Scholarly Journal
- In-depth, primary account of original findings written by the researcher(s); very specific information,
- Purpose: to advance knowledge & educate.
- Author: usually a scholar or specialist with subject expertise with credentials provided.
- Written for scholars, researchers, & students.
- Uses specialized terminology or jargon of the field.
- Format: includes the article abstract, goals & objectives, methodology, results (evidence), discussion, conclusion, and bibliography.
- Articles are evaluated by peer-reviewers or referees who are experts in the field.
- References are provided.

Popular Magazine
- Secondary discussion of someone else's research; may include personal narrative or opinion; general information
- Purpose: to entertain or inform.
- Author: frequently a journalist paid to write articles, may or may not have subject expertise.
- Written for general public; interested non-specialists.
- Easily understandable to most readers.
- Format: may include non-standard formatting. May not present supporting evidence or a conclusion.
- Articles are evaluated by editorial staff, not experts in the field.
- References or source materials rarely provided.

Trade Journal or Magazine
- Current news, trends & products in a specific field or industry.
- Purpose: provide practical industry information.
- Author: usually industry professional, sometimes a journalist with subject expertise.
- Written for industry professionals & interested non-specialists.
- Uses specialized terminology or jargon of field, but not as technical as scholarly journal.
- Format: organized like a journal or newsletter. Presents evidence drawn from personal experience or common knowledge.
- Articles are evaluated by editorial staff who may be experts, not peer-reviewed.
- References may be provided in brief bibliography, not required.

Based on Scholarly vs. Popular Materials by Amy VanScoy, NCSU Library.