FLOW CHART FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH. Directions: Start in the top left corner. Keep following the appropriate arrows until you reach “Excellent! This is an academically valid source.” (See the KEY for explanation of terms in this flow chart.)

Start: Topic

What’s interesting about it; what do you want to know?

Create a QUESTION to research; make sure the question is narrow enough.

Use Google Scholar, GALE, or Pubmed to begin your research.

Potentially viable source found

Check CURRENCY

Currency OK or Not Applicable

Check RELEVANCE

Not RELEVANT

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine” at top of page.

Source not AUTHORITATIVE

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine” at top of page.

Source not ACCURATE

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine” at top of page.

Source’s PURPOSE not appropriate for academic research

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine.”

Excellent! This is an academically valid source.

Potentially viable source found

Check CURRENCY

Currency OK or Not Applicable

Check RELEVANCE

Source is RELEVANT.

Check AUTHORITY

Source is AUTHORITATIVE.

Check ACCURACY

Source is ACCURATE.

Check PURPOSE

PURPOSE of source is valid for your research.

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine.”

Create a QUESTION to research; make sure the question is narrow enough.

Use Google Scholar, GALE, or Pubmed to begin your research.

Potentially viable source found

Check CURRENCY

Currency OK or Not Applicable

Check RELEVANCE

Not RELEVANT

Don’t use source; try again.

Source not AUTHORITATIVE

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine” at top of page.

Source not ACCURATE

Don’t use source; go back to “Use regular search engine” at top of page.

Source’s PURPOSE not appropriate for academic research

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Excellent! This is an academically valid source.