

Is it a scholarly article? A worksheet

A scholarly article is typically a journal article or book chapter that is authored by a professor (a "scholar") or by others affiliated with colleges, universities and, in some instances, research institutes, where the journal (or book) and article focuses on the pursuit of rigorous academic inquiry (e.g. not the *New York Times*).

The below indicators are generally true, but there are exceptions. Journal characteristics vary by discipline and expectations vary by faculty member. If in doubt, ask your instructor or a librarian.

Things to Look For:

1. How long is the article?
2. Is there a bibliography or footnotes?
3. Who wrote the article?
(you can google the author if it's not obvious)
4. Who publishes the journal or book chapter? (you can look up the journal online)
5. Is the journal peer reviewed?
(You can use google to find the journal webpage). Often, databases let you search for "scholarly" or "peer-review" articles only, but this can be misleading.
6. Does the article have an abstract at the beginning? (that is different from the first paragraph of the article).
7. Does the article report on a study that was conducted?
8. Who serves on the editorial board of the journal? (this information is typically available online)
9. Does the article have a scholarly tone?
10. Is the article in JSTOR?
11. Is the journal ranked in *Journal Citation Reports*

Article is More Scholarly if:

- usually at least 7-20+ pages
- yes, has a bibliography and/or footnotes.
- author is a "scholar," affiliated with a university or college. In some disciplines, author may be affiliated with a research institute, like the Brookings Institute.
- an academic press or an academic association (optional, publishers like Sage, Wiley and others also publish scholarly journals).
- yes, journal is peer-reviewed (especially if it is "blind reviewed"). Peer-reviewed typically means that the article is read, critiqued and "okayed" by other scholars who also publish on the same or similar topics.
- yes (not always a good indicator)
- yes (optional, varies by discipline and topic)
- members of the editorial board are all (or most all) affiliated with colleges or universities.
- yes, the article is serious, written in the structure and language appropriate for the discipline.
- yes (optional)
- yes (it's usually not necessary to check)