

Source Credibility – Timeliness, Relevance, Accuracy, Authority and Purpose

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate and compare two different sources of information for credibility by analyzing their **Timeliness, Relevance, Accuracy, Authority and Purpose (TRAAP)**. After you have completed the assignment, you will know how to find a book in Point Park University Library, how to evaluate it as a source of information, and how it compares to another chosen source of information.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

Using PointCat, Point Park University Library’s online catalog, find a book that is about or relevant to the person you’ve chosen from the list of famous people from Pittsburgh.

Who/What is your Pittsburgh person/topic? _____

Retrieve the book from the shelves and use the TRAAP test worksheet to evaluate the book as a source of information on your chosen individual. When you have finished evaluating the book, find a website on your chosen topic/person and use the website worksheet to evaluate the website.

AFTER YOU’VE EVALUATED BOTH SOURCES:

What is the title of the book you found? _____

Is the book an eBook or Print ?

If a print book, what is the call number? _____

What is the title of the website you’re using? _____

What is the website’s URL? _____

What is the website’s top level domain? (.gov, .com, .edu)? _____

Which source scored higher on your worksheets? Why? What contributed most to the higher score?

Which is the more credible source, the book or the website? Why?

What is the greatest strength of the book as a source? Does it have any weaknesses?

What is the greatest strength of the website as a source of information? Was it weak in any particular areas?

The TRAAP Test Worksheet – Evaluating Books

Use the following list to evaluate a book. Answer the questions as appropriate, and then rank each of the 5 parts from 1 to 10 (1 = unacceptable, 10 = excellent). Add up the scores to give you an idea of whether you should use the resource (and whether your professor would want you to!).

Timeliness: *how up-to-date is the information?*.....

- When was the book published? _____
- Does the information need to be revised or updated? _____
- Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic? _____

Relevance: *how does the information relate to your needs?*.....

- How does the information relate to your topic or answer your question? _____

- How in depth is the information? What might be a more in-depth source? _____
- Does the book provide a lot of information or just an overview? _____
- How many books did you look at before choosing this one? _____
- How is the information appropriate for a researcher? _____

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

- Is there an author? Who is it? _____
- Can you find the author's credentials? If so, what are they? _____
- What are the author's qualifications to write on the topic? _____
- Who is the publisher? Is the publisher a university press or a general-interest publisher (like Random House)?

- What does the publisher reveal about the source? _____

Accuracy: *the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content*.....

- Where does the information come from? Are references/citations included? _____
- How do you know the information is supported by evidence? _____
- Has the information been edited by someone else? How do you know? _____
- Would you be able to verify the information in another source? _____
- How is the language or tone? Does it seem biased or free of emotion? _____

Purpose: *the reason the book exists*.....

- What is the purpose of the book? To educate/inform? Express an opinion/persuade? _____
- What do you think is the author's or publisher's purpose in writing or publishing the book? _____

- Is the information fact? Opinion? Propaganda? _____
- Is the point of view objective and impartial or politically, culturally, personally biased? _____

45 - 50 Excellent | 40 - 44 Good
35 - 39 Average | 30 - 34 Borderline Acceptable
Below 30 - Unacceptable

Total:

The TRAAP Test Worksheet – Evaluating Websites

Use the following list to evaluate a website. Answer the questions as appropriate, and then rank each of the 5 parts from 1 to 10 (1 = unacceptable, 10 = excellent). Add up the scores to give you an idea of whether you should use the resource (and whether your professor would want you to!).

Timeliness: *how up-to-date is the information?*.....

- When was the information published or posted? _____
- Does the information or the site need to be revised or updated? _____
- Is the information current or out-of-date for your topic? _____
- When you click on links from the site, do they work? _____

Relevance: *how does the information relate to your needs?*.....

- How does the information relate to your topic or answer your question? _____
- How much information does the site appear to provide? More than an overview? Could there be a more in-depth source? _____
- How many sites did you look at before choosing this one? _____
- How is the information appropriate for a researcher? _____

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

- Is there an author/publisher/source/sponsor? Who/What is it? _____
- Can you find the author's credentials or organizational affiliations? What are they? _____
- How do the authors' credentials or affiliations influence your evaluation of the site? _____
- What can you say about the author's qualifications to write on the topic? _____
- What's the site's top level domain (.edu, .gov, etc.) and what does that mean? _____
- So what does the URL reveal about the source? _____

Accuracy: *the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content*.....

- Where does the information come from? _____
- How do you know the information is supported by evidence? _____
- Has the information been reviewed/refereed/edited by someone else? How do you know? _____
- Can you verify any of the information in another source? _____
- How is the language or tone? _____
- Does the site look professional? Are there spelling/grammatical errors, etc.? _____

Purpose: *the reason the website exists*.....

- What is the purpose of the website? To educate? Inform? Sell? Persuade? _____
- Is there an "About" page? What is the author's/sponsors' purpose? _____
- Is the information fact? Opinion? Propaganda? _____
- Is the point of view objective and impartial or politically, culturally, personally biased? _____

45 - 50 Excellent | 40 - 44 Good
35 - 39 Average | 30 - 34 Borderline Acceptable
Below 30 - Unacceptable

Total:

UNIV 101 Library Session Information Student Survey

Please respond to the following survey questions by circling your answer.

Having completed the information literacy instructional session...

1. I am capable of locating the publication date of sources.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

2. I feel that I am capable of determining whether or not a source is timely.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

3. I am able to identify the author or organization that created the source.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

4. I can accurately assess whether or not the author/organization/publisher is qualified to write about the source topic.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

5. I am able to determine the truthfulness and reliability of the source.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

6. Overall, I feel that I am more able to locate and select appropriate sources as a result of completing this instructional session.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

Comments?: