Evaluating Sources

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Outcomes:

By the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Identify credible sources to use in assignments
- Evaluate sources using the C.R.A.A.P. Test
- Learn where to get more help with source evaluation
Why do we evaluate sources?

- The information you find online may not be reliable, so it's important to think critically about the sources you are incorporating into assignments.
- Learning to evaluate sources will help you make informed decisions on what sources are appropriate to share and cite.
How can you evaluate sources?

The C.R.A.A.P. test can be used to evaluate any source type like books, articles, videos, and websites.

- Currency
- Relevancy
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose

Source Evaluation Tool
When trying to find resources for your assignments at uni,
How can you evaluate sources?

Let's use the **C.R.A.A.P. test** to evaluate this article discovered on Sheridan Library's databases. Click on the link below to view the article.


Currency

Can you find the **publication date** on the article?
Currency

Research in your discipline **rapidly grows and changes**. Utilize the most appropriate books, articles, and Web sources for your assignment. Use these questions to guide what sources to choose:

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work? Check your assignment guidelines.
Relevancy

A document's abstract, introduction, or summary provides a great overview of the content. Read the sample article's abstract to learn more about the research study.
Relevancy

It takes time to find the **BEST** resources that relate to your topic. Start assignments early to allow for a thorough investigation of sources. Use these questions to guide your choice of sources:

- Who is the intended audience?
- Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is one you will use?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?
Authority

Find the author of the article. Based on what you see displayed about the author, do they appear authoritative?
Authority

It's important to know who's creating the content you are reading. After all, you will incorporate the author's words and ideas into your assignment. Consider the following questions before choosing sources:

- Is the author qualified to write on the topic?
- What is the author's credentials?
- For Web sources, does the URL reveal anything about the author?
  - Learn more about URLs: .com / edu / .gov / .org / .net
Accuracy

Have you ever encountered a website with repeated spelling mistakes, or broken links? This could indicate a red-flag in terms of accuracy. If the author doesn't proofread for errors, can you trust the information? Here are a few questions to consider before choosing resource for assignments:

- Has the information been peer-reviewed or refereed?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Do you see spelling, grammar or typographical errors?
- Is a reference list included?
Accuracy

Review the sample article for accuracy. How many sources are cited in the reference list?
Purpose

Consider **why** the author is creating the article, book, website, or other source. Information exist for a specific reason -- entertainment (magazine), sales (company website), persuasion/opinion (editorial), etc. When choosing resources for assignments, think about these questions:

- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- Does the author's point of view appear objective and impartial?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
Purpose

What is the purpose of scholarly sources like the sample journal article?
Where can I find more information?

Here are a few additional resources for help with evaluating sources for credibility:

- **Evaluating sources: General guidelines** (Website) - Purdue Owl
- **Evaluating sources** (video) - Western University
Want to contact us?

- Email: library@sheridancollege.ca
- Phone: 905-459-7533 X4338
- Chat: http://sheridancollege.libguides.com/askalibrarian

We hope to hear from you soon!