The Information Cycle
The Information Cycle is Not Always Linear

- New scholarly findings can become popular news.
Authority is Constructed and Contextual

Information Literacy Unit: University 101
Who has authority in your life? Why?

- Write notes on your own (1 minute)
- Discuss with a partner (3 minutes)
- Class sharing
Authority Defined:

- Webster’s Dictionary: a quality that makes something seem true or real
Authority Defined:

• Oxford English Dictionary (OED): A person whose opinion or testimony is accepted as true; the author of an accepted opinion or statement; a person with extensive or specialized knowledge on (also upon) a particular subject; an expert.
Authority Defined:

• Oxford English Dictionary (OED):
  • A book, passage, etc., accepted as a source of **reliable** information or evidence, especially one used to settle a question or matter in dispute
  • The fact or state of possessing **credible** information
Let’s Discuss

• When you have a medical question, where do you go for answers?
• When you have a question about your new phone, where do you go for answers?
• When you have a question about finding information, where do you go for answers?
Information Need

• Where you look depends on the question.
• All information serves a purpose.
• It is your job to match the purpose of the source to your information need.
Information Need: Two Scenarios
Evaluating Information

- Author
- Audience
- Purpose
- Relevance
- Date
Authority is Constructed:

- Peer-review
- Academic Disciplines
Your Sources

Author

Audience

Purpose

Relevance

Date published

What would this be authoritative for
Source Types

- Scholarly Journals
- Scholarly Books
- Non-Scholarly Periodicals
- Non-Scholarly Books
- Websites/Social Media
- Other (Government Documents, Data, Images, Photographs, Archival Documents)
Conclusion

• Level of authority needed is dependent on your information need.
• Academic and non-academic needs.
• Select and evaluate sources based on specific information needs.
• Access to information is a privilege.