

Be **AWARE** of what you are looking at on the Web. Ask the following questions about any site you are considering using for research purposes:

Authority

- Who is the author or company sponsor of the page? Is this clearly stated somewhere on the page?
- What are the credentials of the author(s) providing information on the topic?
- Is there clear information provided for contacting the author or company sponsor? (hint: Check near the bottom of the page; copyright information or biographical information are usually located there)

Accuracy

- Is a bibliography or list of references used by the authors provided? These can be used for background or for follow-up information.
- Is the information relatively well written and free of typos? (hint: By doing research in traditional sources first, you will have a better grounding in your topic and will be better equipped to judge the accuracy of the site.)

Objectivity

- Is the informational content distinct from advertising or opinion?
- Are editorials and advertisements clearly labeled as such?
- Is it a non-profit, advocacy, or social/political movement page? (hint: Noting the extension <.com, .org, .edu> can assist in determining whether the site has an intentional bias, or is trying to present objective information)

Currency

- Does the page indicate when the information was written or last updated?
- Do the dates, if provided (usually near the bottom of the page), make sense in the context of the information being offered, or, alternatively, are they recent?

Coverage

- Can you tell if the information included is complete?
- If an article is presented, is it reproduced in its entirety (and properly cited), or is it condensed, edited, or embellished in any way?