

Evaluating Online Resources

Authority

- Is the author identified? What are the author's qualifications to speak on this topic?
- Who is the sponsoring organization of the site? What do you know about them?
- Can you contact the author to find out more information or to get clarifications?

Accuracy

- Does the author provide statistics and facts to back up their arguments?
- Does the author give references to the sources of information that are used?
- Is the argument presented in a logical manner with few errors in grammar or spelling? Does their argument make sense?

Objectivity

- Why was this page put on the Web? Has the author clearly stated his purpose?
- Does the site present many opinions on the topic or only one?
- Can you identify any bias in the information and opinions provided?
Remember—Bias isn't necessarily bad, but you have to see it for what it is.
- Does the site reflect the agenda of a political religious or social group or institution?
- If any advertising is present, it is clearly identified as such?

Currency

- When was this information produced?
- Does the page indicate when it was last updated?
- Do the links work? Does it look like someone is actively maintaining the site?

Incidentals

- Is the site easy to navigate? Is the organization of the site clear and logical?
- Are there graphics? Do they enhance or detract from the site?
- Other than the information provided, are there any aspects of the site (its organization, its look, its navigation) that would keep you from using it again?