

Points to Remember – Evaluating Resources

When working on a research project, quality of information is important! Whether your information is from a website, scholarly journal, magazine, newspaper or book, it is important to evaluate your results carefully.

Besides being relevant to your topic, your information should also be evaluated by the following criteria.

Timeliness

- How current is the information? Is it original research or theoretical discussion that includes current data? (Primary Resources)
- Is it a compilation and evaluation of research / data gathered from other sources? (Secondary Resources)
- How recent have the links been updated? (E-resources)
- Are there any dead links? (E-resources)

Scope

- What is the work about?
- Is it written in general overview terms or does it address a specific idea?
- Does the work as a whole match your expectations for scholarly information?
- Does the article/web page/ book have bibliographic support?

Accuracy

- Is the information correct and free from obvious errors?
- Is there bias in any direction?
- Does the author give conclusions and if so, are they verifiable through the resource listing?

Authority

- Who is the author and is s/he well known in the field?
- Does the author have any credentials?
- Has the author written anything else on the subject?

Objectivity

- Does the author seem to push his or her own opinions or beliefs?
- Is the information supported by facts or opinions?
- Does the author represent the information sides evenly / fairly?
- Is there a resource list and does the information contained within the article match that list?