

Website Evaluation Guidelines for students at Mount Saint Vincent University (May 2009)

When evaluating a web site try to answer these 5 questions:

WHO? WHY? WHAT? WHEN? HOW?

WHO?

Can the personal or corporate author of the page be determined?

Is contact information provided (name, e-mail, phone number or address)?

Is the author affiliated with an organization or is she/he speaking as an individual?

Are the author's qualifications provided?

Note: the web address will give a clue to authorship .com (company) .edu (educational institution) .gov (government agency) .org (non-profit organization) .uk (country sponsored site e.g. United Kingdom) www.yourname.com for a personal site

WHO do you think is the "legitimate" author? World Trade Organization

<http://www.wto.org> World Trade Organization <http://www.gatt.org>

WHY?

Does the author have a bias or agenda? Is the bias stated or hidden?

Does the page have advertising and, if so, is it related to the page?

Does the author indicate the goal of providing the information?

Is there a disclaimer included on the page?

Does the author solicit feedback on errors or inconsistencies?

Can anyone contribute information to the page or is there a review process for submission?

WHY do you think this page was created? Attention Deficit Disorder & Hyperactivity Success

<http://www.all-natural.com/add.html>

WHAT?

Is the source of the information provided?

Who is the intended audience?

What is the focus of the information?

What is the depth of coverage of the information?

Is the factual information clearly referenced?

Is there a reference list attached to the page?

Are graphs, charts and tables well-labeled and easy to interpret?

Is credit given to material quoted by the author?

WHAT do you think of the information provided? Dihydrogen Monoxide Research

Division <http://www.dhmo.org>

WHEN?

Are dates included (first posted date, last updated date)?

Is the information current or out of date?

Is it easy to determine when any statistical data on the page was collected?

WHEN do you think this was last updated? Computers in Teaching & Learning

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/cital/welcomeframe.html>

HOW?

Does the presentation appear professional (no typos or misspellings)?

Is the page easy to use and well organized?

Is a help screen or site map or internal search engine provided and is it useful?

Do the links from the page still connect or are one or more "dead"?

Is special software needed to view the page?

HOW do you think this looks? Statistics Canada

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html>

For links to databases and web pages recommended by our Librarians please consult the LibGuides created for the guidance of Mount students and faculty.

<http://libguides.msvu.ca>

For a tutorial on Wikipedia please refer to Wikipedia Beneath the Surface

<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/wikipedia/>