Books, encyclopedias, and periodicals such as scholarly journals, trade publications, general interest magazines, and newspapers are all important text-based sources of information. Each type of publication has a purpose and at times will be the best choice. Each type of publication may be printed as hard copy or published online. This list is in alphabetical order.

**BOOKS**

Books cover virtually any topic, fact or fiction. Books that synthesize a lot of information on one topic may be the most useful for your research. However, you may need only one or two chapters.

Use a Book...
- when looking for an extensive amount of information on a topic
- to put your topic in context with other important issues
- to find historical or background information
- for summaries of research to support an argument
- to find bibliographies that point to other relevant research

Examples of Books:
- *The Neuropsychology of Asian-Americans* by Daryl E.M. Fujii
- *My Sister's Keeper: a Novel* by Jodi Picoult

**ENCYCLOPEDIAS**

Encyclopedias contain factual articles on many subjects. Use encyclopedias for background information or an overview of your topic. General encyclopedias provide overviews on a wide variety of topics. Subject encyclopedias focus on one field of study.

Use an Encyclopedia...
- for background information on a topic
- to find key ideas, important dates or concepts

Examples of Encyclopedias
- *Encyclopedia Americana* (general encyclopedia)
- *Wikipedia* (online-only general encyclopedia)

**MAGAZINES**

Magazines publish articles of popular interest and current events. Articles are written by journalists for the general public. Advertisements are included. They are typically published monthly or weekly.

Use a Magazine...
- to find information or opinions about popular culture
- to find up-to-date information about current events
to find articles written for people who are not necessarily specialists, theorists, or researchers in the field

Examples of Magazines:
- Good Housekeeping
- Southern Living
- U.S. News and World Report (online only)

NEWSPAPERS
Newspapers include articles about current events and are a good source for local information. Like magazines and trade publications, articles are written by professional journalists rather than scholars or researchers. Most newspapers are published daily.

Use a Newspaper...
- to find current information about international, national and local events
- to find editorials, commentaries, expert or popular opinions

Examples of Newspapers:
- New York Times
- Wichita Eagle

SCHOLARLY JOURNALS
Scholarly journals usually cover very specific topics or narrow fields of research. Scholarly articles are written by scholars or researchers in an academic or professional field. Peer reviewed or refereed journals means the articles in that publication go through a review process before they are accepted for publication. Journals are usually published only a few times a year, such as quarterly or monthly.

Use a Journal...
- to find out what has been studied on your topic
- for first-hand accounts of original research studies
- to find bibliographies that point to other relevant research

Examples of Journals:
- Journal of Business Research
- Multicultural Review

TRADE PUBLICATIONS
Trade journals or magazines are written for practitioners or professionals of an applied field. Although trade publications may be specialized, they do not usually include theoretical concepts or reports of original research. A subscription may be included with a membership to a professional organization. They usually include advertisements, and are typically published monthly or weekly.

Use a trade publication…
- for current trends and news in fields related specifically to a business or industry
- to analyze a particular industry when applying for a job or preparing for an interview

Examples of Trade publications:
- Business Review Weekly
- Education Week

Angela Paul, Instruction and Outreach Librarian