



Rio Salado College
Checklist for Evaluating Research Sources

Evaluation Criteria	Print Sources (Books, Journals, Magazines, Newspapers)	Web Sites (Additional Considerations)
Authority—Is the Author or Sponsoring Organization Reputable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the author, publisher, or responsible organization? • Are qualifications or credentials of the responsible party stated? • Is the author a specialist in the field? • Has the author won awards or special recognition? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the suffix of the Internet address? .k12—kindergarten thru high school; .edu—educational; .gov—government; .org—organization; .com—commercial; .net—network; or other • Is this a subscription database for which fees are paid, or free information? • Does the site require passwords or membership to access the information?
Content—How Complete, Accurate and Relevant is the Content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are facts and statistics backed by verifiable research or studies? • Is the information relevant to your research topic? • Does the information seem complete, reliable, and accurate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the information seem reasonable or verifiable? • Does the information mirror or match other information sources, including print?
Currency—Is the Information Appropriately Current?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When was the information published? • What is the copyright date? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the site maintained and updated frequently? • Is a posting date listed?
Organization—How is the Content Organized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a bibliography indicating what research was done? • Does the book include a Table of Contents and Index? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a help feature or way to easily search the site? • Are hyperlinks to additional information included?
Purpose—What is the underlying purpose for the work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the author present both sides of the issue or clearly state point of view? • Is the information biased? • Is the information written for professionals, students, or the general population? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a particular idea or belief being promoted? • Is a product being sold? • Is the website sponsored by an organization known for a particular viewpoint?