



Ron E. Lewis Library

Thinking Critically about Web Information—Applying the CRAAP Test*

When you search the Web, you're going to find a lot of information...but is it credible and reliable? Use this guide to help you determine this for yourself. Give your Web page a score based on this point system. Is your Web source credible and reliable or is it a bunch of ... ? **SCORE _____**

Checking for C-R-A-A-P!	POINTS: 0	1	2	3
Currency or Timeliness How important is it for your topic to have recent information? Science, technology, and health information need to be as recent as possible. If yes, how current is the information?	There is no indication of when the site was created or updated.	The site was created is over 5 years ago with no date given for updating.	The site was created, revised or updated within the last 5 years. If they are citing sources, they are also recent.	The site was created, revised or updated within the last 2 years. If they are citing sources, they are also recent.
Relevance Is this the information you need for your topic? Consider the type of information needed (primary sources or secondary sources) statistics, history or background information.	It mentions my topic briefly but not much else. Or it isn't the type of information I need. Or it isn't enough information.	It provides some information, but it's not enough, or it's not the right type of information.	It provides most of what I need, but I still need more or another type of information.	It is exactly on the subject, is the right amount of information and the right type of information.
Authority. Locate the author or sponsor and Google the name to find out more. What else have they published on the topic? Are there any credentials for the person to establish them as expert? Is it the main organization that provides information about a topic?	There is either no author, or the author is possibly a student or an ordinary person publishing on the Web without expertise. Or the organization is not known. Text errors indicate the author is not an expert.	Author is named but with no credentials. Or the organization is of questionable authority. Web groups can name themselves with names that sound like other credible organizations.	Author is named but the degree of expertise is not that high. Or, the organization, is well-known, and but the degree of expertise on this subject is not clear.	The author's credentials are given and clearly indicate that he/she is an expert. Or the organization is well-known and highly credible on the topic.
Accuracy Are there any sources cited for the information? Are images/photos labeled and credited?	Information is provided with no indication as to where it comes from.	There is a vague reference to the information source. Assumptions must be made as to the source.	There is a general statement about the source of the information but not enough to locate it.	There is a good list of sources that can be located. Images/photos are labeled and sources given.
Purpose Is the information fact or opinion? Is it stating a point of view, promoting an idea, service or product? If you need opinions, then consider the author's authority, their use of logic and provision of evidence for their opinions.	The purpose of the page is to present a biased point of view, sell or promote an idea, service or product. It is not a factual or balanced point of view. The opinion is either not backed up with facts or the facts are distorted.	The purpose of the page is to sell or promote something, but it also provides some good factual information. Or expressed opinion is somewhat logical and presents some evidence.	The purpose of the page is to educate or to offer mostly factual information. Or expressed opinion is logical presenting enough evidence for the opinion.	The purpose of the page is to provide information of a scholarly, academic or at least high quality. Evidence for opinion is factual, presented as numbers in charts, graphs, tables, or statistics or adequate evidence for the opinion.
Score Total/Meanings:	0 to 3 points Very questionable source. Don't use.	4 to 7 points OK for info, but don't cite it.	8 to 11 Good source to use and cite.	12 to 15 Excellent source to use and cite.

*This rubric uses a modified version of the CRAAP Test created by Meriam Library at California State University-Chico.

Evaluation of Web pages and sites: Questions for the CRAAP test—

CURRENCY/ TIMELINESS: When the information was published and the importance the date as it relates to the topic.

- Is currency important for your topic? Is it a science, technology, or health-related topic?
- When was the Web page originally published, last updated or revised?
- Are all of the links on the page functional? Can you determine if there is new information on the page?

REVELANCE/ COVERAGE OF THE TOPIC: The degree to which the information fulfils your information need.

- How relevant to your topic is the information? How on-topic is it?
- Can you find the same or better information in another source?
- Is it the type of information needed? (i.e. background, detailed history, statistics, primary source)
- Is there enough information or do you need to find additional information on your topic?

AUTHORITY: Who is providing this information and are they a reliable source.

- Who is responsibility for the information on the page (the author, creator, sponsor?)
- Are there any author credentials given? Can you determine the author's age, level of expertise, etc. Are they experts on the subject? "Google" the author or site sponsor's name to find out more.
- If there is a group or organization (called a corporate author) creating the page, establish the group's authority. "Google" the name. Are they a well-known, reputable organization for this subject? Learn about the organization on their home page. Look for "About Us" on the home page.

ACCURACY: The truthfulness and correctness of the information.

- Where did the information on the page come from? Did the sponsor/author of the page create the information? If not, the original source should be cited on the page.
- Are there cited sources or links to the original source of the information?
- Can you verify any of the information in other independent sources or from your own knowledge?

PURPOSE: The reason the Web page/site exists, and the point of view of the author/sponsor.

- Is the page promoting something that might cause biases? (such as opinions, products, ideas)
- Is the information based on facts or is it opinion? If opinion, is it based upon logical thinking? Is the author using good evidence for their opinion?
- What is the purpose of the Web site sponsoring this page? Is the domain for the site a .org (an organization), .edu (an educational site), .gov (a federal government site), .mil (a military site), .com (a commercial site), .net (a web-sponsoring site), .TV (a television site)... to name the most well-known domains. Other domains describe state government sites (Texas government sites: state.tx.us) and sites from other countries that use the country abbreviation as the domain.