

UGS 303: Sustaining a Planet, Dr. Banner & Dr. Allen, Fall 2008

Find a Peer-Reviewed Article

Instructions: The accompanying Guide will walk you through the steps needed to find an article and evaluate it.

Part 1: Turn your topic into a search

- 1) What is the topic of your Science in the News thread? Think more specifically than “science” or “sustainability.” What particular issue, world region, environment or aspect is the article reporting on? State this in a sentence.

- 2) Underline the key concepts/keywords above and write them at the top of each column.

- 3) Brainstorm alternate keywords (search terms). Think of broader, narrower and related terms for each of your concepts. [Example: Global warming -- climate change, greenhouse effect]. Use as many columns and rows as is useful for your topic.

O R	Concept 1	AND	Concept 2	AND	Concept 3

Part 2: Find a peer-reviewed article.

- 1) Select a database. Use the Find Articles section of the Guide. Which database did you choose?

What does it contain (include date ranges)? Why did you choose it for this topic?

- 2) Search the database using the keywords you brainstormed above. Write down your search.
(ex: permafrost and global warming and methane)

- 3) How many results did you get?

- 4) Did you revise your search? If so, how did you revise it? How did it change your search results?

- 5) Find and read a useful article from your search results. (You might want to look past the first few search results to find the best article!) If the article isn't available in full text in the database you are searching, use the Guide to help you locate the full article.

- 6) Write down the article citation.

Part 3: Evaluate and reflect upon the peer-reviewed article

- 1) What are the author's credentials? (Hint: Scholarly journals often indicate an author's affiliation. Try Googling the author to find out more about him/her).

- 2) What is the purpose of this journal? (Ex: recent research in earth science). To find out, go to the journal's website or search Ulrich's Periodical Directory at www.lib.uexas.edu/indexes > U for more information.

- 3) In a few sentences, summarize the article. Include any conclusions the author drew.

- 4) In 1-2 paragraphs, explain how this article contributed to your understanding of the topic in your news thread.