

EVALUATING INFORMATION

Why do we evaluate?



Evaluating information is an important activity to do whenever you find information from any source. Evaluating means to verify the relevancy and accuracy of information.

We need to evaluate information for many reasons. Anyone can publish information online; how do we know if they had a motive or are biased? **Finding information online doesn't mean it is true.**

Below are a few tips on how you can evaluate your information which may help you assess if information is reliable.

Tip 1: Who wrote it?

Who is the author? Do they have expertise in the area? This is also known as having 'authority' on a subject. You can check by visiting the About Us section of a website. Some websites also list author credentials at the bottom of an article, including a small bio or additional information about them.

Tip 2: What is its purpose?

Why was it written? What kind of language have they used? Is it factual or exaggerated? Is it academic or personal opinion?

You should always check the platform and website About Us to see what the purpose of a site is. Is it to educate readers or sell a product?

Tip 3: When was it written?



When was it published? Was it recently? You can usually see when an article was published and last edited at the top or bottom of an article. If the source is a few years old, be cautious in reading it as information may have changed since its publication.

Check if they are using references or citations. If they are, and the references are real sources, this can help validate the information. If they are not and you haven't come across similar information elsewhere, be cautious in believing it.



Tip 4: How was it published?

Was it reviewed by an editorial team? Did it undergo peer review before it was published? Has it been edited?

If you cannot tell or if the site appears to be a personal blog of the author, treat it with caution. Personal blogs may reflect the opinion of the author which may not be scientific or factual information. If the content is not reviewed by an editorial team, it may reflect bias from the author and unverified information.