



# Sources of educational research

Decision-makers contend with information about educational interventions and programs claiming to be effective for improving students' learning. However, not all of those claims are supported by high-quality research. Decision-makers and practitioners need to be able to effectively review the research base.

MORE CREDIBLE

## Academic books

### BENEFITS

- In-depth and broad examination of a topic but with a focused view
- Include citations and bibliographies and many include original research

### LIMITATIONS

- Less current; longer lag between an event, idea or discovery and a book's publication
- Intended for an academic or technical audience (e.g., researchers, academics, students, and professionals) and not for general readers



## Academic journals

### BENEFITS

- Narrowly focused topic
- Include citations and bibliographies
- Include original research critically evaluated by peers\*

### LIMITATIONS

- Usually offer a more current view than books but not as current as newspapers and magazines
- Intended for an academic or technical audience and not for general readers



LESS CREDIBLE

## Newspapers, popular magazines, and television

### BENEFITS

- Cover recent developments and events
- Intended for general audience without any particular expertise or advanced education

### LIMITATIONS

- Limited coverage without much historical overview or context
- Rarely include citations and bibliographies; may refer to research studies, but do not contain original research



## Popular press books

### BENEFITS

- Offer more information regarding a specific topic
- More likely to include citations and bibliographies than newspapers, popular magazines, or television

### LIMITATIONS

- Intent is often to entertain or inform in a broad, general sense
- Often do not contain original research
- Published by a commercial publisher



## \*What is peer review?

Peer review provides a measure of quality control, however, not all education journals are peer-reviewed. Many peer-reviewed articles include an abstract, literature review, methodology, results, conclusion, and references sections. They seldom contain advertisements and will sometimes include publication information such as date of initial submission, date for revisions, and final acceptance date.

## Accessing research-based information

[Google Scholar](#) focuses on the scholarly literature available on the Internet and includes articles, theses, books, abstracts, government resources, professional societies, online repositories, and more.

The [What Works Clearinghouse](#) is a central and trusted source of scientific evidence for what works in education.

[ERIC](#) is an index of materials, many of which are free and peer-reviewed, that can help support the work of education policymakers.

Information in this infographic is supported by IES/NCEE's Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast at Florida State University (Contract ED-IES-17-C-0011) as resources and examples for the viewer's convenience. Their inclusion is not intended as an endorsement by the Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast or its funding source, the Institute of Education Sciences.

In addition, the instructional practices shown in this infographic are not intended to mandate, direct, or control a State's, local educational agency's, or school's specific instructional content, academic achievement system and assessments, curriculum, or program of instruction. State and local programs may use any instructional content, achievement system and assessments, curriculum, or program of instruction they wish.

