

# Evaluating Sources

Whether you're searching in a library database or out on the wild, wild web, it's crucial that you critically evaluate the sources you find. This worksheet will help you determine if a source is credible, and if it's a good fit for your assignments. If you're ever in doubt about a source, remember you can always contact your friendly librarian for help!

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Who is the author? What makes them an authority to speak on this topic?

**Hint:** authority can come from an author's educational background, their job, societal position, or relevant personal experience

What is the publication?

**Hint:** check out the publication's website to see if they have an "about" page describing their mission statement and editorial process. If they don't have that information on their website, see if they have a wikipedia page or if other publications have written about them

Some things to think about for authors and publishers: have they won any awards or received special acknowledgments for excellence in their field? Have they been involved in any controversies? What are their biases--are they known for being left or right leaning?

What type of source is this? Is it a scholarly source, popular source, a government report, or something else? How do you know?

**Hint:** consider what type of editing or review process the source had to go through before it could be published

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Is this source credible/reliable? Why or why not? To determine this, consider the author, publication, whether the source uses citations or other means to refer to other sources, and whether the source is fair/objective.

**Hint:** If you're looking for articles to represent a particular viewpoint, you might need to use an article that is very one-sided or in support of one view. That's ok! Just keep in mind that this source is representing that viewpoint, and not necessarily providing objective reporting on the topic).

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Would you use this for an ENGL101 assignment? How would you use it? For example, would you use it to establish facts, present data, or represent a particular viewpoint? Or something else?