Ralph V. Turner’s article considers the Magna Carta’s impact in a wider context through history and how its contents have “become a beacon of liberty.” The article covers a long period, from the Magna Carters beginning through to the nineteenth century. But how can this be used in supporting evidence when assessing the impact of the Magna Carter since 1215? Looking analytically into Turner’s article will allow us to assess whether its content provides a valid argument in supporting what impact the Magna Carter had.

Turner’s article is presented in a chronological style, starting at the Magna Carter’s first signing and ending in the late nineteenth century. Covering such a long period can be seen to have both positive and negative impact on the effectiveness of the article’s study. By analysing the Magna Carter throughout the centuries, Turner demonstrates how the ideals that founded this document affected politics and subsequently society. However, the broadness of the time period covered is potentially an issue, as it means that deeper analysis of the Magna Carter’s effects is not possible. In fact, the writer sometimes goes into a more narrative style of writing that although factual, merely provides a brief overview of the document’s impact and doesn’t go into deeper discussion. In saying this, Turner provided several case examples throughout the article of the Magna Carter’s use, for example that during the fourteenth century “often the first item of parliamentary business was a public reading and reaffirmation of the Charter.” This can be useful in understanding the frequency at which the Magna Carter was used in politics.

Further Turner uses several primary sources within his article to support his arguments. By using primary sources, the writer validates his arguments and provides interpretations of the Magna Carter’s use that can give a different insight into the topic. However, this can also mean that Turner’s own interpretation of these sources may carry biases that could potentially discredit his argument. In spite of this, Turner also has an extensive list of secondary sources used showing that his article has been well researched. This is also reflected in the variety of political viewpoints that Turner discusses, as he demonstrates how the Magna Carter not only impacted a single political group but how its content affected the policies of several political parties, giving his article a more objective stance. In all, the article does not assume any previous knowledge of the Magna Carter and in fact summarises the documents contents in the first paragraph of the writing making the topic clear and concise to the reader.

To conclude Ralph V. Turner’s article can provide an extensive amount of evidence when discussing the impact of the Magna Carter since 1215. The variety of perspectives he provides covers a wide range of the documents uses through the centuries. His writing seems to have high objectivity suggesting that there are less biases in his research. Further, the article has neatly summarised an extensive list of scholarly research written in a manner that is chronological and doesn’t assume previous knowledge of the subject. Overall, I feel this would be a good piece to use when writing about the Magna Carter.