

Evaluating Resources: Credibility Criteria

Remember **O.R.C.A.S.** to check out your sources to see if they are appropriate for your research. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Objectivity* What is the purpose of this information?
- To inform, persuade, or sell?
 - Are the author's assumptions apparent?
 - Does this undermine the argument?
 - Does the author acknowledge other points of view?
- Relevance* Is this material really relevant to your topic?
- Does the information relate to countries or groups you are interested in?
 - Is it for an academic audience or for the general public?
- Currency* When was the information created or last updated? In some disciplines, material can become outdated very quickly.
- Is there more recent research available?
 - If it is a website, is it dated? Does it look like it is being maintained?
- Authority* Who are the authors, and what is their source of authority?
- What are their credentials?
 - Is it in a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal? These will have scholarly credibility. Are references all traceable?
 - Is evidence discussed and thoroughly analyzed?
- Sources* Does the author provide evidence to support the ideas and conclusions presented?
- Are data and statistics used accurately?
 - Has the author undertaken original research?
 - Are there accurate references to other sources that you can follow?