Primary Sources: Materials written or created by people who were present at events, either as participants or observers. These are original documents that have not been interpreted, evaluated, or analyzed. They are raw materials created at the moment of an event or later by a participant or observer of the event itself.

**ADVANTAGES:**
- Firsthand information can help the researcher understand the attitudes and beliefs of a particular time period
- May contain very specific information

**DISADVANTAGES:**
- Limited perspective may need interpretation
- May be biased

**EXAMPLES:** Letters, Diaries, Speeches, Travelogues, Photographs, Autobiographies, Interviews, Emails, Public Documents such as Census data, First-Person Newspaper/Magazine Articles, Polls, Government and Medical Records, Journals

Secondary Sources: Records of events that were written or created after the events occurred by people who were not directly involved in the events. These are sources that interpret or analyze something well after the fact. Generally, they are at least one step removed from the event. These sources interpret and analyze primary sources.

**ADVANTAGES:**
- Sometimes include excerpts from many primary sources
- Often have a broad perspective and many viewpoints
- Good for getting an overview of a topic

**DISADVANTAGES:**
- Only as reliable as the sources used
- May be biased

**EXAMPLES:** Encyclopedias, Textbooks, Biographies, Some Newspaper and Magazine Articles, Documentaries and other Films

Source Types

There are several types of sources that you may wish to consult as you prepare your annotated bibliography and outline.

1. **Books**: Include biographies,
2. **Periodicals**: Include magazines (trade, popular, news, or opinion) and journals
3. **Databases**: Online storehouses primarily comprised of past periodical articles
4. **Internet Sources**: The most reliable internet sources will end in .gov or .edu
5. **Reference Materials**: Include encyclopedias, almanacs, dictionaries, atlases, etc.
   **NOTE**: These types of sources are not recommended on this research project, but may be permitted on projects later in the year.
6. **Interviews**: Often, we can glean a great deal of information from interviews with significant individuals related to our topic.

Source Requirements for the English I G/T Research Project

1. Credible Internet Source
2. Database Source
3. Free Choice
EVALUATING SOURCE CREDIBILITY (CARRDSS)

WILL JUST ANY OLD SOURCE DO? NO. When researching, it is crucial that we determine the CREDIBILITY (trustworthiness) of the source and its writer. Not just any old source will do!

HOW DO WE KNOW IF A SOURCE IS CREDIBLE?
There are seven (7) BIG ISSUES to consider when determining whether or not a source is credible. To determine credibility of a source, use the CARRDSS method:

1. **Credibility of the Writer/Author**
   a. Who is the author, and what are his/her qualifications?
   b. What are his/her credentials? Is s/he qualified to write about this topic?
   c. Have they published anything else on the topic at all?
   d. If the document is anonymous, what is known about the publisher or organization?
   e. With what organization, institution, or company is the writer associated?

2. **Accuracy**
   a. Is the information reliable?
   b. Can facts, statistics, or other information be verified through other sources?
   c. Are there vague or sweeping generalizations that aren’t backed up with evidence?

3. **Reliability**
   a. Does the source present a particular view or bias?
   b. Is the information presented objectively?
   c. Are the opinions balanced?
   d. What is the author’s bias, or perspective?
   e. Is the language objective or emotional?
   f. Does the author have a hidden motive or special interest?

4. **Relevance**
   a. Does this information directly support my hypothesis/thesis?
   b. Does it help to answer my research question?

5. **Date (Currency)**
   a. How current is the information?
   b. When was the original date of the publication?
   c. Has the material been revised since?
   d. How long is too long to be relevant to your topic?

6. **Sources Behind the Text**
   a. Did the author use and cite reliable, credible sources?
   b. What types of sources are used? Primary? Secondary?

7. **Scope**
   a. How well does the source cover the topic? Does this source address my thesis/question in a comprehensive or peripheral way?
   b. Do you think there’s enough evidence offered?
   c. Does the source present a scholarly or a popular treatment of my topic?
   d. **Ask yourself:** Could I find better information somewhere else?

There is one source that is **NEVER** credible… Wikipedia!