Source Evaluation

Anyone can create a web page and post information on the Internet. There is no Internet police or editor to determine whether that information is factual or true.

How do we determine whether the information is a good source of information?

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Purpose

Audience
• Determine the intended audience of the page - based on its content, tone and style
• Does it meet with your needs?

Consider the Source
• Web search engines often give us many results - from memos to scholarly documents
• Many of the resulting items will be useless for your research

Source

- Can you identify the author/producer?
- Does the author/producer have expertise on the subject?
- What is the sponsor/location of the site?

   Examples:

   .edu for educational or research material

   .gov for government resources

   .com for commercial products or commercially-sponsored sites

   .org for organizations, both non and for-profit

- ~NAME in URL may mean a personal home page

Content

RESEARCH

Accuracy
- Don't take the information presented at face value
- Web sites are rarely reviewed
- Look for
  -point of view
  -evidence of bias
- Source of the information should be clearly stated, whether original or borrowed from elsewhere

Comprehensiveness
- Depth of information: Are you able to understand it?

Currency
- Look to see if
  -site has been updated recently, as reflected in the date on the page
  -material contained on the page is current

Links
- Links are relevant and appropriate
- Don't assume that the linked sites are the best available. Be sure to investigate additional sites on the topic

Style and Functionality

- Is the site well organized and easy to navigate?
- Is the writing style appropriate for the intended audience?

Why Cite Sources

There are many reasons why it is important to cite the resources that you consult when researching a paper. The most important of these are:

- Gives credit to authors whose works you have used (whether you quote them or not).

- Provides a trail by which others can locate the materials you consulted.

- Provides evidence of your research.

- Properly citing materials is one strategy to help you avoid plagiarizing.

It's the Law!

Citing Sources - Tools

My Sources

http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic32.htm

https://digitalliteracy.cornell.edu/tutorial/dpl3221.html

http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/evaluating-sources/

http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/wikipedia/

http://library.acadiau.ca/sites/default/files/library/tutorials/webevaluation/

Attachments

Son of Citation Machine

EasyBib

Plagiarism.org