

# 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...

## Questions to help students use the CRAAP test:

### CURRENCY:

Does this project need current, up-to date information?  
Is the site current? Can you find the publication date?  
Can you tell when the information was last revised?  
Are the dates meaningful in relation to the subject matter?  
Broken links can indicate the page has not been updated recently.

### RELEVANCE:

Does the information directly support the thesis or help to answer the question?  
Find sources that support exactly what you need for your paper.  
Consider your audience and pick the best sources for your presentation.

### AUTHORITY:

Who is responsible for the website? Who is the author or sponsors?  
Hint: truncate each section of the URL back until you are able to find the sponsor.  
What are the authors' credentials? Education?  
Have the authors of the site documented their own sources?  
Is it a personal page? (Some university sites offer less-than-serious personal pages to graduate students.)

### ACCURACY:

Are there any errors in spelling or grammar?  
Are the facts correct?  
Can facts, statistics, or other information be verified through other sources?  
Is the information true or is it meant to be misleading because of bias?

### PURPOSE:

Why was this site created? Is its purpose to persuade, teach, sell, or entertain?  
Is it a personal, commercial, government, or organization site?  
Is there any bias? Is only one side presented? Is information purposely omitted? Is the bias useful to you in some way?  
Is the information fact or opinion?