



Evaluating Science in the News

Criteria for Evaluating Sources (CRAP Test)

Adapted from the [CSU Chico CRAAP Test](#)

Question	Yes/No	Tips
Currency: The timeliness of the information		
Was the information published or updated recently ?		For a news article, check the date it was published. For a website, check the copyright date or “last updated” date.
Is the information recent enough for your topic?		For topics like current events or new research, it’s important to use up-to-date sources. For other topics, like history, older sources may also work.
If using a website, do the links work ?		A website with broken links might be outdated.
Reliability: The accuracy and truthfulness of the information		
Is the information supported by evidence like data or quotes? Are there references for the evidence?		If the source references a research study, try to find out more about the study. Make sure the study was valid and represented accurately.
Does the source make reasonable claims about what the evidence shows?		Some sources may overgeneralize the results of a study. Check where the study was done, how many individuals it tested, if it used humans or animals, etc. If the study used animals, for example, its results may not apply to humans.
Has the information (or its references) been reviewed ?		Be wary of information from a study that was not published in a peer-reviewed journal.
Can you confirm the information using another source or your own knowledge?		Trust your judgment and be wary of claims that have been shown to be false by a trustworthy source, such as an educational or government website.
Does the language or tone seem unbiased and professional ?		Avoid sources that use opinionated or biased language, or are poorly written with spelling and grammar errors.
Authority: The source of the information		
Is the author, publisher, or sponsor of the information a trustworthy source , such as an educational or government institution?		If you’re using a website, check the domain in the URL. In the United States, websites with the domain .edu are owned by educational institutions, and those with the domain .gov are owned by the government.
Is the author qualified to write on the topic?		Check the author’s credentials/qualifications to see how experienced they are with the topic.
Is the author likely to be unbiased about the topic?		Check the author’s background and organizations they work with to see if they may have biases or conflicts of interest.
Is there any contact information ?		Avoid sources without an email, publisher address, etc.
Purpose: The reason the information exists		
Is the purpose of the information to teach or inform , rather than to sell, entertain, or persuade?		Avoid sources that are just trying to sell products, get more views, or push a personal agenda. If there are any advertisements, they should be clearly marked as such.
Is the information fact , rather than opinion or propaganda?		The information should be objective, meaning that it uses facts instead of personal opinions or emotions.
Does the source’s point of view seem unbiased ?		Be wary of sources that have political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, or personal biases.