



Using the **CRAAP Test** to Evaluate Websites

A lot of information available on the internet is unreliable, inaccurate, and of low quality. The **CRAAP test** provides a list of criteria and questions to help students evaluate online information

Criteria	Questions to Ask	Purpose & Tips
CURRENCY <i>(timeliness of the information)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic? Are the links functional or broken? When was the page created? 	<p>A recent update does not mean the information is current. The content might still be out of date even if the date given is recent. To determine if information is up-to-date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare the information to other sources, such as scholarly articles found in a library database (This is very important for science, technology, business and health where new information is frequently produced) Test the links to other websites, as broken links that do not work often indicate that a website has not been recently updated
RELEVANCE <i>(importance of the information for your needs)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? How does the site compare with other sites? Is the site intended to be general, comprehensive or selective? 	<p>To identify the target audience, look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading level (is it easy or challenging? Does it assume previous knowledge with the topic?) Design of the page (are there banner ads, flashy graphics, or plain text?) Possible target demographics (is the information aimed at academic researchers, kids, consumers, political activists, or another type of person?)
AUTHORITY <i>(original source of the information)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is the author, publisher, source or sponsor? Are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations given? If yes, what are they? What are the author's qualifications to write on the topic? Is there contact information, such as a publisher or e-mail address? Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? 	<p>Go to the "About" to learn about the website or organization's purpose.</p> <p>The URL ending, or domain, tells you where the information came from geographically or the type of organization that maintains the website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .org: Advocacy site, such as a not-for-profit organization. .com: Business or commercial site. .edu : Site affiliated with a higher education institution .gov: United States government site. .ca: Site originating in Canada .gc.ca: Canadian government site.

<p>ACCURACY</p> <p><i>(reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where does the information come from? Is the information supported by evidence? Has the information been reviewed or refereed? Can you verify the information in another source or from personal knowledge? Does the language or tone seem biased or emotional? Are there obvious errors (spelling, grammar, etc.)? 	<p>Many websites, particularly non-profit organizations or advocacy groups, will have a particular agenda or purpose that results in information with a bias.</p> <p>A bias is not necessarily bad, but it is very important to take it into account when interpreting or using the given information.</p> <p>Consider if the author is fair, balanced or moderate in their presentation or viewpoint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Is he or she overly emotional or extreme?  Is there a conflict of interest due to the author's affiliation or perspective?
<p>PURPOSE</p> <p><i>(reason the information exists)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of the information? Does it inform, persuade, sell or entertain? Are the intentions of the authors/sponsors clear? Does the point of view appear objective? Are there political, cultural, institutional, or personal biases? 	<p>Websites may have several purposes, such as to persuade and entertain at the same time.</p> <p>It is important to analyze if one purpose conflicts with the information found on the website.</p> <p>Consider unstated purposes that are found in clues such as the aim of the organization or the use of advertising on the page.</p>

Google Search Trick

Limit results to one type of website, such as governmental or educational, which generally provide information that passes the **CRAAP test**.

Example 1: **healthcare site:.gc.ca**

Typing "**site:.gc.ca**" after the search term will limit results to government of Canada websites that contain the keyword "healthcare"

Example 2: **early childhood education site:.edu**

Typing "**site:.edu**" after the search term will limit results to educational institutions that contain the phrase "early childhood education"