

### 3. Conduct your Research

A common (and ultimately inaccurate) thing that many teachers recommend is only using sites that end in “.edu”, “.gov”, or “.org.” The problem with this system is that it cuts out a lot of really good information, and in a lot of cases doesn’t ensure a better quality of information. Anybody can register a domain as “.org,” and anyone affiliated with a college or university can publish to their websites (“.edu”) so in both cases, these types of websites are unmoderated. Even “.gov” sites can be published by people affiliated with the government who may have various political or social motivations. In many ways, this makes these sites just as likely to have misleading or bad information as any other type of website.

#### Determining a Quality Website

In order to determine a quality website, consider the following:

##### 1. Purpose of the Assignment

Having a biased source does not necessarily mean the source is bad. If you are researching the motivation of a group or organization, you should use their official website, even though you should be aware that they are biased toward a specific perspective. As a matter of fact, the official website for a political candidate is the better site to cite when it comes to their policy proposals than an “unbiased 3<sup>rd</sup> party” website (Why listen to what the news says John Doe wants to do when you can read John Doe’s website?) However, since they have an agenda, it may be better to cite the 3<sup>rd</sup> party cite when it comes to the impact of their policies, since they’re obviously going to report the best possible outcome to support their ideas.

##### 2. Consensus

Finding consensus among sources is very important. In research papers, the more sources that agree on a certain fact or idea the better. You should read your sources carefully, and if they disagree on certain points, you should investigate those differences further until you can come to a conclusion.

##### 3. Citations

Websites and scholarly articles that cite their information with footnotes are much better than sites that do not. Even Wikipedia does this fairly well when compared with other sources, and for that reason can be used as a source as long as it agrees with your other information. Of course, since most of their citations link directly to more scholarly articles, it is better to use their source articles than

Wikipedia itself.

##### 4. Open-Sourced vs. Closed Websites

The only problem with Wikipedia is that it is open-sourced, which means that it is open for anyone to log into and edit. Since there are a great deal of contributors to the content of the site, over the long-term this tends to regulate the content since there are millions of eyes reading the articles and correcting inaccuracies. It is possible that when you access the content, it hasn’t been corrected, was changed by a person with an agenda, or inaccurate information. Wikipedia asks its users to cite their sources when writing the articles, and for that reason, it is much better to use wikipedia’s sources (when available) than Wikipedia itself.

**NEWS** On July 17, 2005, The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press conducted a national poll in the United States concerning evolution. In regards to beliefs about how life developed, 42% of the respondents said that “living things have existed in their present form 26% said that they had evolved through time as a result of “natural process such as natural selection,” while 18% said that evolution occurs being. In response to the question of whether creationism should be taught in public schools instead of evolution, 38% said yes and 49% creationism should be taught along with evolution. 64% said yes and 26% said no. The older the respondent, the more likely he/she was favor of creationism. The sample consisted of 2,000 people and the margin of error was ±3.5%.

**POSTSCRIPT** For additional information regarding “creation science” and “intelligent design”, look at the 2007 PBS Nova documentary lecture by Dr. Kenneth Miller linked below.



While this website [http://anthro.palomar.edu/evolve/evolve\\_3.htm](http://anthro.palomar.edu/evolve/evolve_3.htm) doesn’t provide footnotes, they do provide links to sources that support the ideas given in the article. The suggested sources are a lecture from a University Professor and PBS Documentary.

##### Footnotes

1. Scheffler, H. and Elsasser, H., *Physics of the Galaxy and Interstellar Matter*, Springer-Verlag (1987) Berlin, pp. 352-353, 401-413.
2. Scheffler, H. and Elsasser, H., *Physics of the Galaxy and Interstellar Matter*, Springer-Verlag (1987) Berlin, pp. 352-353, 401-413.
3. D. Zaritsky, H-W. Rix, and M. Rieke, Inner spiral structure of the galaxy M51, *Nature* 364:313-315 (July 22, 1993).
4. Davies, K., Distribution of supernova remnants in the galaxy, *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Creationism*, vol. II, Creation Science Fellowship (1994), Pittsburgh, PA, pp. 175-184, order from <http://www.creationicc.org/>.
5. Steidl, P. F., Planets, comets, and asteroids, *Design and Origins in Astronomy*, pp. 73-106, G. Mulfinger, ed., Creation Research Society Books (1983), order from <http://www.creationresearch.org/>.
6. Whipple, F. L., Background of modern comet theory, *Nature* 263:15-19 (2 September 1976). Levison, H. F. et al. See also: The mass disruption of Oort Cloud comets, *Science* 296:2212-2215 (21 June 2002).
7. Milliman, John D. and James P. M. Syvitski, Geomorphic/tectonic control of sediment discharge to the ocean: the importance of small mountainous rivers, *The Journal of Geology*, vol. 100, pp. 525-544 (1992).
8. Hay, W. W., et al., Mass/age distribution and composition of sediments on the ocean floor and the global rate of sediment subduction, *Journal of Geophysical Research*, 93(B12):14,933-14,940 (10 December 1988).
9. Hay, W. W., et al., Mass/age distribution and composition of sediments on the ocean floor and the global rate of sediment subduction, *Journal of Geophysical Research*, 93(B12):14,933-14,940 (10 December 1988).
10. Meybeck, M., Concentrations des eaux fluviales en elements majeurs et apports en solution aux oceans, *Revue de Géologie Dynamique et de Géographie Physique* 21(3):215 (1979).

This website article contains a total of 38 citations to different scientific studies. <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/age-of-the-universe/evidence-for-a-young-world/>

## (web) Cites to Site

There are three types of websites that you will need to find and cite in order to complete this assignment. You may use the suggested websites, but they are intended to be a starting point, and not a complete reference section for you to use.

### 1. Informational Websites

This assignment will require you to cite at least 1 source that explains the theory/belief about how the diversity of life came to exist on earth. Since this purpose of this source is simply to get reliable information about that particular perspective, any website from an official research or religious group will work.

Source 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Scientific Websites

This assignment requires you to investigate the scientific processes that are used to verify the theory/belief. You should cite at least 1 source that explains the scientific explanation for:

#### a. Scientific Process for determining the age of the earth

Source 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_

#### b. Scientific Process for explaining rock strata and location of fossils

Source 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_

#### c. Scientific Process for explaining natural selection (some beliefs may use scientific processes to disprove natural selection/evolution. In that case, this section would consist of scientific arguments and studies against natural selection)

Source 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Religious/Philosophical/Logical Sources (optional)

It is also appropriate in this research paper to support your position with sources that discuss logical conclusions or problems with other belief systems. It is appropriate to support a religious position with sources that rely on the holy text that applies to your belief system. The difference between these sites and #1 is that these sites are not simply explaining a position, but are attempting to appeal to logic, reason, or religious interpretation to support the idea that their claims are the best explanation.

Source 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_