

C.R.A.A.P. Test

Questions to Ask When Evaluating Research Sources

Key: ■ indicates additional criteria for web sources

Currency: *How recent is the information?*

- Is it current enough for your topic?
- Has it been published in the last x years? (x will vary, depending on your topic)
- If you have a historical research topic, was it published around the date of the original event?
- Do the links work?
- Has it been updated recently?

Relevance: *Does the information address your needs?*

- Are references or sources for data or quotations included?
- Where does the information come from and does it apply to your topic?
- Is it a primary or secondary source?

Authority: *What is the source of the information?*

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
- What are their credentials and are they provided?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- What is their reputation or expertise? Are they qualified to write on the topic?
- What is the domain ending (e.g., .com, .org, .gov, .edu)?
- Are there any advertisements or other distractions?

Accuracy: *What is the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content?*

- Is it accurate? Is it supported by evidence?
- Is the information balanced or biased?
- Was it peer-reviewed?
- Can you verify the information from another reliable source?
- Are there spelling, grammar, or typographical errors?

Purpose / Point-of-View: *Why does the information exist?*

- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain, or persuade?
- Is it fact or opinion?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is this a first-hand account of an event or research?
- If controversial, are all sides of the issue fairly represented?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, or personal biases?
- Could the site be ironic, like a satire or a spoof?