

RELEVANT MATERIAL Sometimes, since titles can be ambiguous or vague, you can't be sure that the sources listed in the card catalog, indexes, and bibliographies are really about your topic. "For rashness, ignorance, or carelessness the mountains leave no margin: and to rashness, ignorance. or carelessness three-fourths of the catastrophes which shock us are to be traced." For example, suppose you have decided to look into the safety methods (the use of ropes and other equipment) of the early mountaineers to see whether their safety methods were really safe or just another unintended hazard. The catalog card is evidence that the book possibly is related somehow to your topic, but is the work a nineteenth-century physical-fitness treatise or is it a book about mountain climbing? In the card catalog you find a listing for *Hours of Exercise in the Alps* by John Tyndall. When you actually have the book in your hands, you confirm that it does deal with the general topic of mountain climbing, but how can you find out if it has specific information on your topic: the supposed safety practices of early mountaineers? First, of course, check the table of contents. You will, therefore, need to be something of a detective.