

Evaluating Information utilizing the CRAAP Test

There is a lot of information available on the Web. Anyone with a little knowledge and time can put information on the Web. There is no regulatory body governing the content of individual websites. It is therefore important that you evaluate the information with a critical eye. A useful tool to do this is the *CRAAP test**. The *CRAAP test* consists of a series of questions designed to evaluate the information found on the web. Please note it is not all inclusive, as some criteria may be more or less relevant depending on the web site.

Evaluation Criteria

CURRENCY	The timeliness of the information
RELEVANCY	The importance of the information for your needs
AUTHORITY	Source of the information
ACCURACY	The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the informational content
PURPOSE	The reason the information exists

CURRENCY: The timeliness of the information.

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic? (Online)
- Are the links functional? (Online)

RELEVANCE: The importance of the information for your needs.

- 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 this is one you will use?
- Would you be comfortable using this source for a research paper?

AUTHORITY: The source of the information.

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor? Are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations given?
- What are the author's qualifications to write on the topic?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address? (Online)
- Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net

ACCURACY: The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the informational content.

- 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 biased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar, or other typographical errors?

PURPOSE: The reason the information exists.

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

(Online) indicates criteria is for Web only

*The CRAAP acronym and descriptions are from Meriam Library at California State University Chico. CRAAP Test from the Meriam Library website.