

# HAND OUT

## Lesson 18 (Part 3). Researching Skills and Tips

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Wikipedia as an open-source website is often debated as a valid source. Let's explore that argument for our own research purposes.

### **Wikipedia: A "Credible" Source?**

First, we will listen to a story from NPR's *On the Media*: "Get Me Rewrite" (July 8, 2005). In this piece, you will hear media scholar Clay Shirky discuss how Wikipedia functions, both in a technical sense and as a community.

Audio and transcribed text are available from [www.onthemediamedia.org/story/129250-get-me-rewrite/](http://www.onthemediamedia.org/story/129250-get-me-rewrite/).

### **Activity 1: Listening, Reading, and Taking Notes**

As you listen and read the story, take notes about the following features of Wikipedia:

| Talk Page | History Page | Neutral Point of View |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|
|           |              |                       |

Clay Shirky says that "what makes a wiki good is not the technology but the community." What does he mean by this? How is Wikipedia written and edited? Do you think that Wikipedia is a credible source?

### **Activity 2: Determining Credibility**

Examine one Wikipedia page about a topic in which you are interested. Try to determine the following:

- When was the page created?
- When did the most recent edit occur?
- How many total edits have occurred on the page?
- How many discussions about the page have occurred or are currently going on?
- How many references are available to outside sources?

Based on the information above, do you think your Wikipedia page is "credible"? How would you defend or refute the credibility of this page to a teacher who wants to know why you may or may not use Wikipedia as a source?

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