

Criteria for Evaluating web pages

- **Accuracy**
- **Authority**
- **Currency**
- **Objectivity**
- **Intended audience**

Accuracy – It is important to know the accuracy of the information.

Look at the following:

- ✓ A sloppy page (bad grammar, misspelling) indicates hastiness.
- ✓ It's always a good idea to cross-reference information, no matter where you find it.
- ✓ Do graphic add or subtract from the content?
- ✓ Is the information complete or fragmented?

Authority – It is important to know where the information is coming from and by whom it was written.

Look at the following:

- ✓ Who is the author of this page or information?
- ✓ What are his credentials? Eg. Qualification
- ✓ What institution is it affiliated with?
- ✓ Does the page conveniently display the information?
- ✓ Was the information written by a person who is specialist in this field or is it merely someone's hobby or opinion/
- ✓ Was the content verified, reviewed or peer-reviewed in any way?

Currency (up-to-date) – It is important to use only the current information.

Currency defines the age of the information. Look at the following:

- ✓ When was this page created?
- ✓ Is there a revision / creation date?
- ✓ Do the links work?
- ✓ Is the page maintained and new material added?

Objectivity: It is very important to know what the purpose of the author was to write this article:

- ✓ What is the purpose of this page?
- ✓ Does the author state the goals for this site?
- ✓ Does this page inform/educate?

Intended audience: When people write articles, paper, etc, it's always aimed at a specific audience, for e.g. child development that is aimed at parents.

Remember to ask yourself:

Is the web the best place for this type of information? Would a print source or an electronic database be a better choice?

Check with the reference librarian if you are not sure.

The criteria presented here will help you to critically appraise web resources.