

Researching on the Internet

Evaluate Web Sites for **ACCURACY**

- How reliable and free from error is the information?
- Are there editors and fact checkers?
- Can the sources be verified?
- Who is the publishing body (federal agency (.gov), non-profit site (.org), educational institution (.edu), or business (.com))?
- Are charts and graphs clearly labeled and easy to read?
- Is there a bibliography or links to other useful sites?

Evaluate Web Sites for **AUTHORITY**

- What are the author's qualifications for writing on the subject?
- How reputable is the publisher?
- Who is responsible for the webpage? Can you trace the source to a person, company, organization, institution, etc.? Is that source reliable?
- Is the party responsible for the page an authoritative source of information?

Evaluate Web Sites for **OBJECTIVITY**

- Is the information presented with a minimum of bias?
- To what extent is the information trying to sway the opinion of the audience?
- Are the biases of the person, company, organization, institution, etc. clearly stated?
- Is any advertising clearly differentiated from the informational content?
- Are editorials and opinion pieces clearly labeled?

Evaluate Web Sites for **CURRENCY**

- Is the content of the work up-to-date?
- Is the publication date clearly indicated?
- Are there dates on the page to indicate when the page was written, when it was first placed on the web, or when it was last revised?
- Are there any other indicators that the material is kept current?

Evaluate Web Sites for **COVERAGE**

- What topics are included in the work?
- To what depth are those topics explored?
- Is there any indication that the page is complete and not under construction?
- Is the entire work available on the web or only parts of it?
- Is it clear what topics the page intends to address? Does it succeed or is something significant left out?

Additional Resources for Writers

Black Hills State University Writing Center <http://www.bhsu.edu/writingcenter/index.html>

E. Y. Berry Library <http://iis.bhsu.edu/lis/index.cfm>