

How to evaluate Web sites and other resources... Are they CRAAP?!



Before using a Web site or other information resource for your research, evaluate it by applying the CRAAP test:

Currency ~ is the information current (enough)?

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has it been revised or updated (should it have been)?
- Does **your topic** require current information or will older sources still work?
- Are the links (web site) or other recommended additional sources (listed in books) valid/available?

Relevance ~ does it meet **YOUR** research needs?

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience? (i.e. is it you/someone like you?)
- 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 this is one you will use?

Authority ~ who is the source of the information?

- Who wrote/created the book, article, or Web site?
- What education/credentials/experience do they have?
- Are they experts in their field (i.e. are they *qualified* to write about your topic)?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- For web sources, does the URL reveal anything about the author or source?
examples: .com .ca .edu .gov .org .net

Accuracy ~ how reliable, correct, and factual is the content?

- Where is the creator/author getting the information?
- Is the information they've given supported by evidence?
- Are the sources of information clearly listed so they can be verified; are they only the author's opinions?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed? (i.e. formally published vs. personally posted)
- Do the facts presented match those from other similar sources you've found?

Purpose/Point of View ~ why does the information exist?

- Why was the resource created?
- Is the book or Web site intended to inform/sell/teach/entertain/persuade?
- Did someone sponsor or commission the source? Does this sponsor influence the views presented?
- 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?

Remember!

**Not every source
of information
is a GOOD source
of information.**

If the resource passes the CRAAP test, you're well on your way to research success!