

# Evaluating Information - Looking for CRAAP

Hutchins Library  Berea College

When you search for information you're going to find lots of it . . . but is it accurate and reliable? The CRAAP Test is a list of questions you can ask in order to determine if you've found quality information. Different criteria will be more or less important depending on your situation or need.

## Evaluation Criteria

### **Currency:** *The timeliness of the information.*

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic?
- ☞ Are the links functional?

### **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 using this source for a research paper?

### **Authority:** *The source of the information.*

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
- Are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations given?
- What are the author's qualifications to write on the topic?
- 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**

### **Accuracy:** *The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the informational 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 other typographical errors?

### **Purpose:** *The reason the information exists.*

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

**Key:** ☞ indicates additional criteria for Web sites