



## Researching

When you are looking into something for the first time, it is important to remember what you are hoping to find out first. To do this, plan the areas that you want to research beforehand. When you are clear on what you are aiming to achieve think about where you are going to get your information from. Inevitably this may involve the use of Google as an internet searching tool so make sure you are careful with the websites that you choose to use. As a guide, use the below tips when looking at sources of information online.

1. **Bias:** is the website biased in any way? This means that it will present one side of an opinion or favour a particular view. When researching, make sure you balance out biased views with opinions from 'the other side'.
2. **Relevance:** is the website going to help your research? Websites are created for a range of reasons and this may not help you find the answer you are looking for. Refer back to your plan to see if the information is useful to you or irrelevant.
3. **Reliability:** is the website going to give you accurate information? Because anybody can create a website, information you look at should always be treated with caution. Always check the validity of the source: can you trust the author or not? Wikipedia is not a reliable source of information as it is open source (anyone can edit it) – click on the links at the bottom of the article to check sources.

### Plagiarism of Work

When producing your final piece of work it is important to make sure it is a true representation of **your work**. This means you haven't just copied and pasted information. If you do this then you have **plagiarised** someone else's work which may be protected by **copyright law**. If you are quoting information directly, you should always **acknowledge the source** in your work. To do this, add a note to say where the information was taken from – use a bibliography or apply footnotes.

To help you avoid this, try to add some extra information to the text:

- **Point** – this will be your perspective or opinion about something
- **Evidence** – this can be a quote from your researched work
- **Explain** – answer the questions 'so what' and 'what does this mean'
- **Explore** – develop ideas further link to other points or opinions

