

EVALUATING WEB SITES

BRITISH COLUMBIA
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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Quiz

1. Is everything you read on the Internet true?
2. Is the information you find on the web reliable?
3. Are the results of your Google search good enough for a class assignment now that you're at BCIT?

A search engine is an easy place to start looking for information on your research topic.

Evaluating the results of your search can be hard.

But it's important.

Especially if you plan to use the information from those sites for a class assignment.

To evaluate whether a website is good enough for your research consider the following criteria:

- ⇒ Currency: the web site is up-to-date.
- ⇒ Relevance: the information is suitable for your needs.
- ⇒ Authority: the author of the web site is qualified to provide information on the subject.
- ⇒ Accuracy: the information is correct and precise.
- ⇒ Purpose: the information exists to inform or teach.

Use the CRAAP test on the back to determine if a website is a credible and appropriate source of information for your project.

Answers:
1. No 2. Sometimes 3. Maybe

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Did you know?

Domain names can indicate the source of a web site:

“edu” = academic institution

“gov” or “ca” = government agency

“org” = non-profit organization

“com” = commercial ventures

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THE CRAAP TEST

Evaluation Criteria

Currency

- ⇒ When was the information published or posted?
- ⇒ Has the information been revised or updated?
- ⇒ Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work as well?
- ⇒ Are the links working?

Relevance

- ⇒ Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- ⇒ Who is the intended audience?
- ⇒ Is the information at an appropriate level (i.e. not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
- ⇒ Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining which ones you will use?
- ⇒ Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

Authority

- ⇒ Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor and is it clearly stated?
- ⇒ What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- ⇒ Is the author qualified to write on the topic?
- ⇒ Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- ⇒ Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source?
examples: **.com .edu .gov .org .net**

Accuracy

- ⇒ Where does the information come from?
- ⇒ Is the information supported by evidence?
- ⇒ Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
- ⇒ Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- ⇒ Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- ⇒ Are there spelling, grammar, calculation or typographical errors?

Purpose

- ⇒ What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- ⇒ Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
- ⇒ Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- ⇒ Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
- ⇒ Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?

Adapted from: Meriam Library, California State University. (2010, Sept 17)
Evaluating Information—Applying the Craap Test.