Data Quality Literacy 

**A Knowledge Brief**

*Data Quality Literacy Series 01*

# **Data Reference Interview**

*Questions to ask when the researcher has a request related to data.*

## Start with **Three** Basic Questions

* **Who** needs the data—a senior undergraduate, doctoral student, or faculty member? The researcher’s experience with data influences the data needed to serve their purposes.
* **What data** is needed? Ask about the researcher’s data needs and further explore their research plan, methodologies, bibliographic references, etc.
* **When** is it needed? Ask the scope and deadline of the user’s research project.

## Understand the Researcher’s Plan

* What is the research question? How will it be refined?
* What data was used by articles from the literature review? How widely is it used?
* What is the data collection methodology? What are the limitations and possibilities for the data needed?
* What is the theoretical framework? Does it indicate the need for microdata or statistical summary?

## Take More out of the Literature Review

* What data has been collected or used before? Who collected the data?
* Is there data to be collected? Can the existing data be reused?
* How has data been used or interpreted by other researchers?

## Get Down to the Specific Data Attributes

* Who or what is the subject of the research? What is the unit of analysis or observation?
* When and where of the data?
  + **Data Currency**: How recent does the data need to be?
  + **Data Frequency**: Does the data need to be updated monthly, quarterly, annually, or at other intervals?
  + **Geographic Level**: Is the research focused on a local, regional, national, or global level?
  + **Cross-sectional vs. Longitudinal**: Does the research require data collected at a single point in time, or does it need repeated observations to analyze changes or trends over time?
* What are the concepts that need to be measured? What are the variables?

**References**

Liu, G., Bordelon, B., Nagar, R., Sarti, J., Nguyen, U., & Boettcher, J. (2024). *Data Quality Literacy: A Guidebook*. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Grant Project. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/ruawm>

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