<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Scholarly Sources</th>
<th>Professional or Trade Sources</th>
<th>Popular Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>American Journal of Psychology</td>
<td>Advertising Age</td>
<td>Psychology Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal of the American Medical Association</td>
<td>Education Week</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American History Review Quarterly</td>
<td>Supply and Demand Chain Executive</td>
<td>National Geographic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Scholars, researchers and students</td>
<td>Other members of the profession or trade</td>
<td>General audience, all readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authors</strong></td>
<td>Scholars, researchers, and experts in the field of study. Author's credentials in the field are established (e.g., institutional affiliation, maybe degrees)</td>
<td>Members of the profession or trade, specialized journalists, or technical writers. Credentials are usually not provided</td>
<td>Reporters, usually not experts on the subject. Authors may not have special qualifications for writing article; credentials are usually not provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bibliography/References</strong></td>
<td>Sources cited in footnotes and/or bibliography. Usually extensive list of references.</td>
<td>Documentation of sources is not required, though sometimes brief bibliographies of further readings are included</td>
<td>Sources are not cited or cited informally. No reference list provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Field-specific language/jargon; requires reader to be previously informed about field.</td>
<td>Include jargon and terms that are commonly used in the profession or trade.</td>
<td>Written in everyday language accessible to any general reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To report results of original research, experimentation or analysis.</td>
<td>Provide practical information for members of a profession or industry, including topics like news, trends, products, and research summaries.</td>
<td>Provide broad, general information and entertainment. Secondary but not &quot;original&quot; research (the author didn't conduct the actual lab work, math, or theoretical analysis.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
<td>Dense text-based pages. May contain complicated graphs or charts. Usually will <em>not</em> include color glossy pages or photographs. Very little advertising, if any.</td>
<td>Moderate number of advertisements targeted to the interests of the members of a profession, industry, or organization.</td>
<td>Attractive appearance – colorful. Advertisements. Heavily illustrated. Glossy paper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criteria for Evaluating Information Sources

1. Authorship
   - Who wrote the information? What are his or her credentials and professional affiliation?
   - If there isn't an author listed, is the information authored by a government, corporate, or non-profit agency?

2. Publishing Body
   - Articles
     - Is the article from a popular magazine, a substantive news source, or a scholarly journal?
     - Can you tell who the intended audience of the periodical is (general readers, experts, practitioners, etc.)?
     - Is the purpose of the periodical to inform, educate, persuade, entertain, sell, etc.?
   - Books
     - Is the book published by an academic press or a commercial publisher?
     - If a commercial publisher, do they publish primarily scholarly or popular books?
   - Web Sites
     - To what domain does the site belong (edu, gov, org, com, net, etc.), and is this information important for your assessment of a site?
     - Is the name of the individual or organization responsible for the overall site provided? Is there a link to information about their mission or purpose?
   ➔ In general, popular sources do not require extensive prior knowledge of a topic. Scholarly sources assume a greater level of sophistication and knowledge on the part of the reader. See the other side of this sheet for more information.

3. Point of View or Bias
   - Is the information provided as fact or opinion?
   - What kind of evidence is provided?
   - Is the information consistent with information from other sources?

4. References to other sources
   - Does the source include a bibliography or links to other web sites?
   - What types of sources are cited (primary/secondary, popular/scholarly, current/historical, etc.)

5. Relevance to your topic and assignment
   - Is the language and approach suitable to your level of expertise on the subject?
   - What are your biases or assumptions on this subject and your expectations for the source?
   - Does the source provide information that supports or challenges your point of view? Does it verify information from other sources you're using?

6. Format, Organization, and Appearance
   - Does the individual source or overall work include:
     - Advertisements
     - Table of contents and/or index
     - Graphics - photographs, charts, tables, images

Adapted from: http://library.uwb.edu/guides/eval.html