



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 ONLINE RESEARCH, YOU MUST:

- Choose the best resource for the job: do you want a website, or an article from an online database?
- 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 when 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 – Canada-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 learning

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 available

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:

cks.hdsb.ca

/library

INSTEAD OF GOOGLE, CONSIDER USING ONLINE DATABASES:

- **Get directly to authoritative information**
- **Save your time searching**
- **Use custom searches of approved sources**

Works Cited

[http://www.google.com/
support/websearch/bin/
answer.py?answer=134479](http://www.google.com/support/websearch/bin/answer.py?answer=134479)

[http://www.google.com/
support/websearch/bin/
answer.py?answer=136861](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!