



Library Essentials Evaluating Sources for Academic Writing



The Creation of the Work

Who is the Author? What are the author's: credentials? education? past writing? experience? Does the author's background connect to this research area?	Who is the Publisher? Is it a university press or a large reputable publisher? Is it from a government agency? Is the source self-published? Is the source peer reviewed (as happens with academic presses)? Did experts evaluate the quality of the content before it was published? Additional questions for Websites: Who is the sponsor? - try finding the "About Us" page What is the high-level domain? (.edu, .com, .gov, .uk, .au)
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The Character of the Work

Number of Outside Sources Does the source have a bibliography? Quality and Complexity of Outside Sources Does the bibliography include credible sources with differing perspectives?	Length of the Work How long is the source? Is it at least longer than two pages? Is the length of the work long enough to adequately engage with the topic? Currency When was the source published? Is the source current or out of date for your topic?
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Rhetorical Elements of the Work

The Purpose What are the author's intentions? To Inform? To Advocate? To Sell Something? To Attack or Abuse?	The Intended Audience Who is the author trying to reach? scholars voters shoppers no one in particular
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