

Evaluate Sources



Subject experts and publishers evaluate most library resources including books and articles found in print and in database collections. However, on the open Web including social media sites, ANYONE can publish their opinions and ideas.

Did you know there are approximately one trillion websites on the open Web and NO standards exist to ensure what you find is reliable or accurate?

It is important to think critically about the resources you find on the Web as well as in print to determine if a resource is credible. The checklist below will help you identify resources to use for college research assignments as well as for making important decisions in all aspects of your personal and professional life.

ABCD's of Evaluating Resources

<p>Author/Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the author or sponsoring organization? • Who is the publisher? • Is there any contact information? • Are the author/s credentials provided? • Is biographical information given?
<p>Bias</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was the work written? • Does the author or sponsor have an agenda? • Who is the target audience? Is the information intended to inform, explain, sell, promote, or persuade? • Is the site personal, commercial, governmental, organizational, or educational? (.com, .gov, .org, .edu) • Is there an <i>About</i> link?
<p>Content/Currency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the source comprehensive, brief, or unique? • Does the source include original research or a first-hand account of an event? Is the source a secondary account (analysis, interpretation) of original research or events? • What level is the presentation? (elementary, HS, college) • Does the author provide a list of References, Works Cited or links to other sources to support their research? • Currency: Is there a date when the resource was published or last updated?
<p>Design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there spelling or grammar errors? • Do the links work? • Are there ads or pop-ups on the page? • Is the website user-friendly? • Is the navigation menu well labeled or organized? • Do the pages appear uncluttered?

