What To Do When Your Instructor Says:
Read A Scholarly Article

Periodicals are publications that appear regularly (on a daily, weekly, or monthly schedule) and are intended to be published on an ongoing basis. Examples of periodicals (sometimes called serials) are magazines, journals and newspapers.

**Popular periodicals** (or magazines) are those you subscribe to or buy in the supermarket. Examples include *Newsweek, People,* and *Psychology Today,* as well as mass circulation newspapers. Magazine articles tend to be brief, topics are current, and the writing avoids specialized terminology. Articles from popular periodicals are rarely appropriate for graduate assignments.

**Trade and professional periodicals** relate to specific fields and are often part of membership in an association. Examples are *Nursing, HR Focus,* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* Trade and professional periodicals examine news, trends, and issues within a certain professional field. The writing often utilizes specialized terminology. Articles from professional and trade publications are acceptable for some graduate assignments.

**Scholarly journals** contain research results and in-depth articles. If your instructor asks you to select an article from a scholarly journal, look for a publication that has some or all of the following features:

- The overall tone of the journal is serious and academic.
- In many cases, the word *Journal* appears in the title of the publication.
- The journal is sponsored by a professional association, learned society, research center or institute, or academic institution.
- Members of editorial or advisory boards are listed.
- Articles submitted to the journal are sent to referees for a pre-publication evaluation. This means that all submitted articles are reviewed by a board of experts and judged for quality, relevance, timeliness, and credibility. Articles that do not satisfy the rigorous academic standards of the journal are not published.
- Authors are researchers or academicians.
- An author's credentials are always given.
- An abstract briefly summarizing the content precedes each article.
- Articles are substantial in length, many times running as long as twenty or thirty pages.
- The writing style is scholarly and the vocabulary specialized.
- The article contains tables, charts, diagrams or statistical formulae.
- There are few, if any, illustrations or advertisements.
- References to other publications (i.e. a bibliography) are cited at the end of the article or as footnotes.
What makes a journal scholarly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarly</th>
<th>Professional/Trade</th>
<th>Popular magazines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious look, lots of text, few or no advertisements</td>
<td>Focus on one industry or profession, lots of advertisements</td>
<td>Attractive covers, lots of photographs, appeal to wide audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articles written by scholars/experts, often report original research</td>
<td>Articles written by professionals, use of industry-specific terminology</td>
<td>Articles written by staff or free-lance authors, use easy to understand language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Always cite sources in footnotes or bibliographies</td>
<td>Sometimes cite sources</td>
<td>Almost never cite sources</td>
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