You can use “The CRAAP Test” to decide if sources are useful and trustworthy. This test looks at five characteristics (CRAAP). Each characteristic must be evaluated before you decide to use a source.

The table below can help you determine how accurate and reliable a resource is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>When was it published?</th>
<th>Does the source use recent information?</th>
<th>Do links to other sources work?</th>
<th>Does currency matter for this topic? Why or why not?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Currency, or how new something is, can be more important in some fields, like science and medicine, than in some other fields, like those in the humanities. However, having current information is usually recommended. It is important to think about how new your source is, so that you are not using information that has been replaced with newer, better ideas and research.</td>
<td>When was it published?</td>
<td>Does the source use recent information?</td>
<td>Do links to other sources work?</td>
<td>Does currency matter for this topic? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Does this source relate to your topic?</td>
<td>Who was the source written for?</td>
<td>Does this source provide a new point of view or new information?</td>
<td>Is this source too technical or too general?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All of the sources you use in a project should be relevant to your topic. This means that your sources should be about your topic. While you may not find the perfect source, the sources you use should be related to your topic in some way. For example, if you are researching the SpaceX program, an article about founder Elon Musk’s recent divorce is not relevant to your project.</td>
<td>Does this source relate to your topic?</td>
<td>Who was the source written for?</td>
<td>Does this source provide a new point of view or new information?</td>
<td>Is this source too technical or too general?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Authority lets us know that someone with expertise or experience in the topic is sharing their knowledge. Remember, though, an expert on one topic may not be an expert on another topic.</td>
<td>Does the author have expertise in the topic you are researching?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having a Ph.D. in Astronomy would not give someone authority to write about the impact of music therapy on children who have autism. The expertise or experience needs to be relevant to the topic.

**Accuracy**

Determining the **accuracy** of a source ensures that you are using information that is supported with facts and free from errors.

Does the author have connections with a respected university or organization?
What can you find about the author online?
Has the author published on this subject before?
Is the publication trustworthy?

Does the source contain any false information or errors?
Does the source use trustworthy sources to support the claims made?
Has the source gone through peer review?
Does this source agree with other sources that discuss this topic?
Does the information seem complete, or are facts missing?

**Purpose**

Sources may be written to entertain, inform, persuade, or some other purpose.

Understanding the purpose helps us to see if there are any biases or underlying motives that may affect the way the information is presented.

Is this information clearly biased in one way or another?
Is the source based on fact or opinion?
Does this source present multiple points of view on the topic?
Is the writing meant to create a strong, emotional response?

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