



CAN I TRUST THIS RESEARCH?

CREDIBILITY AND RESEARCH: A LIBRARY LESSON



At this stage in your academic careers, you know that **research** is more than just going to Google and asking a question.

This lesson isn't about search terms and using databases though.

Even after finding some resources, it's important to determine if (and how) it will **be of use** for your research.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE IF A RESOURCE IS WORTHY?

BUT I READ IT ONLINE...

In the last ten years, we've watched as "**fake news**" become part of our everyday lives.

What does **Fake News** mean to you?

How might it be dangerous to researchers and students?



BUT HOW WILL I KNOW ?



There's no magic button that tells us if a resource is good or not.

We'll have to do it the old fashioned way and **use analytical skills** to determine if a resource is "good" or not.

We'll need to think of what criteria to examine though.

THIS HANDY-DANDY ACRONYM WILL EXPLAIN IT!

CONTEXT



RELEVANCY



ACCURACY



BIAS &
AUTHORITY



*I FEEL
CRABULOUS!*



CRAB CONTEXT

The details around the creation of a resource can be very important.

To assess **Context**, we need to look at the details around why this source was created

When was it created or researched?
For whom it was created?



CRAB CONTEXT

When a source is created is as important as what is presented within the source.

If an article is written about **Vaccines**, why might it be important if it was written in:

1919

1952

2019

2021

**WHY WOULD
THE YEAR THIS
WAS WRITTEN
MATTER?**



CRAB CONTEXT

Who funded or asked for the source to be created is also important.

If you're watching a video about **Climate Change**, why is it important to know who funded the project?

What changes if from these groups?

GREENPEACE
THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT
AEI.ORG





RELEVANCY

Finding a source that shares some of the same keywords as your research subject is great. But does that mean the source will be of use to you?

Here, we need to make sure the source is on topic for your needs.

RELEVANT-O-METER



CRAB

RELEVANCY

Here, we have to ask:

Is this information **applicable** to my research and **relevant** to my field of study?

How is it related to the field of study?

- Are the facts and details **current** or **dated** or maybe **obsolete**?
- Is the source **loosely related** or **on topic**?

WOULD UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES FROM 1973 HELP IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ABOUT THE GIG ECONOMY IN 2021?

RELEVANT-O-METER



CRAB

RELEVANCY

Does it provide information that uses **subject-specific language**?

Every discipline has its own specialized **vocabulary**.

If the terminology being used is vague, or you see words like **STUFF** being thrown about; steer clear.

CRAB ACCURACY

If the source **looks** good, that's great.

But for it to be **of** use; the facts and details provided have to be **accurate**.

**THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE FACTS IN
ACADEMIC RESEARCH**



CRAB ACCURACY

Questions to Ask

- Is the information provided **true**?
- **How** do we know?
- Is the information an **academic** or **scholarly resource**?
- Have the results been **cited elsewhere**?
- Does it provide **sources/references**?
- Is the information **corroborated*** in other places/sources?

***Confirmed, duplicated, verified**





CRAB BIAS & AUTHORITY

Looking at bias is important step as **all content creators have an agenda** they want to push.

Understanding this **purpose** and **bias** helps us understand the source.

**IF A SOURCE IS BIASED,
DOES THAT MEAN IT IS OF NO USE?**



CRAB

BIAS & AUTHORITY

- Who wrote this?
- What is reason they did so?
- Is the topic controversial and only show one side?
- Is there a conflict of interest or hidden agenda?
- What makes this person an expert? What are their credentials?

SUGGESTED READING LIST

“Fakeout.” *CIVIX*. 2021. <https://newsliteracy.ca/Fakeout-Demo/>

This quiz activity allows you a chance to see if you can determine if a resource is **fake news** or **legit**.

“News Literacy.” *CIVIX*. 2021. <https://newsliteracy.ca/videos/>.

Created by the Civic Education organization, this series of videos and resources helps users understand media literacy and how to gauge the value of news/media sources.

“Research Success @ Your Library: A Guide for Secondary Students.” *Toronto District School Board*. 2017.

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/library/HOME/Inquiry>.

Crafted by the TDSB, this resource provides great organizers, activities and advice when it comes to your research.