



CKSS LIBRARY

Judging Web Site Quality

Consider the following when trying to decide if a website is an adequate resource for your academic research project:

WHEN DOING INTERNET RESEARCH, YOU MUST:

- Choose the best resource for the job: do you want a website, or an article from an online database?
- Be able to judge the quality of a web site
- Be sure that you are using a quality web site as a source of information
- Properly cite your information sources

ONLINE DATABASES:

- Get you directly to authoritative information
- Save your time searching
- Offer custom searches of approved sources

VISIT THE CKSS LIBRARY WEB SITE FOR ONLINE DATABASE ACCESS

Author / Source:

- The author/ organization / source is easily identified
- The author's credentials are listed; the author is qualified & reputable
- The author's affiliation to the institution is stated
- Contact information for the author/ organization is provided
- Website domain considerations:
 - .ca – Canadian-based website
 - .gov – Government-based website
 - .edu – Educational institution website
 - .org – Organization or special interest group website

Purpose / Scope:

- The content is appropriate for the intended audience
- The content/ information is geared to support student

Accuracy:

- The information sources are properly cited/credited
- There is a bibliography or resource list included
- The information presented is comparable to, or better than, other information you may have found from other sources, including print resources
- The information presented on the website can be verified elsewhere
- The website uses proper grammar and spelling

Usability:

- The design of the website is simple, user-friendly, and audience appropriate
- There are no dead links on the website
- Any features / downloads are in an accessible format
- There is a help feature / inquiry contact information

Currency:

- The website is actively maintained
- The original website posting date is listed
- The most recent website revision date is listed
- All links to other websites are up-to-date
- The statistical or factual information provided is up-to-date

Objectivity:

- Any advertisements are acceptable, based on appropriateness for the website's audience
- The website is free of bias and stereotyping, unless it is being used specifically to teach about this topic
- If the information given is mostly opinion, then there is valid evidence provided to support the author's arguments



CKSS LIBRARY

For more tips, tricks, and tutorials visit the **Research** page of the CKSS Library website:

cksslibrary.

blogspot.com

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Works Cited

<http://www.google.com/support/websearch/bin/answer.py?answer=134479>

<http://www.google.com/support/websearch/bin/answer.py?answer=136861>

Successful Internet Searching using Google™

Use the following tips & tricks to focus your search and get the best Google results possible:

- Every word matters — all terms in the search box will be used
- Search is case insensitive — [new york times] same as [New York Times]
- Most punctuation is ignored — eg: @, #, %, &, *, =, etc.
Context-specific exceptions: \$=price, C++=programming, underscore between words not ignored (eg: quick_sort)
- Keep your search simple; avoid “natural language”
- Use search terms the page will have — [headache remedy] not [my head hurts what should I do]
- Be specific, but use as few terms as possible — [weather cancun] not [what is the weather like in cancun today]
- Choose descriptive words — [niagara attractions] not [niagara area information website for things to do]
- Phrase search — Use double quotes around a phrase to search just for that phrase; be aware: [“Alexander Bell”] misses [Alexander Graham Bell] sites
- Domain & site-specific searching:
[iraq site:.gov] — search a specific domain
[iraq site:nytimes.com] — search within a specific site
- Excluding unwanted terms — Use hyphen after search term and space:
[jaguar -car -team -os]
- Whole word wildcard: * — [obama voted * on the * bill]
- Search exactly as-is: + — Keeps Google from using synonyms:
[+childcare] eliminates “day care” & “nursery school” results
- The **or** operator:
[Toronto Maple Leafs 2004 or 2005] gets you pages with either year
[Toronto Maple Leafs 2004 2005] gets you pages with both years

Contact Mr. Thomson in the CKSS Library for help!