

Communicating science toolkit: Searching for information.

Evaluating resources

Evaluating resources: The TRAAP test

This helps you to evaluate certain aspects of your web search results by suggesting you answer some questions about: Timeliness, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, Purpose (See TRAAP test worksheet) with a table you can fill in).

1. The AUTHOR(S)

- Who has written the work?
- Is it a researcher?
- Is it an activist/lobbyist?
- Is it a journalist?
- Is it a Government department? An MP? An international organism? An NGO?
- A combination of several?

2. Timeliness: the timeliness of the information

- 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 as well?
- If you are examining a website or online source, are the links functional?

3. Relevance: the importance of the information for your needs

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information at an appropriate level (for example, not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
- 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?



4. Authority: the source of the information

- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations and is she/he sponsored by any person or company?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- If you are examining a website or online source, does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net

5. Accuracy: the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content

- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed by experts?
- Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar or typographical errors?

6. Purpose: The reason the information was created

- Why did the author publish this source? Is she/he looking to inform, teach, advocate, sell, or entertain?
- Who is the intended audience? Is this designed for general readers or academic readers?
- What political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, personal or other perspectives does the author have?
- What perspectives are not included within this resource, especially less privileged perspectives?

Evaluating resources. References.

Adapted from Chapman university's library guide

http://chapman.libguides.com/evaluate_sources

And Heidelberg-Beeghly Library

http://libguides.heidelberg.edu/ld.php?content_id=5794811

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