

<b>Your Name</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Mods</b>	<b>Date</b>
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## Web Site Evaluation

Fill in this form every time you take information from a web site for use in your project.

<b>Site name</b>	
<b>Address (URL)</b>	
<b>Who</b>	Who wrote or published the site?
	What are the author's qualifications to write about your topic?
	How can you contact the author if you have questions?
<b>When</b>	When was the page created or last updated?
	How can you tell that the site is updated regularly? (List the specific strategies you used.)
<b>What</b>	How do you know information is accurate? (List the specific strategies you used.)
<b>Why</b>	What is the purpose of this site? (Quote the site and name the location; don't just make it up)
<b>Summary</b>	Make a clear and persuasive "closing argument" that summarizes your proof that this is a high-quality web site that should be used for your project.

## Evaluation Strategies

<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To find the author’s credentials, look around the edges of the page for links that say “About us,” “Background,” “Biography.”</li> <li>• Look for the name of the publisher/server, usually in the first portion of the URL between http:// and the next /</li> <li>• Truncate the URL: Delete the end characters of the URL, stopping before each / (leave the slash). For example, in the URL http://www.nhvweb.net/nhhs, delete nhhs. Press enter to see if you can see more about the author or the publisher.</li> <li>• Find out what others say about the author or publisher by looking up the name in Google; try the search a variety of ways:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Without quotes</li> <li>○ Enclosed in quotes as a phrase</li> <li>○ Enclosed in quotes with * between the first and last name (* takes the place of any middle initial)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Look for a personal name following a tilde (~) or percent sign (%). Look for the words “users”, “members”, or “people.” These are signs of personal pages, which anyone – regardless of expertise – can publish. Investigate the author very carefully.</li> <li>• Look for the host name (usually immediately before the period preceding the domain name, e.g., aol.com). Free servers like AOL, Geocities, or Yahoo can indicate a personal page. Investigate the author very carefully.</li> </ul>
<b>When</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for “last updated” or copyright date – usually at the bottom of the page.</li> <li>• Check the date on all pages of the site.</li> <li>• Review the dates mentioned within the page. Do they start or stop at a certain day, month, or year?</li> <li>• Within the page, look for mention of a current event to indicate how recently the site was updated.</li> </ul>
<b>What</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check for information that makes sense or matches what you already know about the topic.</li> <li>• Look for spelling and grammatical errors, which indicate the site may not be credible.</li> <li>• Look for footnote numbers or links that refer to additional documentation. Make sure those references are real; on the web it’s easy to create fake citations.</li> <li>• Look for too-bright colors or annoying animation; sloppy or garish design may be a sign of poor content.</li> <li>• Click on the links to make sure they work and go to the expected location; broken links may indicate old or weak content.</li> <li>• Look for a direct relationship between the images and the text. Unrelated graphics may indicate old or weak content.</li> </ul>
<b>Why</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the domain, and consider whether it is the most reliable source for your information need:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Businesses:</b> .com (may be trying to sell a product)</li> <li>○ <b>Educational sites:</b> .edu (may host student-created pages; be sure the information is coming from an expert on the topic)</li> <li>○ <b>Government sites:</b> .gov, .mil, .us, or other country code (examine carefully to be sure the content is current; these sites are usually large and contain both new and old information)</li> <li>○ <b>Network service provider:</b> .net (sometimes associated with personal pages)</li> <li>○ <b>Nonprofit organizations:</b> .org (may be trying to persuade you about a point of view)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To find a description of the site’s purpose or audience, look around the edges of the page for links that say “About us,” “Mission,” “Goals.”</li> <li>• Avoid sites with language or design elements that could indicate bias or opinion: extreme points of view, exaggeration, large type, bright colors, animation.</li> <li>• Click on the links and evaluate the quality of the sites the page is linking to. Do they show signs of bias? Are they balanced and objective?</li> <li>• You’re only as good as the company you keep. Evaluate the pages that link to this page by doing a link search in Google:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Copy the URL of the page</li> <li>○ Go to Google</li> <li>○ In the Google search box, type link: and paste the URL immediately after the colon (no space)</li> <li>○ The pages listed all contain one or more links to the page you are evaluating. Do they show signs of bias? Are they balanced and objective?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Look for the page in a reputable subject directory (such as lii.org, ipl.org, about.com) and read the review of the site.</li> </ul>

