How To

Evaluate Sources by Using The CRAAP Test
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INTRODUCTION

IT IS IMPORTANT TO EVALUATE THE INFORMATION YOU FIND

It is not always easy to decide whether the information that you have found is suitable and/or appropriate for your information need. You can check by doing:

CRAAP stands for:

Currency
Relevance
Authority
Accuracy
Purpose

Let's show you how.....
Currency refers to the date when an article, book or any other source was published, or when a website was last updated.

The currency or date of a publication is important, depending on your information need. Use the most recent sources or as required by your assignment.

For example, in a field such as IT that changes very fast, information gets outdated quickly.

For information on Artworks, a painting/book from the 18th century could be regarded as current.
RELEVANCE

Relevance is often the first thing you think of when selecting a source: namely, does this information relate to the topic you want to write about? Does this information answer your questions?

Relevance also deals with whether the information is written at the right level and who the intended audience is, e.g. academics, university students or the general public.

Look at a variety of sources to see which are the most relevant for you.
AUTHORITY

Authority refers to who wrote and published the source (book, article, website, etc.).

Most resources include the credentials of the author(s), the institute or department where they work, or contact information.

Search whether an author has published any other works or is well known in a particular field.

It is important to note the publisher of a particular source, especially a journal. Journals have editorial teams which review articles before they are published.

To find out more about Accredited journals refer to Module 2, Information Sources.
ACCURACY

Make sure the sources you are using is legitimate and provides accurate information.

Where does the information come from? Is the information factual and unbiased? Can the information be verified with other sources?

A way to check accuracy is to look at who the article cited. To learn more about "cited" and referencing, see our Module 5, Referencing in this course.

A good place to find academic sources would be at your library.
PURPOSE

Think about why this source was written, and what the author wants to accomplish.

Is the source for academic purposes, to sell or entertain?

Some authors or publishers might only present one side of an argument, meaning that they are biased and present information in a specific way.

In conclusion after applying these criteria you would have tested whether your sources are valid and reliable.
THANK YOU

FOR CHOOSING
CPUT LIBRARIES
TO ASSIST YOU

Acknowledgement: This book is based on the CRAAP test clip developed by McMaster University Library