

EVALUATING RESOURCES AND APPLYING THE CRAAP TEST

English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Introduction

In this module, you will explore the importance of critical thinking when evaluating scholarly and popular sources. You will learn how to use the CRAAP test to help distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the role of critical thinking when evaluating information.
- Apply the CRAAP test to determine if an article is appropriate for research writing.

To Do List

- Watch a series of nine videos on Evaluating Internet Sources and Fake News with ncLibraries.
- Complete the Check Your Understanding for the matching nine videos in the series.
- Watch the Evaluate What You Find With the “CRAAP Test” video
- Complete your CRAAP assignment in Blackboard.

Attribution & References

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THE CRAAP TEST AND EVALUATING RESOURCES

Why Do We Evaluate Resources?

The importance of choosing a properly fitted resource can make or break the quality of your work. A resource that contains information that does not quite support your point, or worse, provides inaccurate or false information, can cause damage to your written work. As a writer, you must decipher the validity of articles you may want to include. How can you tell if a resource has what you need? Knowing how to evaluate sources has a huge impact on the quality of your writing. Having the skills to evaluate your resource ensures your audience believes in you as a writer, your writing prowess and what you have to say. Developing the ability to evaluate resources gives you the tools and skills needed to choose an appropriate resource to use for reference in your writing.

Evaluating Sources

This module will outline some key concepts to consider when analyzing internet sources. This knowledge will help you do better research for assignments and daily life.

Watch it: Evaluating Internet Sources and Fake News

Watch Evaluating internet sources and fake news with nLibraries (8 minutes) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/fh9vDmlzznl>)

The Importance of Evaluating Sources:

Check Your Knowledge: Why is Evaluating Sources Important?

Evaluating Sources I (Text Version)

Watch Why is this important?(≤ 1 minute) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/7jZVj-ijx1Y>) and answer the following question:

Knowing how to evaluate information is only useful for school assignments. True or false?

Check your answer: ¹

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Consider the Source:

Check Your Understand: Consider the Source

Evaluating Sources II (Text Version)

Watch Consider the source (1 minute) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/hrCOMRAseSM>) and answer the following question:

Where can you look to find author information for a website:

1. False

1. About
2. Information
3. All of the above
4. None of the above

Check your answer: ²

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Motivation & Bias:

Check Your Understanding: Motivation and Bias

Evaluating Sources III (Text Version)

Watch Motivation/bias (2 minutes) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/HBkFMKjoMPO>) then answer the following question:

Shortening the URL to find the homepage of the site that you’re viewing might also give you information about any groups or organizations that this information is aligned with. True or false?

Check your answer: ³

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2. 3. If author information is not clearly stated elsewhere, checking the “About” or “Information” pages of a website may provide additional clues.
3. True. Shortening the url to find the homepage of a site is a helpful way to trace back the source.

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Check the Evidence:

Check Your Understanding: Evidence

Evaluating Sources IV (Text Version)

Watch Evidence (< 1 minute) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/KYeCP9nTK1c>) and answer the following question:

The more verifiable evidence a site uses, the more likely the information that site is trying to convey is accurate. True or false?

Check your answer: ⁴

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4. True. The more evidence to support a claim, the better!

Timeliness:

Check Your Understanding: Timeliness

Evaluating Sources V (Text Version)

Watch Timeliness (< 1 minute) on YouTube (https://youtu.be/pvAMuqI_h40) and answer the following question:

Which of the following is important when evaluating a source from the web:

1. The author or creator
2. The date posted
3. Supporting evidence
4. All of the above
5. None of the above

Check your answer: ⁵

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5. 4. All of the criteria listed are important for evaluating internet resources.

The CRAAP/RADAR Test:

Check Your Understanding: CRAAP Test

Evaluating Sources VI (Text Version)

Watch Evaluating sources: CRAAP/RADAR (1 minute) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/hd5zhcZrQ3A>) and answer the following question:

Which of the following is **not** part of the CRAAP test?

1. Currency
2. Relevance
3. Authority
4. Aptitude
5. Purpose

Check your answer: ⁶

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6. Aptitude is not part of the CRAAP test.

What Makes News “Fake”?

Check Your Understanding: Fake News

Evaluating Sources VII (Text Version)

Watch Fake news (< 2 minutes) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/92DdYk5nRBM>) then answer the following question:

You can trust the headline to represent the content of an online news source. True or false?

Check your answer: ⁷

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Be a Skeptic!

7. False. You should always read beyond the headline.

EVALUATE WHAT YOU FIND WITH THE "CRAAP TEST"

Watch It: CRAAP Test

Watch Chapter 8 video 2 (3 minutes) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/Q9b9exHOIBk>) about how to apply the CRAAP test and then read the text below.

Sources to evaluate in the Video:

- Wikipedia entry on Online Social Movements [New Tab] (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_social_movement)
 - Consider this a good starting point and look at the sources below for more information.
- Blog written by a professor: *Role of Social Media in Social Movements: Egyptian Revolution and Occupy Wall Street* [New Tab]
 - Select "Author", "Author – Main Publications"
 - This article is not peer reviewed; consider why.
- Peer Reviewed (Open Source): *The Digital Evolution of Occupy Wall Street* [New Tab] (<http://europepmc.org/backend/ptpmcrender.fcgi?accid=PMC3667169&blobtype=pdf>)
 - This article *is* peer reviewed. Why?
 - Look at the conflict of interest note at the beginning.

Evaluating your sources is critical to the academic research process. The CRAAP test allows you analyze your sources and determine whether they are appropriate for your research or just plain crap! The CRAAP test uses a series of questions that address specific evaluation criteria like the authority and purpose of the source. You should use this test for all your sources. **Note:** it is not intended to make you exclude other, less authoritative sources, but to help you analyze how you intend to use them to support your arguments.

C = Currency: The timeliness of the information.

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work?

R = Relevance: The importance of the information for your needs.

- 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?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

A = Authority: The source of the information.

- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic? Do you trust the author?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net

A = Accuracy: The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.

- Where does the information come from?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
- Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar or typographical errors?

P = Purpose: The reason the information exists.

- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?

Summary

In this unit, you learned about the differences between scholarly and popular sources, how to evaluate them using the CRAAP test, and how this information can help you succeed in your career.

Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter (video & Text) is adapted from “Evaluate What You Find With the “CRAAP Test” (<https://pressbooks.library.torontomu.ca/writehere/chapter/evaluate-what-you-find-with-the-craap-test/>)” In *Write Here, Right Now: An Interactive Introduction to Academic Writing and Research* by Aaron Tucker, Paul Chafe, and Ryerson University, licensed under CC BY 4.0. Adapted for clarity of writing and punctuation.