

# Research Practice

Lesson 4

# What is Research?

- ▶ The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.
  - ▶ Dictionary.com
- ▶ What are some things people research?



# Primary versus Secondary sources

- ▶ Primary sources are first-hand accounts of a topic
- ▶ These include
  - ▶ Journals/diaries
  - ▶ Oral histories
  - ▶ Photographs
  - ▶ Historical documents
    - ▶ Census records
    - ▶ Government documents
- ▶ Secondary sources describe, discuss, interpret, comment upon, analyze, evaluate, summarize, and process primary sources.
  - ▶ Book reviews
  - ▶ Movie reviews
  - ▶ Scholarly journals or articles
  - ▶ Anything that discusses or evaluates someone else's original work

# Using the Oral Histories as a Source

- ▶ How to generate strong key words
  - ▶ What are you looking for?
  - ▶ What keywords relate to what you're searching for?
- ▶ Use the indexes and transcripts to guide you
- ▶ Be mindful of who is talking

# Class Practice

- ▶ Searching for an oral history that discusses anti-Semitism
  - ▶ Who is talking about anti-Semitism?
  - ▶ What is the time frame for when they experienced it?
  - ▶ What types of experiences do they describe?

# Good Research of Secondary Sources Requires...

- ▶ Patience
- ▶ Asking good questions
- ▶ Going beneath the surface
- ▶ Finding reliable sources
- ▶ Focusing your scope
- ▶ Proper citation

# What are your goals of research?

- ▶ To begin your research ask yourself
  - ▶ What am I wanting to find out?
  - ▶ What am I curious about?
- ▶ Think carefully and specifically

# Don't trust every website...

- ▶ Not every website is going to be reliable
- ▶ Take the time to evaluate your sources
- ▶ Ask yourself
  - ▶ Who created it?
    - ▶ Does this website have authority?
    - ▶ Is it trustworthy?
    - ▶ **Is it credible????**
  - ▶ Is this information current?
  - ▶ Does this website prompt virus warnings?



# What makes a source credible?

- ▶ Journals by authors respected and well known in their specific fields
- ▶ Websites from credible institutions like Department of Justice or University-affiliated institutions
- ▶ Websites:
  - ▶ The more information available, the more credible the website.
  - ▶ If there is a specific author, the audience is clear, the purpose is informative not biased, and the information is regularly updated, the source is credible
  - ▶ Websites ending in .edu and .gov. are usually credible
- ▶ Remember that there are always exceptions to these rules!

# The first result isn't always the best

- ▶ You may be tempted to go with the first result that pops up, but there could be better sources that do not pop up immediately
- ▶ Wikipedia is usually the first result
  - ▶ This is a good basis for research. It gives great background information, but isn't always a great source to use depending on your audience!
- ▶ Look beyond the first result!
- ▶ Google vs. Google Scholar

# Plagiarism is unacceptable

- ▶ Plagiarism is the failure to cite
- ▶ If you use a quote or idea from a source you **MUST** cite it
- ▶ If you even think you may be plagiarizing, you probably are...
- ▶ To be safe, give credit where it is earned
- ▶ There are many types of citations (MLA, APA, Chicago Style)
  - ▶ For our purposes we will use *MLA*

# MLA Citations

- ▶ According to Purdue Owl, these are the things you will need when doing a proper citation
  - ▶ Author.
  - ▶ Title of source.
  - ▶ Title of container,
  - ▶ Other contributors,
  - ▶ Version,
  - ▶ Number,
  - ▶ Publisher,
  - ▶ Publication date,
  - ▶ Location.
  
- ▶ Purdue Owl: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

# MLA Citation Cont. (provided by Purdue Owl)

## ▶ Entire website citation:

- ▶ Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number, Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available), URL, DOI or permalink. Date of access (if applicable).
- ▶ *The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008, owl.english.purdue.edu/owl. Accessed 23 Apr. 2008.

## ▶ Article on a website citation:

- ▶ For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. If the publisher is the same as the website name, only list it once.
- ▶ "Athlete's Foot - Topic Overview." *WebMD*, 25 Sept. 2014, www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/tc/athletes-foot-topic-overview.

## MLA Citation Cont.

- ▶ When using a direct quote from a text, be sure to say who the author is as well as a page number. Your audience should be able to look at the formal citation to find what article or book the information is from.

# Pro Tips

- ▶ Use Google Scholar when looking for scholarly articles
- ▶ Use trust-worthy websites when searching for background information
- ▶ The news can be a good source
  - ▶ All news is told from a certain perspective or point-of-view
  - ▶ The best news sources are fair to the people they quote and attempt to tell stories without bias or “slant”
- ▶ Be mindful of where the internet takes you

# Class Practice

- ▶ I am researching varying Jewish observances of Shabbat
- ▶ How can I tell what is a good source to use?
- ▶ Where can I get background info?
- ▶ What qualifies as a scholarly source?





# Partner Practice

- ▶ Find a partner
- ▶ Pick a topic
  - ▶ The Torah
  - ▶ Challah
  - ▶ Sitting Shiva
  - ▶ Purim
  - ▶ Jewish Weddings
- ▶ Find 2 reliable sources about these topics