



Evaluate Information Online: The CRAAP Test

CURRENCY: *The timeliness of the source and the information*

- When was the information posted?
- When was it last revised?
- Are links functional and up-to-date?
- Is there evidence of newly added information or links?
- Is the information still considered accurate? Has more recent research challenged this information? Don't exclude articles or information because of the publication date; instead think about the currency and relevance of the arguments presented.

RELEVANCE/COVERAGE: *The importance and scope of the information*

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Is the topic covered with sufficient depth and breadth? Is the information comprehensive enough for your needs? Are the complexities of your topic adequately addressed?
- Could you find the same or better information in another source?
- Is the information relevant to current scholarly discussions on the topic? Do scholars refer to this source?

AUTHORITY: *The source of the information*

- Is the author/sponsor clearly identified? Is contact information easy to find?
- What are the author's credentials? Is the author knowledgeable in his/her field (based on employment, publications, sponsorship by reputable organizations).
- Has the author published works in traditional formats? (Look up the authors in [Google Scholar](#).)
- Is the author affiliated with an organization? Does this organization appear to support or sponsor the page? (Google the authors and/or sponsoring organizations.)
- What does the sponsoring site (e.g. www.noaa.gov, www.uiowa.edu) and domain name (e.g. .com .edu .gov .org .net) reveal about the source of the information, if anything?

ACCURACY: *The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content*

- Where does the information come from? Can you verify any of the information in independent sources or from your own knowledge?
- Are the original sources of information listed?
- What evidence is presented to support claims made?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed?*
- Does the language or tone seem objective and unbiased?
- Is the information free of spelling, grammar, and typographical errors?

*Refereed, or peer-reviewed, articles have been objectively and rigorously reviewed by the author's colleagues in order to ensure high quality scholarship.

PURPOSE: *The reason the web site exists*

- Is the purpose of the page stated? Is the purpose to: inform? teach? entertain? enlighten? sell? persuade? Are possible biases clearly stated?
- Is advertising content vs. informational content easily distinguishable?
- Are editorials/opinion pieces clearly labeled?

REMEMBER TO SEE WHAT AUTHORS OF BOOKS AND SCHOLARLY ARTICLES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT YOUR TOPIC!

When evaluating information, consider:

- What are the claims being made by the author(s)?
- What evidence is provided to support those claims?
- How does the information offered on this site relate to what is provided in other sources, both non-print and print?

Think critically about the information provided:

How could the information be verified? Is the information specific? How is the information related to your research question? Does the information address the complexities and significant factors of the topic? Do you need to consider another point of view? Is there another way to look at this question? Does all of this make sense?

More Information

- *Evaluating Web Content*, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (<http://library.albany.edu/usered/eval/evalweb/>) Tips for evaluating content and determining author's expertise.
- *Evaluating Information Found on the Internet*, The Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins Institute (<http://guides.library.jhu.edu/evaluatinginformation>)
- *Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply and Questions to Ask*, UC Berkeley (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>)

Provides tips for finding answers to questions about a site's authorship, currency, and quality.

Quick Search Tips

- Use quotes to focus your search and look for phrases
e.g. "The Great Depression"
- Eliminate terms you don't want
e.g. vikings -Minnesota
- Limit your search to a domain likely to have information on your topic
e.g. health pregnancy site:gov
- Add FAQ if you think your answer may appear on an FAQ page
e.g. pregnancy depression FAQ site:gov