Evaluating Sources: The CRAP Test

Currency

The timeliness of the information

- When was the information published or posted?
- Does the time period that the information was published matter in relation to your topic?
- When was the information last revised? (online often found in the footer area)
- If reviewing a web source, are the links current or are they broken?

Relevance

The importance of the information in relation to your topic

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience? Is the page intended for your age and education level?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

Authority

Consider the source

- Can you tell who wrote it? If the author is not identified who is the sponsor, publisher, or organization behind the information?
- Are the author’s credentials or organizational affiliations listed?
- Is contact information available?
- Is the information affiliated with an education institution (.edu), the federal government (.gov) or a reputable organization (.org)?
- Is the source reputable?
- Does the author cite the sources used in the research?

Accuracy

The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the informational content

- Where does the information presented come from? Are the sources listed?
- Are the sources reputable?
- Can you verify the information in other sources or from your own knowledge? Corroborate!

Purpose and Point of View
The reason the information exists

- Are the purpose and objectives of the document clearly stated?
- Can you determine possible bias? If you can are they clearly stated or do they become apparent through a close reading?
- Does the author present both sides of the issue?
- Does the point of view appear objective?
- Is the presentation of information more important than any commercials on the site?