



Resources and audiences

Approaches to communication of a particular topic may vary significantly, according to the audience. This activity is about students' ability to receive information about stem cells and cloning.

Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- compare resources for difficulty, audience, reliability and personal usefulness
- access a range of resources for topic learning
- develop critical skills in selecting sources of information
- analyse different styles of presentation appropriate to different types of report.

Time required

The work is intended for integration into the study of specific science content and has no set time allocation. The table is deliberately quite simple, so that time is devoted to exploring the resources rather than to completing a complex grid.

Outline of the activity

Students compare the sources with reference to their structure, visual devices, language and its match to audience, current issues, reliability and usefulness. A final discussion encourages reflection and metacognition.

Tips and strategies



This activity should be integrated with an appropriate assignment to stimulate reflection about sources of information and writing for particular audiences. See the activity 'Assessing the reliability of information sources'.

The student sheet can be used as a briefing, with students developing their own tables or other structures to organise the information. Alternatively, it can be used as a traditional 'worksheet', using the table provided.



Resources and audiences: briefing sheet

In this activity you will discuss the communication of science in a range of different articles.

- 1 Find each of the following on the subject of stem cells and cloning:
 - article from a popular science magazine such as *Focus*
 - article from a broad-interest science magazine such as *New Scientist*, *Science* or *Scientific American*
 - newspaper article
 - article from an academic journal.
- 2 Study each text and complete the table opposite.

Discussion points

- 1 Compare your table with others, and discuss any differences in your generalisations about the different types of publication.
- 2 What are the benefits, if any, to you as a learner, of exploring a topic using a range of different types of resources?
- 3 If you could choose two of these articles to research the current topic for a short essay, which would you choose, and why?



Resources and audiences: briefing sheet

	Popular science magazine	Broad interest science magazine	Academic journal	Newspaper article
Structure Briefly list any features of the way that the article is organised that make it different from the others.				
Visual appeal Does the article have an attractive design? Does it use visual methods of communication as well as text? Briefly list its special visual features.				
Language How has the author adapted the style of language to suit the intended audience?				
Current issues How quickly will the information in the article become out of date?				
Authority or reliability of the writer Is the writer an expert on the subject, an expert in communication, or both? Can you trust the information?				
Level of difficulty Score the texts on a 1 to 5 scale, with 1 being suitable for a 14 year old pupil, and 5 accessible only to specialists.				