

Evaluating Web Resources Activity

The URL of the web page you are evaluating:

Name of the web page:

The Author and/or Site Publisher

Who is the author?

Is the author's email address included?

What is the domain (i.e. edu, com, gov)?

How does this influence your evaluation?

Is there evidence that the web page is a personal page? (See below for help on this answer:

Look for:

a personal name (e.g. cdavis or davis) following a tilde (~)

a percent sign (%)

or the words “users”, “members”, or “people”

Is the server a commercial ISP or other web page hosting provider (like geocities.com or aol.com)?

What can you find out about the author?

Enter the author's name in a search engine.

Pair the author's name with subject keywords that relate to the topic of the webpage . (Try using some "nyms" - synonyms, hyponyms, and hypernyms for the subject keywords).

What clues did this search give you?

Is there a responsible organization or source for the webpage or article? If so, what is it?

What do you know about this organization?

If you cannot find an author or responsible organization, try using easywhois.com.

Go to easywhois.com and enter the URL of your site.

If this does not produce a listing of who owns the domain, truncate the URL. (Ex: <http://www.marcusletter.bravehost.com/0708dom/index.htm>. Truncate it back to <http://marcusletter.bravehost.com/>

If this still isn't working, leave off the "http://" or "www" (In our example, this would leave marcusletter.bravehost.com

(Note: This provides information on who owns the site, but the site owner may or may not be the author of the web page.)

Did this provide information about the web page you are evaluating?

Links from/Links to

Links from:

Are the links up-to-date or are they dead links?

Examine the links found on the web page you are evaluating.

How reliable are the pages that link from this website to other Internet sources?

Where do they link?

Are the pages on this same site or on another site?

Who authored the information on the other end?

Are these links from credible sources?

Do they support or contradict facts or opinions on the author's page?

What did you learn from examining the sites that link from this website?

Links to:

Knowing what other websites have links to the web page you are evaluating can help you with your evaluation. If other reputable authors or organizations have links to the web page, this may indicate that they have a positive view of the webpage you are evaluating.

Likewise, if questionable or disreputable sources link to the page, this might indicate that the page you are evaluating is also questionable.

How do you find out who links to a webpage?

Use the links command!

Go to a search engine (altavista does this well) and type
link:

followed by the URL of the web page (with no spaces in between)

The resulting search will tell you what pages on the Web link to the page you are evaluating. Try this.

What did you learn about the web page from this "links to" search?

Content

Is the information current? When was the web page created or updated?

Do you find grammatical or spelling errors?

Is personal information requested from the user? If so, why?

What is the purpose of the web page? (to inform, to persuade, to sell you something?)

Does the content of the site reflect what the site claims to be?

Does the information agree with or contradict other sources, including print sources?

Try to find at least two other sources that agree with the information on this web page.

Does the author provide evidence for his/her arguments or ideas?

Is a bibliography included?

Bias

Possible indicators of bias:

Exaggerated language

Unbalanced information (one-sided)

Prejudice

Check out your own emotional response. If your response is extreme or intense, that may indicate the page is biased.

Did you find any of the above indicators of bias? If so, which ones?

Expert Opinion:

Do you know someone with expertise on this subject, or can you find someone online who is known for his authority on this topic? Contact this person for verification of the site you are evaluating.

Narrative Evaluation

Looking at all the data you have collected, explain why this site is or is not valid.