



A **CAPS** Guide to Evaluating Online Information

You can't believe everything you read, see, or hear. Use this checklist to select the best.

Currency

- ✓ Is the publication date noted?
- ✓ Has the information been recently updated?
- ✓ Are links from a web page still active and useful?
- ✓ How old is the information contained compared to the publication date of the source?

Accuracy

- ✓ Is the author/creator clearly identified? Are they a reliable source of information? (eg. journalist, expert within their field?)
- ✓ Is there any way to verify the author/creator's credentials?
- ✓ Who is ultimately responsible for the content?
- ✓ If you trace back the URL to view a page higher in the directory, is the sponsor/location of the site appropriate for the material contained?
- ✓ Can you tell where the information came from?
- ✓ Can you contact the creator by email if you have a concern?

Purpose

- ✓ Why was this article written? Is the information provided as a public service, to sell something, to educate, to convince you, or for some other purpose?
- ✓ Are ads present? If so, are they clearly separated from the information content?
- ✓ Are opinions identified as such? Does the creator's affiliation or employment have any impact on his/her point of view?
- ✓ Does the source provide a comprehensive/broad overview of a subject, or is it limited to a specific time period or narrower aspect?
- ✓ Are sources given?
- ✓ Are several points of view included or is there evidence of bias and one-sidedness?

Suitability

- ✓ Who is the intended audience, based on the source's content, tone and style?
- ✓ Does this tone, level and content meet your needs?
- ✓ Are there navigation aids to help you use the resource and locate specific information?