

## Let's Talk About Sources Script

Slide 2: Many people in higher education use the term source to describe different things for different contexts, such as a researcher's source of data. For this tutorial, we define source as a single piece of information such as an online article, book, or video. Some of your professors may have used the term in the same context in their syllabi or assignment descriptions. For example, use academic sources to support your argument or cite the sources you used in your paper.

Slide 3: So how do you select sources for your research assignments? Do you select the first five sources that come up in a search result list? Or do you select sources based off of careful evaluation? Don't settle for the first five OK sources. If you start using the best available sources for research as a student, these skills will carry over into your personal and professional life after you leave OU.

Slide 4: When you are researching, try to be flexible and open to new types of sources. There is no one correct way to evaluate and select sources, but using key concepts of context, authorship, and evidence will help during the evaluation and selection process.

Slide 5: Think about your information need. Why do you need to find sources? Did your professor put limits on the types of sources you can use in your paper? Putting your information need into the context of your research assignment will help you understand what types of sources you need to find.

Slide 6: Who is the author or creator of the information source and why is this person qualified to write on this topic? Check to see if the source lists the author's educational background, occupation, or other publications. What is the author's point of view? How does the author's point of view create a bias in the presentation of information? Sometimes you need unbiased facts and evidence to support your research. But other times you might need to include an author's perspective, and that's OK as long as you acknowledge the author's point of view in your research.

Slide 7: What kind of evidence does the author use to support their writing? Does the source have a reference list, bibliography, or footnotes? Was the evidence reviewed by someone else? Is there other research that can confirm the author's evidence? You should also consider when the evidence was published or last updated.

Slide 8: Remember, there are many paths to research and discovery, so don't limit yourself to the easiest path. Go to [libraries.ou.edu/askus](https://libraries.ou.edu/askus) for more help with sources!