familiar with the topic at hand.
- Find other relevant literature with the included bibliography/reference list.
- Find using ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database.
- You can also search Digital NZ and institutional repositories of tertiary institutions to find theses.

Conference Proceedings

- Collect together papers presented at conferences.
- Primary research on a topic may be presented and discussed at a conference well in advance of publication in an academic journal.
- Not always easy to find. Some are published like a book, others may be available online, some may not be published at all.
- Ask a librarian if you need help finding relevant proceedings.

Reports

- Produced by various organisations (government departments, charities, research associations) to examine a particular topic or issue.
- Often written in order to provide recommendations.
- Typical examples include company annual reports or performance reports on particular organisations or policies.
- If up to date, can provide a good picture of the current state of the topic under question.
- Can be a good source of statistics and other data on a topic.
- Not always easily located as they are not always published.

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