

CHAPTER 2

Reading, Evaluating, and Responding to Arguments

One of the challenges of college work is that the readings often seem more complex than those you are used to, and understanding them may require more background information than the books assigned in high school. These increased expectations may be especially apparent as students progress from reading textbooks written for students to reading books and articles written for more informed and specialized audiences. Textbooks give students the “common knowledge” that introduces them to a field of study, and they usually represent a consensus view of the field. On the other hand, books and articles written by researchers for fellow researchers in their field—members of the same academic “discourse community”—are more apt to focus on a controversy or gap in knowledge. Researchers writing for their peers expect their readers to bring considerable common knowledge to their reading, and they may not repeat that common knowledge directly, except when introducing their topic. Thus, they may leave out pieces of information that newcomers need in order to fully understand the reading. For instance, an American Civil War historian writing for her colleagues might not mention the dates of the war, since she would assume that those dates are common knowledge in the field. A Shakespeare scholar writing for other experts in the field might not define terms like *first folio*. Moreover, researchers writing for their peers often use *jargon*, or professional terminology, without defining it (like “folio” in the previous sentence). All of these factors can contribute to a student’s uncomfortable sense of entering a conversation in the middle—which is, in a way, what all newcomers to a field do. You can, however, increase your comprehension of readings in unfamiliar fields if you try to pick up the cues writers give regarding their audience, purpose, and argument.

READING FOR CUES TO AUDIENCE, PURPOSE, AND SIGNIFICANCE

Cues to Audience (Who Are “We”?)

Researchers addressing an audience of researchers in their field usually start out by establishing the context for their argument. Sometimes they will directly state the

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context for the argument as a consensus, using phrases like “*It is generally believed . . .*” or “*Established practice recommends . . .*.” It is very important to developing the writer’s credibility (or ethos) that these actually are general beliefs or established practices and that the audience of researchers agrees with the writer about what the consensus in the field is. One way to establish this credibility is to draw on the work of authorities in the field, and researchers often make references to earlier published work to establish the common knowledge and to create the context for a particular inquiry. Some cues to what everyone knows are

- *we/our*
- *of course*
- *it is widely believed that*
- *the fact that*
- *there is general agreement that*

You can find even more information about the audience by looking at the acknowledgments page, citations list, and sources cited in footnotes or endnotes. These parts of a publication can reveal the immediate audience envisioned by the academic researcher.

Establishing that there is a consensus often includes a formal appraisal of previously published research, called a “literature review” (see Chapter 6). In this case, “literature” means publications in the field, *not* creative writing. The literature review both demonstrates the researcher’s expertise (ethos) and moves toward the controversy to be addressed: what is unknown or mistaken in current knowledge that the current research will resolve. In the process of reviewing previous research, the writer normally indicates its value to the present project, addresses its shortcomings, and states the purpose of the present study in relation to past work in the field. The writer may also use the literature review to move from consensus to controversy, laying the groundwork for extending a line of thinking or showing that an accepted claim is wrong. Look for verbal cues to the writer’s position such as:

- *on the other hand*
- *however*
- *more recent studies suggest*
- *more convincing research suggests*
- *to extend this line of research*

Cues to Purpose

To identify the purpose of a piece of writing, look for language that addresses two common general purposes of academic research: increasing understanding of an issue or advocating good choices about potential actions. Look for what the writer wants the piece to do:

- *explore an idea*
- *extend an idea or approach*
- *change a way of thinking about a subject*

- ❑ correct a misconception
- ❑ put an established concept in a new framework
- ❑ adopt a new methodology
- ❑ change a practice
- ❑ another purpose (Identify it.)

An author who is advocating a particular course of action usually makes that very clear, but it may be more difficult to catch the author's purpose if it is primarily a matter of changing or resolving ideas. Usually by the end of the introduction, the writer's purpose is clear; sometimes the writer will directly assert it by saying something like

- ❑ *The purpose of this investigation is to . . .*
- ❑ *This study will show (or argue) that . . .*

Near or at the end of the introduction, the research writer usually makes the major, overall claim for which the piece will argue, either as a thesis statement, or, in a scientific report, as the hypothesis which the investigation is meant to prove or disprove. The major claim may sometimes be merged with a statement of purpose. In this case, some writers use direct cues to announce their claim:

- ❑ *The point of this paper (or argument, or line of thinking) is . . .*
- ❑ *My point here is . . .*

This kind of statement is often used at key places in academic writing, where claims and reasons are stated and reiterated. As you read academic articles, you will find that these statements are quite common, even though writers in most academic fields are advised to avoid such direct statements (particularly those using "I" or "we"), and some handbooks assert that they are not acceptable.

Cues to Significance

Finally, most academic writers consider the greater significance of their research to understanding in the field—how the results of that investigation change or modify the consensus addressed at the beginning of the piece. Look for points where the writer mentions "significance" in the introduction and anticipates it throughout the work. The significance, however, is usually most explicitly discussed in the conclusion. A significant piece of research usually changes something about how people in the field think, work, or practice, and perhaps influences those outside the field as well. Some writers may be subtle about the significance, like Watson and Crick, whose work with DNA was mentioned in Chapter 1. They coyly understate that their findings "are of considerable biological interest" (737–38), because they anticipate that their fellow scientists will appreciate the great importance of what they have discovered.

By carefully reading for the cues writers give about their audience and purpose, and by noticing when writers use the terminology of argumentation—such as *argument*, *claim*, *warrant*, *reason*, and the looser term *point*—you can increase your ability to follow even complex arguments and to understand the conversation of a field you might not yet be very familiar with.

ANNOTATIONS

In addition to the process of taking marginal notes, you can annotate your own book: although you understand

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ANNOTATING READINGS

In addition to highlighting cues to argument, annotation can include a more complete process of highlighting, underlining, and taking notes in the margins of sources. While marginal note-taking is a very valuable means of understanding an argument, you can annotate only sources you own—printouts, photocopies, some electronic files, and your own books and journals. It is unethical—and illegal—to write in library books, although you can photocopy parts that seem to be useful or particularly difficult to understand and annotate your own copies.

While you may be asked to produce an annotated bibliography (that is, a list of sources with summaries and evaluations written for an audience), annotations you make on texts while reading are made for yourself, and in some cases they can replace taking notes. Because you are the audience, you have considerable flexibility about how to make annotations and for what purposes: for example, to help you understand the reading, to organize it in your mind, or to record your initial responses to it. You might also flag things that you do not quite understand, to return to after you have read more deeply in the field.

It can be very tempting to highlight or underline everything, but that defeats the purpose of annotating. One way to keep highlighting from taking over is to highlight (preferably in different colors) mainly two kinds of passage: those that carry the writer's argument and those you do not completely understand. Marginal comments can be a big help when you return to a piece after further reading and reflection on the topic. Your comments can identify key points of reasoning, make connections from part to part, and record your first responses. They can also identify relations you see among sources and record how you think a source might fit into your thinking about the topic. By rereading annotated sources, you can expand or contradict initial responses as seems appropriate. You need not always annotate by hand. If you can move the document into MS Word, you can highlight and comment electronically.

FOCUS POINTS: READING ARGUMENTS

The following guide to reading arguments offers a structured approach to understanding and evaluating difficult writing. This focused reading takes some thought and very close reading—usually more than once—but it can help you identify the line of the author's reasoning and locate the information with which to evaluate reliability. As students move into a major field, they begin to pick up the specialized knowledge that writers in a field expect their audience to have and to acquire the specialized vocabulary that can make reading academic writing difficult at first. More than one reading of a text is often necessary; often fully understanding a complex argument begins only on a second or third reading.

- If there is an abstract (that is, a summary printed just before the piece begins, and usually separated from the main body of text), how much does it tell you?
- What does the writer count as "already known" in the field? Who does this author say has this common knowledge?
- What is the author's preliminary thesis or statement of purpose? What cues does the author use? Why does the author claim it is important?
- How does the writer fit his or her claims into the argument? Does the writer have to make a case for the validity of the evidence? How is this accomplished?

- With what reasons are the claims supported? What kinds of evidence does the writer use? Does the writer refute any conflicting evidence? What cues are used? What reasons are given?
- How is the evidence represented? Examples? Charts? Graphs? Quotations?
- What is the writer's conclusion? Does the writer raise any new ideas in the conclusion? How is the significance of this research established? What cues are used to do this?
- What can you tell about the audience the writer is addressing and about the warrants the audience will accept? From what field is the author coming to the topic? Does the author ever use "I" or "we"? If there is a "we," who does it include? What are the effects of the author's use of formal and/or informal language?
- How does the author relate to the sources cited as the argument develops? Does the author agree or disagree with them? What cues does the author use? How often does the author summarize, paraphrase, use short quotations, and use long, set-off quotations?

READING FOR THE ARGUMENT IN A SAMPLE OPINION PIECE

"The Dangerous Myth of Grade Inflation" (p. 260), by education writer Alfie Kohn, is a good sample argument on which to try using these focus points. The article was first printed in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, a weekly newspaper for a non-specialized academic audience—faculty in all fields, college administrators, and professional college and university staff members—and was later printed in a collection of Kohn's essays directed to the general public. The article refers to other articles and studies, but it is an opinion piece, an interpretive essay published in the opinion section of a professional newspaper. Kohn can expect a highly critical reading from his academic audience, some of whom have considerable expertise in his field and many of whom have strong feelings about his argument. Although his article has no formal citations, the author refers to other publications by using parenthetical references that allow his readers to find those sources, and in a note at the end he directs readers to his Web page for more complete citations. Ellipses (. . .) indicate material left out.

Kohn addresses what seems to be common knowledge in the field. Where does it come from and who has it?

Complaints about grade inflation have been around for a very long time. Every so often a fresh flurry of publicity pushes the issue to the foreground again, the latest example being a series of articles in *The Boston Globe* last year that disclosed—in a tone normally reserved for the discovery of entrenched corruption in state government—that a lot of students at Harvard were receiving A's and being graduated with honors.

He repeats that this knowledge has been common for a long time.

The fact that people were offering the same complaints more than a century ago puts the latest bout of harrumphing in

Kohn gives a specific source for his claim about common knowledge.

Kohn is making fun of this series of articles.

This is the thesis: it is closer to a final thesis than to a preliminary thesis.

Kohn cites published evidence against his claim; experts would note that Jossey-Bass is a highly respected publishing company in the field of education.

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perspective, not unlike those quotations about the disgraceful values of the younger generation that turn out to be hundreds of years old. The long history of indignation also pretty well derails any attempts to place the blame for higher grades on a residue of bleeding-heart liberal professors hired in the '60s. (Unless, of course, there was a similar countercultural phenomenon in the 1860s.)

Yet on campuses across America today, academe's usual requirements for supporting data and reasoned analysis have been suspended for some reason where this issue is concerned. It is largely accepted on faith that grade inflation—an upward shift in students' grade-point averages without a similar rise in achievement—exists, and that it is a bad thing. Meanwhile, the truly substantive issues surrounding grades and motivation have been obscured or ignored.

→ This is the thesis: it is closer to a final thesis than to a preliminary thesis.

Kohn cites published evidence against his claim; experts would note that Jossey-Bass is a highly respected publishing company in the field of education.

→ The fact is that it is hard to substantiate even the simple claim that grades have been rising. Depending on the time period we're talking about, that claim may well be false. In their book *When Hope and Fear Collide* (Jossey-Bass, 1998), Arthur Levine and Jeanette Curteon tell us that more undergraduates in 1993 reported receiving A's (and fewer reported receiving grades of C or below) compared with their counterparts in 1969 and 1976 surveys. Unfortunately, self-reports are notoriously unreliable, and the numbers become even more dubious when only a self-selected, and possibly unrepresentative, segment bothers to return the questionnaires. (One out of three failed to do so in 1993; no information is offered about the return rates in the earlier surveys.)

To get a more accurate picture of whether grades have changed over the years, one needs to look at official student transcripts. Clifford Adelman, a senior research analyst with the U.S. Department of Education, did just that, reviewing

← Another repetition: this knowledge has been common for a long time.

← Kohn is setting readers up for a counterargument: his thesis. Scholars do not accept ideas "on faith": they demand evidence.

← This is the author's first claim in support of his thesis: that the "common knowledge" about grade inflation (although it has been common knowledge for a long time) is false.

← Kohn points out the unreliability of data that comes from self-selected reporting and the incomplete data from the earlier surveys used for comparison.

← Kohn directly proposes a more reliable and more "accurate" source of data. Then he adds two more sources that he considers more reliable.

transcripts from more than 3,000 institutions and reporting his results in 1995. His finding: "Contrary to the widespread lamentations, grades actually declined slightly in the last two decades." Moreover, a report released just this year by the National Center for Education Statistics revealed that fully 33.5 percent of American undergraduates had a grade-point average of C or below in 1999–2000, a number that ought to quiet "all the furor over grade inflation," according to a spokesperson for the Association of American Colleges and Universities. (A review of other research suggests a comparable lack of support for claims of grade inflation at the high-school level.) . . .

Grades motivate. With the exception of orthodox behaviorists, psychologists have come to realize that people can exhibit qualitatively different kinds of motivation: intrinsic, in which the task itself is seen as valuable, and extrinsic, in which the task is just a means to the end of gaining a reward or escaping a punishment. The two are not only distinct but often inversely related. Scores of studies have demonstrated, for example, that the more people are rewarded, the more they come to lose interest in whatever had to be done in order to get the reward. (That conclusion is essentially reaffirmed by the latest major meta-analysis on the topic: a review of 128 studies, published in 1999 by Edward L. Deci, Richard Koestner, and Richard Ryan.)

Those unfamiliar with that basic distinction, let alone the supporting research, may be forgiven for pondering how to "motivate" students, then concluding that grades are often a good way of doing so, and consequently worrying about the impact of inflated grades. But the reality is that it doesn't matter how motivated students are; what matters is how students are motivated. A focus on grades creates, or at least perpetuates, an extrinsic orientation that is likely to undermine the love of learning we are presumably seeking to promote.

In moving toward his second claim, that grades are not effective motivation for learning, Kohn starts with "common knowledge" about motivation but moves quickly into expert knowledge.

Kohn repeats his second claim, that grades are poor motivation for learning, distinguishing between the "common knowledge" of nonexperts, and the "common knowledge" of experts.

Kohn uses a "meta-analysis" as evidence for this claim. In a meta-analysis, experts in a field review a large body of relevant studies to assess agreement and disagreement in a field and often to suggest directions for future research.

Kohn argues against a study that identifies grade inflation by pointing out the study's limitations.

Notice how this transition moves the two claims toward his conclusion.

Three robust findings emerge from the empirical literature on the subject: Students who are given grades, or for whom grades are made particularly salient, tend to display less interest in what they are doing, fare worse on meaningful measures of learning, and avoid more challenging tasks when given the opportunity—as compared with those in a nongraded comparison group. College instructors cannot help noticing, and presumably being disturbed by, such consequences, but they may lapse into blaming students (“grade grubbers”) rather than understanding the systemic sources of the problem. A focus on whether too many students are getting A’s suggests a tacit endorsement of grades that predictably produces just such a mind-set in students.

Kohn offers evidence for his claim that grades are not the best motivation for learning with a reference to empirical research that demonstrates the ineffectiveness of grades as motivation for genuine and sustained learning.

These fundamental questions are almost completely absent from discussions of grade inflation. The American Academy’s report takes exactly one sentence—with no citations—to dismiss the argument that “lowering the anxiety over grades leads to better learning,” ignoring the fact that much more is involved than anxiety. It is a matter of why a student learns, not only how much stress he feels. Nor is the point just that low grades hurt some students’ feelings, but that grades, per se, hurt all students’ engagement with learning. The meaningful contrast is not between an A and a B or C, but between an extrinsic and an intrinsic focus.

Kohn connects grade inflation claim to motivation claim.

Precisely because that is true, a reconsideration of grade inflation leads us to explore alternatives to our (often unreflective) use of grades. Narrative comments and other ways by which faculty members can communicate their evaluations can be far more informative than letter or number grades, and much less destructive. Indeed, some colleges—for example, Hampshire, Evergreen State, Alverno, and New College of Florida—have eliminated grades entirely, as a critical step toward raising intellectual standards. Even the American Academy’s report acknowledges that “relatively undifferentiated course grading has been a traditional

People in the field would recognize these programs, since they are acknowledged leaders in student assessment.

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Kohn argues against a study that identifies grade inflation by pointing out the study’s limitations.

Notice how this transition moves the two claims toward his conclusion.

practice in many graduate schools for a very long time.” Has that policy produced lower-quality teaching and learning? Quite the contrary: Many people say they didn’t begin to explore ideas deeply and passionately until graduate school began and the importance of grades diminished significantly.

If the continued use of grades rests on nothing more than tradition (“We’ve always done it that way”), a faulty understanding of motivation, or excessive deference to graduate-school admissions committees, then it may be time to balance those factors against the demonstrated harms of getting students to chase A’s. Ohmer Milton and his colleagues discovered—and others have confirmed—that a “grade orientation” and a “learning orientation” on the part of students tend to be inversely related. That raises the disturbing possibility that some colleges are institutions of higher learning in name only, because the paramount question for students is not “What does this mean?” but “Do we have to know this?”

A grade-oriented student body is an invitation for the administration and faculty to ask hard questions: What unexamined assumptions keep traditional grading in place? What forms of assessment might be less destructive? How can professors minimize the salience of grades in their classrooms, so long as grades must still be given? And: If the artificial inducement of grades disappeared, what sort of teaching strategies might elicit authentic interest in a course?

To engage in this sort of inquiry, to observe real classrooms, and to review the relevant research is to arrive at one overriding conclusion: The real threat to excellence isn’t grade inflation at all; it’s grades.

Kohn returns to his opening idea: that “common knowledge” is based on tradition, not evidence.

Here is Kohn’s statement about the significance of his argument—and it offers a serious accusation.

Kohn repeats his conclusion. Notice the “punch” in the final sentence—it repeats the point, using a few, very blunt words.

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EVALUATING SOURCES

The quality of any argument depends directly on the sources it uses for evidence and support. Evaluating sources has always been a necessary skill for students writing research papers, but it has become somewhat more complicated with the advent of the World Wide Web because of the sheer quantity of information available on it. Many instructors complain that too many students start—and finish—their research by entering their topic into a search engine like Google or Yahoo! and using whatever turns up. This section offers criteria for evaluating sources and suggestions for finding sources likely to be most credible to an academic or professional audience.

Arguments and Expertise: Peer Review

It is useful to students to know about peer review because one of the goals of a college-level research writing course is knowing how to evaluate sources. Because a peer-reviewed book or article can generally be considered to fit within the boundaries of its *discipline*—another name for a field of study and practice—you can usually expect peer-reviewed sources to be credible.

An important feature that distinguishes academic writing from writing for a mass market is that it has been reviewed by other specialists in its field before it is published. As the quotation from Jacob Bronowski notes in Chapter 1, “criticism is a necessary and positive function in science,” and that necessary criticism is made by other scientists in the field. Most other academic fields also depend on this kind of critical reading by other experts.

While experts may not entirely agree on how to interpret new information—if they did, there would be no need to continue research or argument—most people working in a particular field agree on common knowledge in the field, on methods of discovery and interpretation, and on what arguments are warranted. Articles in peer-reviewed journals and books published by peer-reviewed presses are considered authoritative because they have been read by several of the author’s peers, who have good reasons to be critical because they often are competitors for funding, awards, reputation, and other rewards of scholarship.

Peer review is one important and reliable criterion for judging a text when students are new to a field because peer-reviewed sources are generally recognized as having authority in a field of study. This does not mean that all peer-reviewed sources agree, because they do not. Nor does it mean that you cannot or should not read anything that is not peer reviewed. However, when you draw information from more general sources, you often need to be more careful about judging their reliability for yourself.

Peer Review among Researchers

Here’s how peer review works: if a history professor sends a book proposal or manuscript about the Civil War to a university press, it will be sent to several other history professors who have published books on the Civil War, and these peer reviewers will determine whether or not the book should be published. The reviewers will use their own expertise to evaluate the manuscript on grounds of the accuracy of its evidence, the logic of its argument, and the contribution it makes to the arguments and controversies in its field of study. Peer review actually begins before

Here is Kohn's statement about the significance of his argument—and it offers a serious accusation.

the book is written, when the researcher may compete with peers on proposals for research funding and preliminary publications, and it continues after the book is published, when it is further evaluated in published reviews by still other experts. If the published book turns out to be widely read by other experts in its field, subsequent researchers will cite it as a source, even if they intend to refute it. The same peer-review process is used for articles in scholarly and scientific journals. While no review process that involves human beings can be 100 percent effective, peer review works reasonably well to make sure that research published in books by university presses and in scholarly journals is acceptable to other experts in the field. Other sources, like encyclopedia entries, magazine articles, and books for a general audience are useful sources for general readers, but they may reflect an editor's idea of what specialists wrote and of how to present it to a wider public, or they may project a single author's point of view apart from the context of a field of study. Sources written for a general audience may smooth over controversies in a field, or use those controversies to discredit the value of expertise.

Peer Review in the Professions

Peer review takes place in every academic field—biology, zoology, civil engineering, medicine, literature, and so on—because it offers a workable balance between maintaining a stable body of knowledge and responding to newly discovered information. Although peer review of published work is most common in academic research, similar processes of peer review take place in other professions. For example, many professions have a certifying process (involving taking an exam and obtaining a license to practice) overseen by a professional board of peers. Boards of specialists license physicians to practice in specific fields like pediatrics or internal medicine. Law school graduates must pass their state's bar association exam before they can practice as lawyers. These groups of professional peers uphold standard procedures to decide who has sufficient knowledge to practice and to determine what constitutes good (and ethical) practice. The publications of professional associations are also peer reviewed, not only their journals (like *The Journal of the American Medical Association*), but also manuals and other resources for practitioners. Usually the title pages of such publications will list the names and institutional affiliations of members of the editorial board responsible for peer review.

Peer Review among Students

For students, the process of peer review often begins in groups in which students develop and test each other's growing expertise in a field. Many students start informal study groups to help them master new material. In some courses students are required to form research groups in which they can develop enough common expertise to read each other's developing inquiries. Such research groups develop shared expertise in an area of investigation through the processes of discussing developing drafts, compiling bibliographies (lists of sources consulted), and carrying out projects together. One of the useful effects of this peer group work is that reading and responding to each other's writing helps students directly experience how their own writing communicates to actual, visible readers who are interested in the topic and who need to know what has been discovered about it. Peer review helps students create and participate in an academic discourse community and prepares them for the teamwork expected in a wide range of future professions.

FOCUS PC

It is impossible to have sufficient information without some propaganda and Web sites. Others are informative, but others are not. We argue with each other, but we don't have a checklist to use to constellate the credibility.

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FOCUS POINTS: EVALUATING SOURCES

It is important to remember that while the following questions can be helpful, it is not sufficient to simply run through a checklist to evaluate sources. While overt propaganda and deception are reasonably easy to spot, some sources—books, articles, and Web sites—cleverly misrepresent themselves as thoughtful, unbiased purveyors of information, when they are actually promoting political, religious, or social agendas; others are written by writers who do not have sufficient expertise to know about or argue with alternative explanations or interpretations. Because the questions in the checklist that follows may not give rise to consistent answers, student researchers need to constantly weigh the criteria against each other and make difficult decisions about the credibility of sources they find.

1. Is the book or article peer-reviewed? That is, has a body of experts already evaluated it?

- You can generally assume that a book has been peer reviewed if its publisher has the words “University Press” in its name. There are some other presses that use peer review for their books (NCTE Press, Heinemann, Routledge, Earlbaum, etc.). When in doubt, ask your instructor or a reference librarian.
- Peer-reviewed sources usually make specific references to other peer-reviewed sources and have the “scholarly apparatus” appropriate to the field, such as footnotes, endnotes, parenthetical citations, and/or bibliographies. Questions 2 and 7 in checklist 2-1 (Reading Arguments) can help you locate some of the information you need to evaluate the reliability of sources.
- The “Acknowledgments” section of peer-reviewed books usually mentions and thanks colleagues at the writer’s institution and other universities, and may list government or foundation grants that helped pay for the project. However, students should not use the presence of acknowledgments as the only criterion for evaluating a source because sometimes authors of sources that are not peer-reviewed also acknowledge the help or inspiration of others, and some sources of funding are highly partisan.

Example

See Figure 2.1.

- Scholarly journals have editorial boards listed on the title page or a page next to it, and these editors’ university affiliations are identified.

Example

See Figure 2.2.


2. What kind of piece is it?

- In a newspaper or magazine, is the piece a news article, a feature article, an opinion piece, or an editorial?


Example

See Figure 2.3.

- In a peer-reviewed journal, is the piece a research report or article, a review essay, an editorial commentary, a letter or commentary in response to a previously published article, or something else that you can identify? Research reports, articles, and review essays are considered more reliable



Academic Charisma and the Origins of the Research University



William Clark

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO AND LONDON

Notes

here make use of a number of conventions. Notes in reference to is use an abbreviation schema under Abbreviations. All other citations ography. Page citations in most notes are made in terms of the now se of *f* for one page following the page number listed, and of *ff* 2a. I have omitted the periods conventionally called for in this citation xample 40f. becomes 40f and 108ff. becomes 108ff and so on.

CHAPTER ONE

17; 1986; Foucault 1975; Latour 1987; 1990; Becker and Clark 2001. 1975, 150.

Marx and Engels 1966, 1:31–60. See also Funkenstein 1986.

162, 563 (1956, 571); emphasis of “expert” in the original.

1976a, 123ff (1956, esp. 122ff).

162, 129 (first quotation), 58ff (second quotation, emphasis in original and quotation, emphasis in original omitted); (1956, 129, 58ff, 129).

3 1958, 72. On Baroque courtiers, see Biagioli 1993.

1 from Brandenburg-Prussia 1894–1936, 3:577.

1953, 13 (quotation); see also 12ff. On the above, see Brandenburg-Prussia 1894–1936, 3:582ff; Heinrich 1931, 11f; Bleek 1972, 63ff.

10. On the above, see Heinrich 1931, 13; Derwurt 1953, 289ff; Rosenberg 1958, 16c; Bleek 1972, 41, 69; Johnson 1975, 49ff, 218ff; D. Willoweit in Jeserich et al. 1983–88, 1:346ff; Jeserich in *ibid.*, 2:304; Ractiff 1983, 158ff; on bureaucracy in general, see Weber 1976a, 55ff (1956, 559ff).

11. Justi 1758, 2:63f (quotation).

12. See Justi 1760–61, 1:3ff; 2:73ff; 1782, 3ff, 10, 15f, 56f, 254ff; Sonnenfels 1771–77, 1:131 (quotation); from Zincke 1742–43, 1:296ff, 319f, 322 (quotation); see also Darjes 1756, 397, 425ff; Dithmar 1755, 154, 172; Förster 1771, 196ff; in general, Small 1909; Brückner 1977, 229ff; Stollleis 1988–92, 1:366ff, esp. 374, 379ff.

13. On the next paragraphs, see Justi 1755, 1:173f, 184, 212ff, 231f, 290ff; 1758, 1:496; 2:56, 63f, 251, 263f; 1760–61, 1:481ff, 505ff, 685f, 698ff; 2:191f, 37ff; 1782, 34f, 43ff, 59f, 159ff.

14. Justi 1755, 1:211–14, 202–14, 235f.

15. Justi 1755, 1:107; 1758, 2:611 (quotation on giving a gracious audience); 1760–61, 2:47ff, 67f (quotation on freedom of thought), 68ff, 1782, 254ff.

16. On Catholic protests contra commodification, see Nicolai 1783–96, 4:682.

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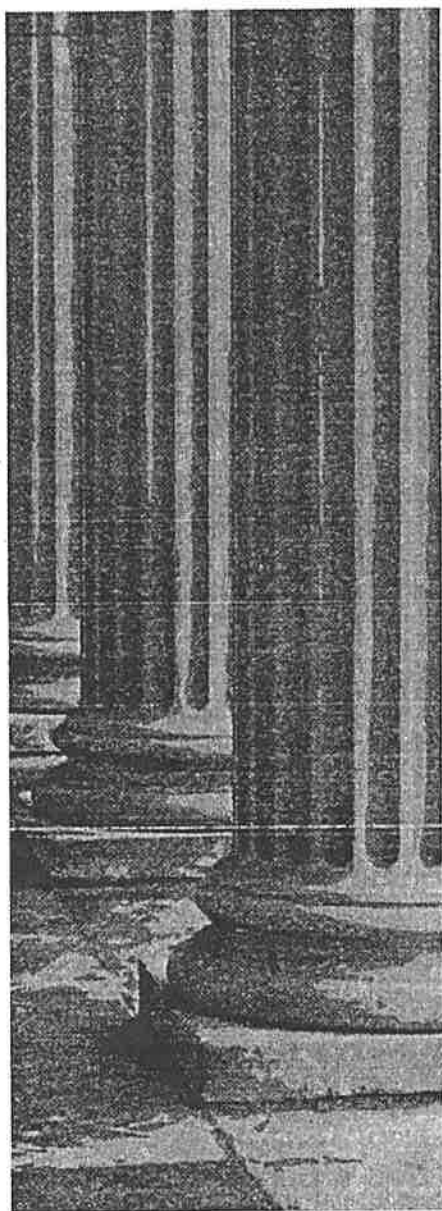
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FIGURE 2.1 (continued)

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FIGURE 2.3
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MARCH 9, 2009

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FIGURE 2.4

Table of contents with section headings that identify kinds of pieces, from *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9.3 (2007).

than editorial comments and the responses of readers—even of prominent or authoritative readers.

Example

See Figure 2.4.

- On a Web site, are you looking at a personal Web site, a governmental or institutional site, or a site for a recognized and reputable organization? (“Recognized” and “reputable” can be ambiguous terms, which is one reason why evaluating sources is always a matter of judgment.) Was the piece written for the Web, or first published in print and then archived on the Web? Is it from a newspaper, a major magazine, a blog, or an academic journal? Whether it is an archived print publication or an original Web publication, was it peer reviewed?
3. Do sources from newspapers and magazines seem to adhere to the ethical codes of journalism?
- Journalistic codes of ethics (i.e., The American Society of Newspaper Editors’ “Statement of Principles” www.asne.org/kiosk/archive/principles.htm and the Society of Professional Journalists’ “Code of Ethics” www.spi.org/ethics_code.asp) date back to the 1920s. These codes, followed by the most reputable newspapers and magazines, bind journalists to high standards of truth, accuracy, impartiality, and fair play.
 - Although major newspapers usually adhere to journalistic codes of ethics, it can be hard to tell whether smaller, newer, more popular, or more politically committed publications do so. If a journalistic piece seems one-sided or unfair or if it makes what seem to be inflated claims for a position, ask your instructors and librarians what they know about it. An inflated claim is one that uses absolute terms like *always*, *never*, or *unique* or that attributes a wide array of results to a single factor; if a claim seems too good (or too bad) to be true, the source merits a closer, more critical examination.
 - The extent to which the writer’s opinion is supposed to shape the piece varies depending on whether it is published in a news article, a feature article, or an editorial.
 - A news article aims to document information—who, what, when, where, and how—and to record responses from significant participants or analysts.
 - A feature article develops an interpretation as it presents information.
 - An editorial tries to persuade readers to share a particular interpretation or to respond to a call to action.
 - Usually newspapers give clear cues about what kind of piece a given article is (for example, editorials are often printed on a page labeled “Opinion”). *However, ethical journalists are responsible for factual accuracy in all these genres.* This means, for instance, that responsible journalists cannot misrepresent facts to support an editorial or opinion piece. Misrepresentation includes fabricating evidence, making a composite source seem like a single person, and taking quotations out of their original context.
 - In many publications, these codes of ethics are taken very seriously; for example, in 2003 the *New York Times* was wracked with scandals involving the fabrication of stories and staff writers publishing the work of their assistants as their own. The newspaper appointed a “public editor” at that time, who

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explains (and sometimes disagrees with) editorial decisions about what is printed and why.

4. Does the piece seem to adhere to a code of ethics in a professional field or discipline?
 - As professions define themselves as distinct fields of practice, they usually establish codes of ethics that define acceptable practices in that field—what practitioners may and may not do without risking the disapproval of their peers.
 - Codes of ethics for specific professions are available on professional association Web sites. The Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions at the Illinois Institute of Technology maintains an online collection of most of those codes of ethics, organized by profession. To take a look at these codes, see the following Web site: www.iit.edu/departments/csep/publicwww/codes/index.html.
5. How up-to-date is the source?
 - Information in newspapers may be quickly rendered obsolete by breaking news, which often reveals new information that may contradict the observations of early witnesses.
 - Books have a somewhat longer “shelf life” than articles, but their importance varies from field to field, and how long they remain current depends on how much they have been cited in more recent books and articles.
 - In any field, a book or article over 15 years old that has not been cited in a considerable number of more recent sources is probably not a very important source.
 - In the humanities, books are considered the most important publications. Peer-reviewed articles over 10 years old have probably been surpassed by more recent articles and books, although some articles that have presented groundbreaking arguments may continue to be cited for much longer.
 - In the sciences and most social sciences, articles are considered more important than books because they are more current (they make it into print faster), and you should not consider an article over five years old to be current unless you have good evidence to the contrary (for example, if it is still frequently cited in more current articles).
 - The “classics” in a field may be read for decades or even centuries, but they carry a different kind of authority as they become classics. For instance, B. F. Skinner and Sigmund Freud were crucial figures in psychology 50 and 100 years ago, respectively. They are still cited in histories of science and in some inquiries in literary or cultural studies, but they should not be cited as evidence for current claims in psychology, a field that has shifted considerably since their times.
 - Some “classics” are not disproved; they are built upon until the original insights become commonplace. The Watson and Crick article that articulated the structure of DNA in 1953 is such a classic; this work has been built upon significantly over the years, but the double helix model remains “common knowledge” in genetics and related fields.
 - Historians and others writing about history may use old sources as well as more recent ones to draw evidence from the past.
6. Is the source cited by, and relied upon, by others in the field?
 - Do other authors cite this source or refer to it? Because research is ordinarily conducted and published when there is controversy or a gap in a field of knowledge,

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other authors may substantially disagree with a source—but even when there is disagreement, the fact that researchers cite it indicates that the source is important enough to refute. When you begin doing research in a field, you will find that many of the authors use each other as sources. This is the visible *discourse community* of the field. Writers who frequently show up on lists of works cited are probably authors whose work you too should read.

- Does the source refer to other researchers known to be authorities in the field? Does the source use and reflect on data that other sources in the field use, or relate new data to existing, accepted data? Be wary about sources that claim to refute an entire field or to discard all or most previous research. Most paradigm shifts take place only after considerable discussion by experts about how to interpret puzzling data.
- Is the author a recognized authority *in this area* of study? You may have heard of the author, but consider whether other writers in this field use this writer as a source or reference. For example, it would be unusual for a chemist to be considered a reliable source in American history.
- When in doubt, ask an instructor—or several—in the field, and consult with a research librarian.

7. What is the author's purpose?

- Most authors have a purpose and make an argument. Almost all published research proposes an argument or interpretation; there would be no reason to publish if it did not. People do research because there is a controversy or a gap in knowledge, and the purpose of most credible published research is to interpret or explain the result of an experiment or an investigation—seldom do “the facts speak for themselves.” There are controversies in every field, and in some fields there are very deep differences among experts and the way they look at data. A writer who is making an argument will make a case for his or her interpretation based on the evidence. If the interpretation refutes earlier work, the researcher may argue for a reinterpretation of earlier results in the light of new evidence or a new theory, but researchers seldom reject earlier knowledge out of hand. Be careful to distinguish between *argument* and *bias*. An argument is a legitimate aspect of much academic writing, but a biased argument omits or distorts evidence to support its claims.

8. How and how much is the source biased?

- A writer's position is always a factor in a piece of writing, and the way the writer represents himself or herself can impact the argument. Does the writer's ethos seem like a legitimate professional position, or does the purpose of the argument seem personal—not clearly connected with the writer's area of expertise? When evaluating bias, ask how clearly the writer states her position. Does there seem to be a hidden agenda? What warrants does the writer state or assume? Are they in accord with others you have read in the field? How much room for doubt does the writer admit? A nuanced position that allows for or carefully considers possible exceptions is often more reliable than an “always” or “never” stand.
- An *overly biased* writer may twist and distort evidence in order to make a point. An overly biased writer may merely dismiss earlier research or ignore evidence,

rather than refuting it; may engage in personal (or *ad hominem*) attacks on those who hold other points of view (including name-calling and guilt by association); or may use other logical fallacies like bandwagon, slippery slope, false dichotomy, or appeals to tradition, spite, or ridicule.

- As Jacob Bronowski observes in the passage quoted in Chapter 1, scholars and scientists normally disagree with each others' methodologies and conclusions. However, they seldom accuse each other of deception or falsification, which are serious violations of professional ethics. Such accusations may indicate that a source is unfairly biased.
- What do your fellow students and instructor(s) think about a source? If a number of people warn you away from a source because they think it is biased, you too should be wary about its reliability. Although the decision about the reliability of a source is yours, remember that part of your work in making an argument is to convince the audience. If you know that your audience considers a source unreliable, you need to make a case for its reliability, and so consider whether that secondary argument will strengthen or weaken your larger claims.

EVALUATING THE RELEVANCE OF SOURCES

While reliability is very important, when you are engaged in a research project, you need sources that are directly relevant to the particular question you are considering. When you first start reading about a particular topic, almost everything a writer discusses may seem related to it, and the sources used by writers you read early in the process can be a good place to find more to read. But try to develop your own questions as soon as possible, so that you can focus your reading and research on the particular question you want to consider, rather than on the topic in general. If you write down your questions and responses from the outset of a project, you will have a record of your thinking as it develops, and when you review your responses to a particular piece of writing, you will probably find questions, points of agreement and disagreement, and other reactions that can move you toward a particular question and guide your finding and selection of sources.

When reviewing your responses, look for central ideas and key terms that you have identified as interesting to you. Then review the writer's use of sources, to see if you can find those terms repeated in the writer's summaries and in the titles of the sources he or she uses. Don't look only for sources that agree with you, but do look for sources that speak to the points that you want to investigate further.

For example, if you were to start an inquiry with Alfie Kohn's article, "The Dangerous Myth of Grade Inflation," and decide you want to think more about and perhaps write about motivations for learning, you might turn to the review of 128 studies by Edward L. Deci, Richard Koestner, and Richard Ryan that Kohn mentions in his article, a reference which was posted on Kohn's Web site and is available in the version of the article later published in a collection of his essays. Because this review article is now over 10 years old, you might want to skim the review for key terms and for the names of writers the reviewers considered important at the time. Then, you could do an author search (see Chapter 5), looking for more recent articles by these authors, particularly articles that have "grades" and "motivation" in their titles. Kohn refers to

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other studies that discuss the issue of grade inflation, but these are less likely to be of use for a study on motivation, even though they are important to making Kohn's point. Keep in mind that his inquiry is not the same as yours; while you can and should use a previous author's research on a related topic, your own research decisions should be based on the question *you* want to investigate.

Learning to skim is necessary for effective decisions about the relevance of a piece to your own work. Reading the introduction, the conclusion, and the first sentences of paragraphs will show you the scope of a piece. Recognizing a writer's use of key terms can help you decide whether you will be able to use a piece in your own work. It helps if you write down these responses and reflections as you make them, so that you can avoid backtracking later.

EVALUATING ONLINE SOURCES

Even though the Internet has revolutionized the research process in the past 10 years, the same criteria work for evaluating electronic sources as well as printed texts. The challenges of evaluating Web materials come not only from the sheer quantity of information available online, but also from its highly variable quality. The Internet has vastly increased the quantity of information available to everyone with access to the Web, but it is important to remember that *almost anyone can put anything on the Web for any purpose*—usually more easily and cheaply than publishing in print. When you are doing research online, then, you need to be even more careful about who produced the documents you are consulting and whether they are credible to an audience who knows the field you are studying.

The easy freedom to put things on the Web makes it very attractive, but this same freedom can leave you vulnerable to mistaken or deceptive Web resources. Remember that some Web sites look very professional and official but carry highly biased, distorted, or deceptive information. Of course, you should expect that information put online by a political organization will be biased toward its candidates and principles, but that information is not necessarily deceptive. However, there is a difference between sites that admit their political stance (the Web site of a political party, a candidate for office, or a political blog or influence group), and those that hide their position. For example, some extremist political organizations post information that most mainstream historians or political scientists would find misleading. If information about who created the site is not available on the first page of a site, follow links such as "about us" to see whether a site you have located has a semi-buried affiliation, and ask yourself why that affiliation may be hidden. Deceptive sites *pretend* to be unbiased, which should lead you to be very suspicious about accepting their posts without considerable investigation.

When evaluating Web sites, use the same criteria you would use for evaluating a print document, but with a more critical eye. As with print media, you need to know what kind of page you are looking at, who wrote it, and when it was produced. Always ask yourself whether your readers will think a source you cite is reliable, and, if you have doubts about a site, ask your instructors or a librarian to help you make an evaluation. In general, when doing research for academic papers, try to keep in mind the differences between sources available through your university library and the databases it provides access to, and sources generally available on the World Wide Web. Try to stay within the

library's Web resources and to use databases located on the library's Web site. These will lead more directly to peer-reviewed sources and to the more reputable magazines and newspapers.

FOCUS POINTS: EVALUATING MATERIALS ON THE WEB

In order to do the best academic research, you need to find sites that are reliable and relevant, and that offer the best possible resources. In addition to the general considerations for evaluating sources, here are some further considerations specific to sources found on the Web.

- *What sort of document have you found?* A commercial site (.com), an organizational site (.org), a college or university site (.edu), and so forth? A personal Web site? An archived print document? A piece of an online discussion from a listserv that has been archived? A piece from an online journal? A blog?
- *Who wrote the document, or what organization adopted it?* Was it peer reviewed? Is the person or organization considered a reputable source in the field? Is it cited by other sources you have encountered—particularly by print sources? Is the person or organization subject to any ethical code?
 - Be sure to click on any link that offers information about the person or organization behind the Web site, such as "About us," the name of the organization, or the name of the person to whom it belongs.
 - A print document archived online is as reliable as it was when in print (unless it has become outdated).
 - A personal or organization Web site or blog is only as reliable as the person or organization that created it; you should rely on such sources primarily when researching the blogger (since the blog can tell you what the person thinks), but you will have to make a case for their reliability if you use them as evidence for an argument. Sometimes blogs can lead you to useful sources on very contemporary topics, through links to journals, articles, and other sites, but, as always, you must evaluate these sources critically.
- *What is the purpose of the document?* Is it clearly stated on the front page, or do you have to dig to infer it? Are the document and format suitable for the purpose? Can you detect bias in the coverage the document offers?

FINDING THE MOST RELIABLE, RELEVANT, AND USEFUL SOURCES FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Say that you are researching New Wave French Cinema of the 1950s. The Internet has abundant resources for your search, some more promising than others. Using the criteria in Focus Points: Evaluating Materials on the Web, let's evaluate two examples.

At first glance our preliminary Web search has yielded some results (see Example A). We have a site that provides a place to start and some useful preliminary information from which to start. However, we still need to check for contact, copyright, and publishing information before we can determine whether or not this site is a credible one from which to quote.



Example A—



Example A—

This is a .com Web site, which tells us that it is a commercial site. It is not an organizational or university Web site. It appears to be informational but also appears to sell films.



The site seems to have some helpful links for finding out more information on the topic and also includes a Links page that may lead to other bibliographic information.

The site gives examples and summaries of some well-known films of the period but does not offer expert commentary or peer-reviewed references.

Example A—Web Research on French Cinema #1



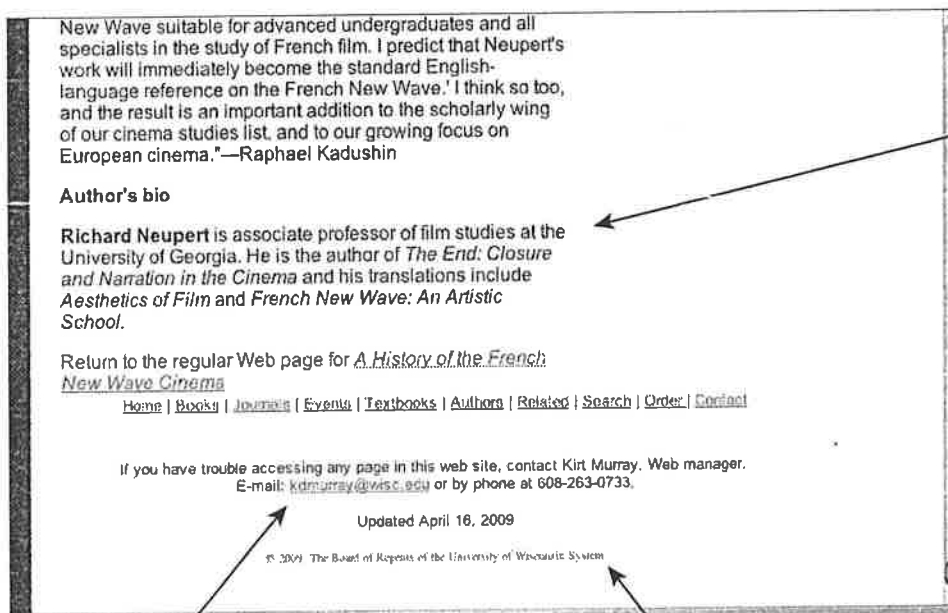
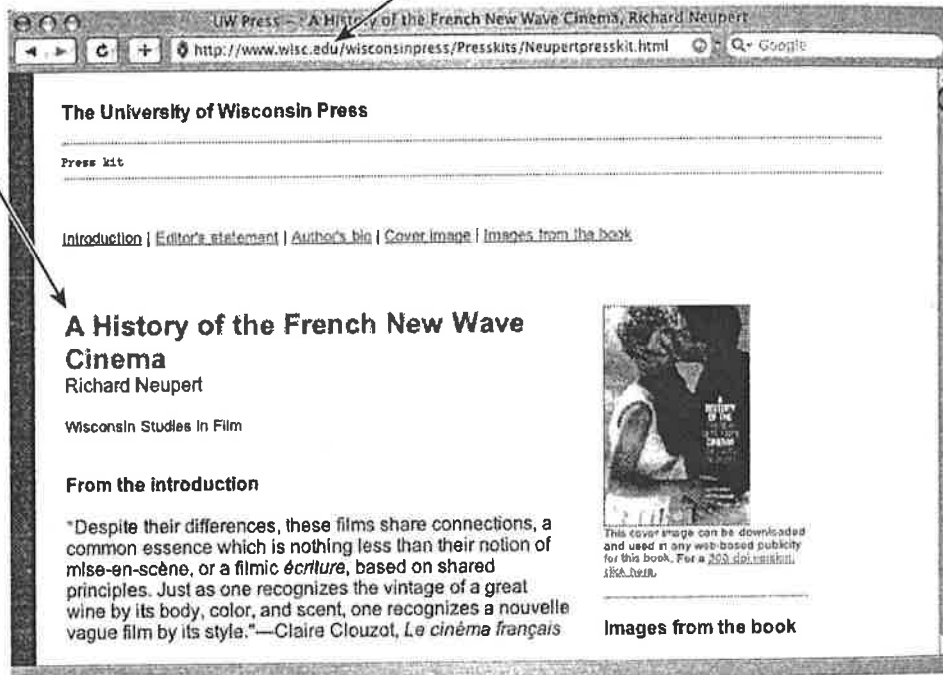
When we click the Contact link, we do not get any indication of authorship, copyright, or publication information.

The actual contact link takes us to a Web form that does not include a person's name or e-mail address. Sources without publication information (author, publisher, date modified) are difficult to cite and usually indicate that they are not credible sites for quoting.

Example A—Web Research on French Cinema #2

This Web site is a .edu site, which means that it is a university-sponsored site. For this site, then, we already know that the name of the publishing organization is the name of the university.

This site also names the article clearly and provides an author name and affiliation information. This article appears to be from the Wisconsin Studies in Film series.



This site includes background information on the author that helps us to determine the author's credibility as an expert in the field. It also provides the names of other publications that can expand your research horizon.

The site also provides contact information for the author.

This site also includes publication and copyright information, which will be used in your bibliography.

Example B—Web Research on French Cinema #3 & #4

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In our second search (see Example B), we find an article on the history of New Wave Cinema. Here again we will apply our evaluation criteria in order to test the credibility of the site.

Our second search has yielded much more promising results by way of credibility thus far. However, we should check the bottom of the page for more information that will help us to finally determine credibility.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS

For additional discussions and examples useful for developing your ability to evaluate Web sources, consult the following sites. Many of these sites were created by reference librarians at colleges and universities to help students locate and identify reliable sources on the Web. You will benefit most, however, by consulting your own library's Web page to see what help your library offers with finding and evaluating online sources and learning what other "information literacy" resources your instructors and reference librarians recommend.

www.ithaca.edu/library/training/think.html "ICYouSee: T is for Thinking: A Guide to Critical Thinking About What You See on the Web." This recently updated site built by a reference librarian has been on the Web for nearly 15 years. Students find it clear and easy to use.

www.library.jhu.edu/researchhelp/general/evaluating/index.html This is a short list of considerations about the reliability of sources from the Sheridan Libraries at Johns Hopkins University.

gateway.lib.ohio-state.edu/tutor/ This larger and more complex site from the reference department at The Ohio State University offers both information and interactive tutorials (available to users anywhere). There are special sections on Careers and Employment, History Research, and News Sources.

www.lib.purdue.edu/rguides/tutorials.html Purdue University reference librarians have compiled this body of resources, including tutorials on topics for beginning students through advanced researchers. You may sign in as a guest and use most of the informational materials offered.

RESPONDING TO (AND IN) ACADEMIC WRITING

When you are reading and taking notes on a topic, it is almost inevitable that you will respond to your sources, both positively and negatively, and you can use those responses to start exploring potential arguments about your topic. While it is important to maintain a clear distinction in your mind, and particularly in your notes and papers, between other writers' ideas and your response to them, by no means should you try to squelch your responses, since they will help you direct your research, discover what you want to argue, and suggest how you might organize that argument. The word *response* brings to mind a reflex—something automatic and outside of conscious control. While responses to readings may start with a reflex, those first thoughts can be modified by conscious thinking and by reflecting about the field's conventions (that is, its usual ways of doing things, some explicit and some implicit) and the warrants (basic assumptions) it accepts. Response is an important part of the research process; as researchers read sources, they decide how they might fit into an argument being constructed and how they work in relation to each other.

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This site includes background information on the author that helps us to determine the author's credibility as an expert in the field. It also provides the names of other publications that can expand your research horizon.

FOCUS POINTS: SHAPING YOUR RESPONSES

- How well does the research fulfill its purpose; that is, how well does it do what the researcher says it will do?
- Is the evidence convincing?
- What are the warrants of the argument—the underlying assumptions that the argument depends on? Can you tell if they are the usual warrants in the field? To what extent do you share them?
- Does the writer acknowledge and refute alternatives to the conclusions reached?
- Is the research thorough, and is the methodology appropriate? (These issues can be hard for a person new to a field to judge; take particular notice when you find articles that evaluate other research on these grounds.)
- Is the argument reasonable? Review the list of logical fallacies in Chapter 1 and consider whether the writer exploits any of them.

These are not the only possible grounds for response, but they are common ones. In a response, you provoke an interaction between the written piece and your own thinking on the topic. When writing a response, you are expected to be reasonable—but not necessarily impartial. “Being reasonable” includes representing accurately what was written, responding to what the writer said rather than who the writer is, and acknowledging when your basic assumptions about values or how things work (i.e., your warrants) differ from those of the writer. Although a response need not be written as a polished argument, it can help you to think about making a case in relation to a reading or readings. If you misrepresent what the writer said, the case falls apart as soon as the mistake is pointed out. If you attack the personal qualities of the writer or question the writer’s ethos, you must be sure that you are willing and able to support that attack, and that those qualities are relevant to the article you are responding to. It is very important to recognize where you share warrants with the writer to whom you are responding, and where you differ.

Exercises**2.1 READING A SOURCE**

1. Read the piece by Alfie Kohn in the Readings, highlighting cues to audience, purpose, and argument.
2. Answer in writing the questions in Focus Points: Reading Arguments (p. 21) that are not addressed by the annotated excerpt of this article. You may be asked to do this work with a small group so that you can discuss your understanding of the argument.
3. Write a list of the parts of the piece you still do not understand, discuss them with a partner or small group, and then reread the article, looking for clarification. Take notes as you read that record your opinions and responses to the author’s argument.

2.2 RESPONDING TO A SOURCE

1. Using another source from the readings, highlight parts that seem important, write in the margins why you highlighted them, and record any immediate responses you have. Also note the parts of the piece that you do not understand.

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2. Answer, in writing, the questions in Focus Points: Shaping Your Responses (p. 44).
3. Review your answers and notes. Write a response to the piece, based on one or more questions from the list that seem most applicable to your thinking about the piece.
4. Write a short paragraph reflecting on how useful these questions were for increasing your understanding of and response to the piece. What questions would you add and/or eliminate?

2.3 EVALUATING RELIABILITY

1. Write a short (350–400 words) evaluation of the reliability of the article on grade inflation by Alfie Kohn (p. 260), based on the criteria in Focus Points: Evaluating Sources (p. 29). Focus your discussion on the criteria from the list that you think most appropriate to this particular source, and explain your choice.
2. Discuss your evaluation with a small group, considering which of Kohn's sources seem more or less reliable and how this affects his argument. What other kinds of sources would you want to consult if you were writing a paper on grade inflation?
3. Does your consideration of reliability change your response to the piece? If so, make a list of changes you might make in your response. If not, make a list of how Kohn's use of sources helps supporting your response.

2.4 EVALUATING TWO WEB SITES ON THE SAME TOPIC

A Google search on *Cosmetics and Safety* yielded 19,600,000 hits. Two near the top of the list were:

www.cosmeticsinfo.org/ What's in Cosmetic and Personal Care Products? Source: The Personal Care Products Council (industry trade group)

www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ Skin Deep Cosmetic Safety Database. Source: Environmental Working Group

1. These two sites were found on a search for information about the safety of cosmetics. Consider what the point of view of each site is. Do you think that either or both of them are biased? How are they biased and what makes you think so?
2. Write a short account of how the perspectives of these sources differ. Consider whether you consider one or both of them overly biased and how you might be able to use them in an inquiry of your own.
3. Repeat this exercise with two sites found in a search on a topic of your own choosing.

2.5 READING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLEX ACADEMIC WRITING

Articles written for a more specialized academic audience can be very difficult for a newcomer to understand. For this exercise, you may be asked to read and respond to the piece by Jane Tompkins (p. 289). This is a source from which examples of claims and evidence were drawn in Chapter 1. Tompkins' piece is a very unconventional scholarly article, because it is constructed as a personal account of the writer's research process, not as an impersonal account or finished argument. Tompkins breaks some of the rules of academic writing in order to make a point about the nature and limitations of historical research. Even though it may not be the best model for typical academic research writing, it is useful to read because it shows the process of academic discovery in action—like the personal account of your research that you may be assigned in later chapters. Reading Tompkins' inquiry demonstrates the experience of research clearly driven by a question, or, more accurately, by a sequence of questions. Tompkins makes a complicated argument, and you should expect to read it several times in order to understand what the author is saying.

1. During the first reading, use the annotation strategies described at the beginning of the chapter. On this first reading, highlight the thesis statement—or question—and the first

- sentence of every paragraph. Highlight her cues to audience, purpose, and argument. In the margins, ask questions, record responses, and mark parts that you do not understand.
2. Use the Focus Points: Reading Arguments (p. 21) to assist your second reading of this piece. As you read, notice how the author moves back and forth between summarizing and responding to sources.
 3. Reread the piece a third time, this time identifying the sentences or parts of sentences that indicate the author's responses to sources consulted. In the Tompkins piece, what you do not identify as response should be primarily summaries of and quotations from the works she consulted.
 4. List the cues the author uses to show when and how she is representing the thinking of others and when she is representing her own thinking.
 5. With a discussion group, consider how the author's summaries prepare for and justify her responses to the works consulted. How does the author use quotations from sources in this piece? On what grounds does she consider the sources to be authoritative?
 6. Consider the following questions with a discussion group:
 - Given Tompkins' discovery that researchers always see the past and that witnesses perceive the present through eyes affected by their own cultural assumptions, what is the value of doing historical research at all?
 - How do Tompkins' questions change and develop as she works her way through the topic of "Indians"?
 - What is the effect of Tompkins' violating the convention that academic writers not include personal experiences in their research? Why might she have chosen to present an unconventional ethos in this article?
 7. Finally, use these informal reflections as a start for writing a response to some aspect of the author's piece. For example, you might consider Jane Tompkins' use of "I," her idea of history, her dismissal of absolute objectivity, or her conclusion that meaning in history may be tentative, but is still possible. Compare your responses to those of another writer in the class who responded to a similar aspect of the reading.
 8. Reread your response and consider with your group on what warrant(s) you grounded it. How do warrants you would accept differ from the author's warrants, and from the warrants of other members of your discussion group? Describe audiences that would and would not share them. How might you need to reframe your response to incline a reader to consider your response, even though he or she does not share your warrants?

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