

## Evaluating Internet Resources

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Complete a search on your teacher-approved topic. Did you find a "good source?" Here is a checklist to help you determine if what you have in hand is worth the time and effort to read and use it. These questions should be asked every time you choose to use information from any source!

### 1. WHO WROTE IT? (Authority)

Who is responsible for the content of the source? Can you determine the name of the individual, the organization that produced it?

### 2. WHY WAS IT WRITTEN? (Objectivity)

The purpose of a source is very important to understand its BIAS. Every creator has a purpose or viewpoint behind what they publish. Print sources often state or imply the purpose or intent of the text in the introduction or preface. The purpose of an Internet source is sometimes harder to pinpoint. Look at the address for clues, and read the material carefully for language that gives opinion, viewpoint or perspective. The BIAS helps us determine how to interpret the information for our own use.

### 3. WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN? (Currency)

Timeliness is often an important factor in the usefulness of information. Look for copyright dates, updates, and sources used. If the source contains references to other pieces of information, can you discover when those were produced? You need to look for CURRENT (within the last 3 to 4 years). For some topics, you will need information even more current than that. This is when databases of periodicals become valuable. Sometimes the documents in the databases are posted before the item is on the newsstands or in the mail!

### 4. WHERE HAS THE INFORMATION BEEN PUBLISHED PREVIOUSLY? (Accuracy)

The more reliable a source the more likely it is the information contained in it was checked and verified. If the information was just put out without such checks, you cannot tell if it is true or not. Be cautious. Try to find additional sources that confirm the information.

### 5. HOW IS THE INFORMATION ORGANIZED AND PRESENTED? (Content & Organization)

Does this source give you the information you need in an ORGANIZED, well presented manner? Does it flow logically from one point to another? If what you get is superficial or gives only minimal data - one or two sentences or paragraphs- then the source does not really give you much content. Just a mention of your topic is NOT enough!

### 6. IS THIS A PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE?

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