

Evaluate a News Story

Instructions: Evaluate sources using specific criteria and recognize that they vary in quality, usefulness, perspective, purpose, and format.

Name: _____

Part 1: Find a News Story

Find a news story to evaluate. You have three options:

1. Go to your Twitter account and select an online news story that appears in your feed
2. Go to your Facebook account and select an online news story that appears in your feed
3. Select one of the news stories below:
 - a. <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/11/19/michigan-legislators-trump-meeting-438538>
 - b. <https://www.usnews.com/news/business/articles/2020-11-20/criminal-probe-legal-fights-await-trump-after-white-house>
 - c. <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/11/donald-trump-election-complaints-bring-back-the-1870s.html>

Please note: you are not evaluating a webpage. You are specifically looking for a news story, essentially an article that discusses current or recent news. It will likely be part of a larger website that contains a collection of news stories. The larger website should look like an online newspaper, with a variety of headlines, articles, links, and other newsy items.

Part 2: Evaluate the News Story

Read the news story and answer these questions about it:

GENERAL	
I found my news story via: (identify one)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twitter 2. Facebook 3. This assignment
URL of the News story/article you're evaluating	URL:
What was your first response to the news story? Curiosity? Disbelief? Anger? Something else? Does it speak to a personal belief or bias? Why did you respond this way? Be specific.	
Are there ads?	
If so, are the ads provocative or click-bait (content, especially that of a sensational or provocative nature, whose main purpose is to attract attention and draw visitors to a particular web page.)?	
Is the news story satire or a joke?	

AUTHORITY	
Who is the author of the news story? Use Google, Wikipedia, About Us, etc. to investigate. What did you find out about him/her/them?	
Who is responsible for the site on which the news story appears? Investigate the owner/sponsor. Use Google, Wikipedia, About Us, etc. to verify. Who are they? What did you find out about them?	
Go to the news story's home page (the main page of the online newspaper the news story is in). List the titles of two other news stories posted on that page.	1. 2.
Briefly scan both news stories. What are your first impressions of the news stories? Do they influence how you feel about the news story you selected and the Authority of the site?	
Is there a Contact page/info? If so, does the contact information appear to be legitimate? If not, what does that tell you about the authority of this site?	

ACCURACY	
Read beyond the headline. Does the content of the news story support what the headline says?	
Does the news story use sources to support the claims? Do the sources actually exist? (Click one or two of them to find out.)	
Investigate one source cited in the news story. URL of the source you're investigating:	URL:
Evaluate the source using CRAAP Criteria. Address each of the 5 criteria. Does it provide good, accurate, reliable information?	Currency: Relevance: Authority: Accuracy: Purpose:
Search the web for another news story on the topic , one from a site you know is reputable (e.g. NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Time Magazine, NPR, etc.). What is the URL of the news story? What does that news story say about your topic? If you cannot find a reputable news story on your topic, what does that tell you?	URL:
In searching for a reputable source, did you learn anything from the results of your search? That	

is, did the links you retrieved reveal anything about your news story?	
Fact check your original news story by checking two of these: snopes.com , politifact.com , or factcheck.org . What did you learn about your news story when you checked?	1. 2.

CURRENCY	
What is the date of the news story? Is the information in the news story current?	

PURPOSE	
What is the purpose of your news story? What is the purpose of the organization sponsoring the website on which your news story appears? Is the information provided in the news story and on the site biased? Objective? Fact? Opinion?	

Part 3: Reflect on your evaluation

Take a moment to **check your own bias** and honestly consider the information in the original news story you found, along with all the information you discovered when you investigated it.

- What are your conclusions about the accuracy and reliability of the original news story you found?
- Would you feel good sharing it with a friend?
- Would you use it as a source in a paper?