

5WH

To Evaluate a Website

Faire une recherche,
ÇA S'APPREND
www.faireunerecherche.fse.ulaval.ca/



WHO is the author? (AUTHORITY)

- Is it an **individual** or a **known organization**?
- Is the author an **expert** in this field? *Background and experience; occupation, title or affiliation with a known organism; previous publications.*
- Can I **contact** the author? *Email address, mailing address, phone number.*

WHAT is this source about? (RELEVANCE AND ACCURACY)

- Is the **topic** of the website **clearly mentioned** on the main page? *Introduction, abstract, plan.*
- Is the information **relevant** for my research?
- Is the information **accurate** and **confirmed** by at least **two other sources** of information (print or digital)?
- Are the **sources** of information **credible, serious** and **cited** on the site?
- Are there links to other **serious sites** on the same topic?

WHEN was the site published (CURRENT)

- Is the information on the website **up to date**?
- Are the **links** to other sites **working** and **up to date**?

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WHAT is this source about? (RELEVANCE AND ACCURACY)

- What **kind of information** am I looking for? *Facts, statistics, descriptions, reasoned arguments, opinions.*
- What is the **goal** of the website? *Inform, influence, sell a product or a service, promote*
- Is the information **impartial**?
- For controversial topics, are **different perspectives** presented? Are the **arguments serious**?

WHERE does the information come from? (SOURCE)

- Is the information provided from an **individual** *Personal site, forum, blog, social media, YouTube* or an **organization**? What type of organization? *Government, university, commercial business, publishing houses (books, dictionaries, encyclopedia), media (newspaper, magazine, television), association, lobby group*
- Is the information linked to a **place** related to the topic of my research? *Country, province, city, etc.*

HOW is information presented? (CLARITY AND RIGOR)

- Is it **easy to find** the information needed? *Plan, table of content, menu, navigation button, content organization*
- Is there an **internal search** tool?
- Are the texts and media **clearly presented and easy** to consult? *Font, colors, layout, visual and audio quality*
- Are the texts written in **quality English**? *Spelling, grammar, vocabulary, syntax, text structure*
- If any, are the **ads separate** from the content of the website?

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Global evaluation of the website

- Globally, does the website earn **at least 2 stars**?
- Is the information **relevant** to the topic of my research?
- Is the information **reliable** and **confirmed** by the **two other sources**?
- If my question is “yes” to these three questions, I can use the website as a source for my research.

