

Types of Information

Information Type	Description	Sample Sources
Scholarly	<p>Author: has some degree of authority in the field; typically has an academic post or is a researcher</p> <p>Audience: other experts in that field</p> <p>Purpose: advances a field a study by reporting new findings or ideas, increase author's authority and credentials in field</p>	<p>Where to find: Books, articles in scholarly journals, websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> ➤ <i>The American Journal of Political Science</i> ➤ Research findings on a website ➤ <i>Guns, Germs, and Steel: the Fates of Human Societies</i> by Jared Diamondⁱ
Professional/Trade	<p>Author: member of a profession or trade but not necessarily a researcher</p> <p>Audience: members of a particular field or trade</p> <p>Purpose: informs, promotes, and generally strengthens the profession</p>	<p>Where to find: Trade magazines & journals, association websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>American Libraries</i> ➤ <i>Fire Command</i> ➤ <i>Nursing Times</i>
Government	<p>Author: varies (could be government employee, elected official, or expert in a particular field)</p> <p>Audience: varies (could be public, elected official, or government agency)</p> <p>Purpose: generally created to run the government, inform decision makers or inform the public</p>	<p>Where to find: Printed government publications and official government websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Congressional Record</i> ➤ <i>Supreme Court Reporter</i> ➤ Studies conducted by government agencies
Facts, Definitions and Statistics	<p>Author: staff writers</p> <p>Audience: general public or researchers</p> <p>Purpose: presents facts, definitions and statistics with little explanation or evaluation</p>	<p>Where to find: Books and websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>World Almanac</i> ➤ <i>Statistical Abstracts</i> ➤ <i>American Heritage Dictionary</i>
Overviews	<p>Author: staff writers, freelance writers or scholars</p> <p>Audience: general public</p> <p>Purpose: provides overviews and background on a subject</p>	<p>Where to find: Encyclopedias, dictionaries, other books, websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> ➤ <i>About.com</i>
Entertainment/Popular	<p>Author: non-expert in a field usually with a degree in journalism or training as a writer</p> <p>Audience: general public</p> <p>Purpose: presents information in an interesting manner that does not necessarily focus on depth of coverage</p>	<p>Where to find: Magazines, websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Rolling Stone</i> ➤ <i>Glamour</i> ➤ <i>Entertainment Weekly</i> ➤ <i>Cosmo</i> ➤ <i>The Sporting News</i>
News	<p>Author: non-expert in a field usually with a degree in journalism or training as a writer</p> <p>Audience: general public</p> <p>Purpose: reports current events in a timely fashion possibly influenced by editorial policy</p>	<p>Where to find: Newspapers, news magazines, news websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>New York Times</i> ➤ www.msnbc.com ➤ <i>TIME</i> ➤ <i>Washington Post</i>
Special Interest/Opinion	<p>Author: typically a non-expert in a field, but could be an expert expressing his or her opinion</p> <p>Audience: general public/people subscribing to a particular point of view</p> <p>Purpose: advances a particular point of view or expresses an individual's point of view (the attribution of authority may heavily depend on the beliefs of the reader)</p>	<p>Where to find: Books, magazines, websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>We're Right, They're Wrong</i> by James Carvilleⁱⁱ ➤ National Rifle Association Web site—http://www.nra.org
Unsubstantiated or Uncredited Information	<p>Author: unable to substantiate identity of the author or author's credentials do not carry authority</p> <p>Audience: general public or unable to determine</p> <p>Purpose: hobby or personal interest</p>	<p>Where to find: Websites, info from friends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ personal websites ➤ blogs ➤ note found in the library garbage can

ⁱ Jared Diamond. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: the Fates of Human Societies*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997.

ⁱⁱ James Carville. *We're Right and They're Wrong: A Handbook for Spirited Progressives*. New York: Random House, 1996.

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