

C.R.A.P. Test

Evaluating Research Sources

Currency

Is the information recent 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?

Reliability/Relevance

Where does the information come from, and does the information apply to your topic?

- Is it a primary or secondary source?
- Are methods or references provided?
- Who published the information?
- Was it peer-reviewed?
- Does all of the information apply to your topic, or only part of it?
- Is the information general or detailed?
- Is the information balanced or biased?

Authority

Who authored this information?

- Was it a single person or several people?
- Was it a corporation or organization?
- Are their credentials provided?
- What is their reputation or expertise?

Purpose/Point-of-View

What was the intent of the author, and how is the author connected to the information?

- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information intended to inform, persuade, sell, entertain, ...?
- Is this a first-hand account of an event or research?
- Does the author have a vested interest in the topic?

Additional Questions for Online Sources:

- What is the domain (*i.e.* .com, .org, .gov, .edu)?
- Who is the site publisher or sponsor, and is this information easy to find?
- Has it been updated recently?
- Are there any advertisements or other distractions?
- Could the site be ironic, like a satire or a spoof?

The C.R.A.P. Test

Grade all websites you intend to use for class projects using this rubric.

Name: _____

Website: <http://> _____

Criteria	Evaluation Techniques	0	1	2	3
Currency When was the information written & last updated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a copyright or last updated date on the page? Are links broken (404 error)? Is it current enough for your topic? 	There is no indication of when the site was created or revised.	The date given for the site's creation is over 3 years old; no date of revision or update.	The site has been created or updated within the last 3 years.	Created or updated less than two years. Sources referenced are current.
Reliability Where did the author get this information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the creator provide links to sources for data or quotations? Do those sources seem reliable? Is the information accurate and error-free? Can the information be corroborated with another source? 	No links to sources or works cited is given.	There is a general statement about the source of the information, but no specific links to sources or a works cited list.	There are links to sources or a works cited list.	There are links to sources or a works cited list. Information is corroborated with another source.
Authority of Author Who is responsible for the information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the author's name listed? Google the author's names to learn more about the author. Can you figure out what makes the author an expert in this area (credentials*, known and respected)? * Credentials = education, work, and/or university faculty in this area, etc. 	The author is probably a student. Errors indicate the author is not an expert.	The author is unnamed and/or no credentials* are given.	The author is named but credentials* are incomplete.	Credentials* are given and indicate that author is an expert.
Authority of Organization Does the resource have a reputable organization behind it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a reputable organization behind it? What is the organization's interest (if any) in this information? What is the domain (.edu, .com, .org, .net, .uk, .k12, etc)? Is the page hosted by an individual? (look for any of the following in the URL: %, ~, "users", "AOL", or "yahoo") Search who owns the site using a "whois" search engine such as: http://whois.domaintools.com. Who else links to the site? Google command: "link:crnchs.net" 	An individual's page hosted by an Internet service provider (Comcast, yahoo, AOL, etc) or a .com site with no affiliation	Any of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The home page is a K12, .com, .org, or unknown. The home page is a student folder on a .edu site. 	A known business, professional association, organization, museum, or university sponsors the home page.	A government department or agency is the home page. OR The domain is .edu and faculty maintains the site.
Purpose/ Point of View: Does the information seem fairly represented, or is it biased?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scan the contents. Why was it written? (ex. information, advice, advocacy, propaganda, opinion, entertainment, commercial site, personal, news) Be able to spot point of view. Is the site fair and objective? Is it an advocacy site? Is the page affiliated with an organization that has a particular political or social agenda? Is there a conflict of interest? Does the web site producer stand to benefit from the information being provided? How important is balance? Is it required for your purposes? Is any bias explicit or hidden? Can you use the information? 	The purpose is personal or too much advertising is distracting.	Purpose is to sell, persuade, or give a biased view. Some factual info. or useful pictures but focus is to promote something.	Offers some factual information. Sides unbalanced; some bias or advertising.	The purpose is to support scholarly research with factual information. Balanced coverage/without bias.

What does the score mean?

- 12 to 15 pts Excellent source for research
- 8 to 11 pts Good source for a research paper or academic project. **Confirm with other sources.**
- 4 to 7 pts Useful for ideas or casual projects. Do not cite as a reference for a research paper or project
- 0 to 3 pts Highly questionable source

Total Points =