

# Evaluating Source Credibility

**Informative Writing**

# Why is Evaluating Websites Important?

- Anyone can put something on the Internet.
- No one oversees what is put on the internet for accuracy.
- Documents can easily be copied with omissions and errors.

CRAAP

# Currency

Currency refers to the time that the information was produced.

- When was the information added?
- When was it last updated?
- Do the links work?

TIP: For certain topics you might be able to use information that was published long ago, but for many contemporary, scientific, or health-related topics, you'll probably want to use information that was published recently.

# Relevance

Relevancy has to do with the connection between the source and your topic.

- Does it relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information at an appropriate level? Too advanced? Too easy?

TIP: Try to identify the scope of the source. Once you have done this, make sure that it aligns with your topic.

# Authority

Authority refers to the reliability and credibility of the source's author.

- Who created the Website?
- Is there an “About” or “Contact” page that tells about the author?
- What qualifications does this author have to write on this topic?
- Where is this information being published from?

TIP: If the source is a webpage, you may have to look around to find information about authorship. Try scrolling down to the bottom of the page.

# Accuracy

Accuracy refers to the reliability of the information.

- How well is the site developed?
- Can the information be verified?
- Are there typos?

TIP: The peer-review process used by many scholarly journals is designed to guarantee a certain amount of accuracy and quality in the publication of scholarly information

# Purpose

The purpose is the reason that the source was created.

- What is the purpose of the information?
- Is the information fact, opinion, or propaganda?
- Does the point of view appear objective and unbiased?

TIP: Decide whether the source was made to inform, teach, sell, entertain, or persuade. A credible source should present information without ulterior motives.



# Practice

Use CRAAP to evaluate these three websites:

- [http://www.answers.com/Q/why can't humans live on Mars](http://www.answers.com/Q/why_can't_humans_live_on_Mars)
- <http://www.astronomy.com/news/2017/05/could-we-live-on-mars>
- <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/09/elon-musk-spacex-exploring-mars-planets-space-science/>