SECONDARY RESEARCH (BASICS)

The term Secondary Research refers to any material, data, evidence, or information which you use for research which is not your own or which you did not create. Essentially, Secondary Research involves gathering data (a secondary source of information) by means of “reading” and re-reporting the primary research of others

Secondary Research often include different types of texts:

- Books
- Articles
- Reviews
- Abstracts
- Images
- Films
- Audio Clips
- Blogs
- Government Publications
- Pamphlets
- Dissertations/Theses
- Information from Radio or Television
- Letters
- Lectures

Secondary Research, when appropriate, comes from experts, scholars, and professional commentators. We use secondary sources to help to ensure our ideas are valid, truthful, and well-supported by borrowing information from these sources and using it in our papers.

THREE WAYS TO BORROW INFORMATION
We can use secondary sources to construct three structures:

- Quotes from the original source (again, a form of testimony)
- Paraphrases of the original source
- Parenthetical Summaries of the original source (less than a paragraph)

These three structures help our readers to have additional support for our claims and allow us to have the information needed to find our original sources. Therefore, it is useful to have secondary sources.

PRESEARCH VERSUS RESEARCH

PRESEARCH
Presearch refers to unofficial or informal research which most people use to learn about a topic.
Presearch is usually the product of second- or third-hand accounts of information. Oftentimes, you may find retelling of events or facts, summaries of findings,

commentary, and even informal analysis/evaluations. Most pre-search contains bias and some opinion built into it, so we cannot always accept the validity, sincerity, or truthfulness of the information.

Oftentimes, people do very generalized internet searches looking through multiple sites on the World Wide Web to find facts and other information about the topic. People will search through wikis, social media, popular news sources, online encyclopedias, and even look through various discussion boards to examine hearsay (information received from other people that cannot be definitively substantiated or confirmed for validity) about the topic. We call this Presearch.

The Problem: Most of this "research" (or presearch) is surface-level. Libraries and universities still have the "keys" to deep research. Many studies, experiments, and other official forms of research are unavailable to the general public due to accessibility and cost. Therefore, much of the so-called "research" found easily on the internet is often incomplete or containing "holes." Thus, many social media posts and popular articles are incomplete and their conclusions are not always valid.

RESEARCH

Research is very different from presearch. Real research is formal. Formal research comes from first-hand accounts, typically from the original source. Oftentimes, this information comes from scientists, a scholars, or experts in the field. Typically, with research, you find more definitive facts, numbers, methods, findings/conclusions, etc. Research is typically reported in books, articles, and other documentation, which is oftentimes taken and reproduced in popular media as Presearch.

Research is usually collected in library databases. As a result, universities typically pay large sums of money for access to these databases which (in turn) is made available to these scientists (professors) and their students. A large portion of the operating budget of a university is to provide access to these materials/results.

Many of your professors are engaged in high forms of research (observing these previous studies) and adding their own findings to the collectives. The end results is further understanding of a myriad of different topics from engineering to medicine to astronomy to geology to linguistics to psychology, etc.