

Evaluating Information: Are My Sources CRAAP?

Assessing the Value of Information Sources

The CRAAP and Gut Tests evaluate the quality and relevance of any information you are considering for your research assignment. Keep these tests in mind when considering the inclusion of any source - whether print, online or other media - in your assignment.

CRAAP Test

Currency

- The timeliness (publication date, revision history) of the information.
- Broken links or an old publication date indicates the page has not been updated recently.

Relevance

- The importance of the information for your needs.
- Consider your audience and compare with a variety of sources.

Authority

- The source (author, publisher, sponsor) of the information.
- Check for contact information and the credentials of the author.

Accuracy

- The reliability (source, evidence, truthfulness) of the information.
- Think about the source and look for evidence of bias or error.

Purpose

- The reason (teach, sell, entertain) the information exists.
- Identify the type of information (fact or opinion) and the intent of the author.

Gut Test

When considering whether a particular website is a good source do not forget the simple Gut Test. There is no fancy acronym here. The gut test is just your immediate first impression after skimming a site's homepage or reading some selected content.

If on your first viewing a site seems...

- biased or advocating a particular agenda,
- factually wrong or treating opinion as fact,
- full of spelling or grammatical errors,
- kooky, warped, crazy, sick, depraved, or just plain old wrong

...then it is probably not a reliable source of research information.

<http://library.sait.ca/evaluatinginformation.asp>