Website Evaluation

As you search for sources on the Internet, part of your research task is to find out if the websites you find are trustworthy. The C.R.A.A.P method can help. Use this guide to work through your evaluation of websites. Based on your assessment of each criterion, decide whether, on balance, the website can be trusted as a credible source for your project.

Website Evaluation Tool – C.R.A.A.P.	
Currency	When was the information posted or updated? Is it too old to use? Your answer depends on your topic-- do you need up-to-the-minute information or can you make effective use of information that was posted several years ago? • Look for a date at the beginning or end of the article. • If you can't find a posting date, look for evidence in the text (e.g. references to people or events that are current or outdated).
Relevance	Is the information on target for your assignment? Does it answer your research question? Does it move you forward in your research? Who is the intended audience? • Read and think!
Authority	Who wrote the information, created the webpage, owns or sponsors the website? Do they have knowledge, experience or credentials? What proof do they offer for their expertise? Do they provide contact information? • Look for the "about" link and investigate. • Use Google to find more information about the author, sponsor, etc. • If you cannot identify who wrote the information and you also cannot identify the person or organization responsible for creating or maintaining the site, you should not use its information for college research.
Accuracy	What is on the webpage? Examine both content and appearance. • Is it sloppy or professional looking? Is it cluttered with pop-ups and ads? Are there a lot of typos or grammatical errors? Do the links work? • Where did the information come from? Does the website identify the names and credentials of anyone quoted and tell you all the sources it used? Does it give you links to those sources? • Does it give you links to other reliable websites? Do other trustworthy websites link to it? • Use Google to learn what other credible sites think about this website. • Does the site clearly distinguish between facts and opinions? Can you verify "facts" on an independent website?
Purpose	Why does this website exist? Is its purpose to try to sell you something? Is its goal to publicize and promote a particular point of view? Is its purpose to educate and inform? What is the bias of the website or its creator? Is the website upfront about its purposes and possible biases, or does it try to hide them? • Use the "about" links and investigate. • Scan the navigation tools: are there shopping links? Donation links? Do they want you to "join?" • Do you have to provide personal information to use this site? • Consider the domain extension (.com, .gov, .org, .edu, .mil., .info., etc.)

Name: _____   TOPIC: _____   Date: _____

Website URL				
Webpage title				
CURRENCY				
RELEVANCE				
AUTHORITY				
ACCURACY				
PURPOSE				
Use it or lose it? Why?				

The CRAAP Detector was designed by Sarah Blakeslee, of the Meriam Library at California State University, Chico.   Adapted by QVCC Library. Updated 2015.