

THE "C.R.A.P." TEST

Use this to assess the credibility of sources (i.e. Find out what's "crap" and what's not..)

CURRENCY

While this will matter more for some areas of research than for others, it's important to be aware of when the information was published. More current information will likely be more relevant and reliable for your research. Sometimes it will be essential, especially if views about your subject matter have changed significantly over time.

RELIABILITY

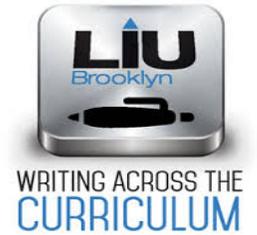
Where does the information this source provides come from and can it be trusted? You can evaluate reliability from a couple of angles:

a. Evaluate the Sources' Sources:

Just as you show your research, your sources should also be forthcoming about the sources of their information. What is your source using to back up its claims? Are your sources' sources credible? Are they thorough? Does your source use *convergent evidence*? Is it using primary or secondary sources? If secondary, you might want to track down the primary source as well and perhaps use that instead.

b. Professionalism

Is this source a well-respected and established person or publication in the field? Do they use clear, error-free language? Do they keep a reasonable and logical tone or do they seem to be swayed mostly by emotional and personal belief? Does the website or place of publication contain many advertisements that distract from the article?



AUTHORSHIP/AUTHORITY

Who is responsible for the information? Is this piece of information easy to find or is it obscured in some way? What is the person's/organization's history? Record? Education? Job description? Experience? (Ideally related to the field of study).

PURPOSE/POINT OF VIEW

Why is this source writing about this subject matter? Does the source have any biases or agenda? Is the source advocating something that will ultimately benefit them in some way – financially, professionally, personally, legally, etc.? How objective is their writing? Is there any reason for them to take a particular position over another?