

Comparing Journalistic Reports to Primary Sources of Research, Part II

Step 1: Finding the source(s)

Based on the claim made the news piece from the first assignment, try to find the scientific research article or other scientific results (e.g., polling numbers) on which the claim was based. There may be more than one, in which case, I recommend that you try to find a maximum of two of the articles. If you find two primary sources, you might want to find sources that have different or complementary results. The reference librarians are also great resources for this project.

Step 2: Reading the source(s)

Read through the article(s). Parts may be difficult or technical, but do the best that you can to understand it. We'll take some time in class to review difficult sections.

Step 3: Analysis and comparison

As best you can, review the precise wording of the scientific article or report and consider the following questions:

- What claims does the primary source actually make (rather than imply)?
- What claims does the primary source imply?
- What information does the primary source give you about the support that the researcher has for the claim?
- Is there any explicit information about the way in which the data was collected or the experimental methods used?
- Is there any information about who collected the data or reported the results?

Consider how these may or may not differ from your considerations of the news story in the first assignment.

Step 4: Writing

Write a 1-2 page (double-spaced, Times or similar font, approx. 600 words) reflection about the news story and the primary source. Compare and contrast the claims made and implied by the news piece with the claims made and implied by the primary source. Does the news story seem to be a fair representation of the primary source?

Step 5: Turn it in

Submit your paper on Moodle in MS Word Format (.doc or .docx) or Rich Text Format (.rtf).