

Basic Guide to Research

Most professors will require the use of academic (AKA peer-reviewed) sources for student writing. This is because these sources, written for academic audiences of specific fields, are helpful for developing your argument on many topics of interest in the academic realm, from history to biology. While popular sources like news articles also often discuss topics of interest within academic fields, peer-reviewed sources offer a depth of research and expertise that you cannot find in popular sources. Therefore, knowing how to (1) identify popular vs. academic sources, (2) differentiate between primary and secondary sources, and (3) find academic sources is a vital step in writing research. Below are definitions of the two ways scholars categorize types of sources based on when they were created (i.e. time and place) and how (i.e. methodology):

Popular vs. Academic Sources:

Popular sources are publicly accessible periodicals—newspapers, magazines, and blogs—such as *The Washington Post* or *The New Yorker*. These sources are most often written for non-academic audiences, but can be helpful for finding general information and a variety of opinions on your topic.

Academic sources, known also as peer reviewed or scholarly articles, are those that have undergone peer review before being published. Typically, these articles are written for other scholars in the field and are published in academic journals, like *Feminist Studies* or *The American Journal of Psychology*. Literature reviews, research projects, case studies, and notes from the field are common examples.

Primary vs. Secondary Sources:

Primary sources are articles written by people directly involved in what they were writing about, including: News reports and photographs, diaries and novels, films and videos, speeches and autobiographies, as well as original research and statistics.

Secondary sources, on the other hand, are second hand accounts written about a topic based on primary sources. Whether a journal article or other academic publication is considered a secondary source depends on how you use it.

Source Attribution

Information in this handout is adapted from University System of Georgia. (n.d.). *Popular vs. scholarly*.
https://www.usg.edu/galileo/skills/unit05/galileo05_12.phtml

Information is also adapted from UMass Boston. (n.d.). *Primary sources: A research guide*.
<https://umb.libguides.com/PrimarySources/secondary>

How to Find Academic Sources

Finding appropriate academic sources from the hundreds of different journal publications can be daunting. Therefore, it is important to find databases—digital collections of articles—relevant to your topic to narrow your search. Albertson’s Library has access to several different databases, which can be located by clicking the “Articles and Databases” tab on the website’s homepage, and navigating to “Databases A-Z” to refine your search. Popular databases include: *Academic Search Premier* and *Proquest Central* (non-specific databases which include a wide variety of articles), *JSTOR* (humanities and social sciences, from literature to history), *Web of Science* (formal sciences and natural sciences such as biology and chemistry), and *Google Scholar* (a web search engine that searches scholarly literature and academic sources). If you are unable to access articles from other databases, make sure you’re signed in to Albertson’s Library through Boise State!

Performing a Database Search

Databases include many different types of sources besides academic journals, however, including book reviews and other periodicals. Using the search bar, you can limit search results to those containing specific keywords or phrases like “writing center” or “transfer theory.” Utilizing keywords in your search—names of key concepts, authors, or ideas—rather than questions is the most effective way to find articles in databases. When searching for a specific work by title, placing the title in quotation marks will ensure your search includes only results in that specific word order. In the example below, search terms including the author (“Virginia Woolf”) and subject (“feminism”) are entered into the popular database EBSCOhost:

The screenshot displays the EBSCOhost search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Publications', 'Subject Terms', 'Cited References', 'Images', and 'More'. On the right side of the navigation bar, there are links for 'Sign In', 'Folder', 'Preferences', and 'Languages'. The main search area features a search bar with the text 'virginia Woolf and feminism' entered. To the right of the search bar is a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there are three rows of 'AND' operators and 'Select a Field (optional)' dropdown menus. A 'Clear' button is also present. A green box highlights the search bar and the 'Search' button, with a callout arrow pointing to the search bar and the text 'Search bar with basic search terms.' Below the search bar, there are links for 'Basic Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Search History'. On the left side, there is a 'Refine Results' panel with a 'Current Search' dropdown and 'Proximity' and 'Expanders' sections. The main search results area shows 'Search Results: 1 - 20 of 142' and 'Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next'. The first result is titled '1. THE JOURNEY TO MENTAL FREEDOM, CREATIVITY AND ART THROUGH VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "TO THE LIGHTHOUSE".' Below the title is a small icon of a book and the text 'Academic Journal'. The abstract text begins with 'VIRGINIA WOOLFUN "DENİZ FENERİ" ADLI ESERİ İLE SANATA, YARATICILIĞA VE ZİHİNSEL ÖZGÜRLÜĞE UZANAN BİR YOLCULUK. By: DUMAN, Silva; KOÇ, Nur Emine. Istanbul Aydın University Journal of Social Sciences / Istanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi. nis2021, Vol. 13 Issue 2, p555-568. 14p. Abstract (English): In this study To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf is going to be analysed through feminist theory. This book can be assumed as a journey to the mental freedom, art and creativity. As an ardent supporter of the feminist movement, Virginia Woolf rebelled against the patriarchal order that undermines women's identity and creativity. As asserted in her feminist manifesto, she constantly encouraged women for having their own income and their separate rooms to create and survive individually indicating the initiative among the two sexes. Virginia Woolf highlighted the difficulties for women to follow the route of creativity and mental freedom in a

Refining Your Search Results

Many databases have a bar on the left of the screen where you can further refine your results. For example, if you are only interested in finding complete scholarly articles, or peer-reviewed ones, you can toggle these different options to further limit your search. These options are located under the “Refine Results” bar in EBSCOhost, divided into different sections, with a display of currently selected search filters and filter options to refine your search based on your specific needs, as seen in the figure below:

The image shows a screenshot of an EBSCOhost search results page. On the left is a 'Refine Results' sidebar with several sections: 'Current Search' (showing 'virginia Woolf and feminism'), 'Expanders' (with 'Apply equivalent subjects' checked), 'Limiters' (with 'Peer Reviewed' checked), 'Limit To' (with 'Peer Reviewed' checked and 'References Available' and 'Linked Full Text' unchecked), 'Source Types' (with 'All Results' checked and 'Academic Journals (98)' unchecked), and 'Subject: Thesaurus Term' (with 'feminism (48)', 'criticism (11)', 'feminism in literature (10)', 'women authors (8)', 'feminists (7)', and 'aesthetics (4)' listed). The main search results area shows a list of results. The first result is titled 'NEY TO MENTAL FREEDOM, CREATIVITY AND ART THROUGH VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "TO THE LIGHTHOUSE"' and includes a snippet of the abstract. The second result is titled 'nia Woolf, Espionage, and Feminist Agency' and includes a snippet of the abstract. The third result is titled 'The ghosts of old readers: social media, representation and gender in the information sector.' and includes a snippet of the abstract. Annotations with green arrows point to the 'Refine Results' sidebar and the first two search results.

Search Results: 1 - 20 of 98
Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next >

Refine Results

Current Search
virginia Woolf and feminism

Expanders
Apply equivalent subjects

Limiters
Peer Reviewed

Limit To
 Peer Reviewed
 References Available
 Linked Full Text

From: 1975 To: 2024
Publication Date

Show More

Source Types
 All Results
 Academic Journals (98)

Subject: Thesaurus Term
 feminism (48)
 criticism (11)
 feminism in literature (10)
 women authors (8)
 feminists (7)
 aesthetics (4)

NEE TO MENTAL FREEDOM, CREATIVITY AND ART THROUGH VIRGINIA WOOLF'S "TO THE LIGHTHOUSE"
NIA WOOLF UN "DENİZ FENERİ" ADLI ESERİ İLE SANATA, YARATICILIĞA VE ZİHNSEL ÖZGÜRLÜĞE UZANAN BİR YOLCULUK. By: DUMAN, Silva; KOÇ, Nur Er
Abstract (English): In this study To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf is go be assumed as a journey to the mental freedom, art and creativity. As an ardent supporter of the feminist movement, Virginia Woolf rebelled against the patriarchal o asserted in her feminist manifesto, she constantly encouraged women for having their own income and their separate rooms to create and survive individually indicatin highlighted the difficulties for women to follow the route of creativity and mental freedom in a patriarchal order. Frustrated by the sudden deaths of her beloveds succe: autobiographical novel, To the Lighthouse, art has turned a perfect medium for the convergence of life into a concrete product. The novel offers the reader two prototy the extraordinary artist Lily Briscoe. In accordance with Woolf's feminist struggle, traditional and all giving mother figure Mrs Ramsay reflected "the angel in the house" Mrs Ramsay and Lily Briscoe become indispensable for each other, as the existence of traditional Mrs Ramsay helps the extraordinary Lily Briscoe to become an artist Endowed with the feminist discourse, the reader will encounter an allegorical journey to the lighthouse as the source of illumination, creativity and mental freedom. The for Lily's artistic journey, but also for the reader for creativity, individuality, freedom of mind and art, defying the harsh reality of death and mortality. [ABSTRACT FROM /austbd_v13i2010. (AN: 149661276)

Subjects: FEMINISM; FEMININE identity; CREATIVE ability; FEMINIST theory; CONCRETE products; FEMINIST art; Other specialty-line building supplies merchant w Structural Steel and Precast Concrete Contractors; WOOLF, Virginia, 1882-1941

Find-It

Options to filter your search.

nia Woolf, Espionage, and Feminist Agency.
by: kauman, Mark David. Twentieth Century Literature (Duke University Press). Sep2018, Vol. 64 Issue 3, p317-346. 30p. Abstract: The article presents the author's v with Woolf as the protagonist, feminist agency, the steampunk literary genre, and speculative fictions. DOI: 10.1215/0041462X-7142072. (AN: 131711206)

Subjects: FEMINISM; WOMEN authors; WOOLF, Virginia, 1882-1941

Cited References: (38)

Find-It

3. The ghosts of old readers: social media, representation and gender in the information sector.
By: Bex, Gabrielle. Archives & Records. Spring2023, Vol. 44 Issue 1, p36-52. 17p. Abstract: Social media has become an almost ubiquitous method of communication : across the increasingly digitalized world. Likewise, it has played a large role in the development of fourth-wave feminism and in movements such as #YesAllWomen, # improvements to the representation of gender in media. This paper draws together both aspects in order to critique and reflect upon the current usage of social media university libraries, archives and special collections. It explores the challenges of utilizing such media for academic institutions deeply rooted in discourses of authority . social media posts to foreground and examine a number of successes and shortcomings, with discussions informed by critical theory. In particular, foundational texts of One's Own (1929) and Black Looks: Race And Representation (1992) by bell hooks, are used to frame explorations of gender and intersectionality in university collect professionals may better represent the diverse nature of their collections on social media platforms. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR] DOI: 10.1080/23257962.2022.2143

Search results can also be limited by *subject*: If you search “Romeo and Juliet” on Academic Search Premier to find literary analysis articles for your English class, you’ll find a lot of other sources that include this search term, such as ones about theater production or ballets based on Shakespeare’s play. However, if you’re writing a literary paper on the text of the play itself, you might limit your search results to “fiction” to see only articles that discuss the play within the field of literature. Alternatively, for a theater class discussing the play, you might limit your search results to “drama.”