



Earned Scholarly Average (ESA) or "How can I tell if an article is scholarly?"

This worksheet provides a way to help you think about the scholarly worth of a source, or in other words, how reliable a source is as evidence to support or disprove a thesis. Most scholars do not use a point system like this to figure out a source's ESA, but this worksheet can be a valuable tool for you to use to practice evaluating material.

Points	Journal Article
	Age of source: 3 points if the article is five years old or newer. Subtract 1 point for each year older than 5. 0 points if older than 10 years.
	Author: 1 point if the author has written on this topic before. 1 point if the author works for a college or university.
	Type of source: 3 points for a peer reviewed scholarly journal. 1 point for a professional magazine. 0 points for a popular magazine (e.g. <i>Time</i> , <i>Newsweek</i>).
	Bibliography: Add 1 point if the article or book has a bibliography or reference section.
	Footnote/References: Add 1 point if the article or book has footnotes or endnotes.
	Length: Add 1 point if the article is longer than two pages.
	Total Points

ESA Scale:

6 points or above = Good source, provided it is relevant to your topic.

2 - 5 points = Worth a look and further consideration.

0 - 1 points = Possible background material, but keep looking.

Adapted from:

Schroeder, R. & Griffith, J. Case Study 5 in *The role of the library in the first college year*. (2007). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. (Judith Griffith works at Wartburg College as an Associate Professor of English).

Please Note: If any material in this worksheet is unclear, please contact your instructor.