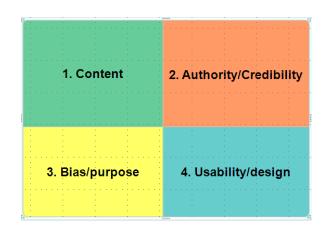
4 Criteria for Web Evaluation

ELEMENTARY (BASIC)

This is an easy way to teach students how to evaluate web resources:

- 1. Content
- 2. Authority/Reliability
- 3. Bias/Purpose
- 4. Usability/Design



WEB SITE EVALUATION (Joyce Valenza, 2004)

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1. Content

- •Does the site cover the topic comprehensively? Accurately?
- •Can you understand what is being said? Is it written above or below your level of understanding?
- •What is unique about this site? Does it offer something others do not?
- •Are the links well-chosen? sufficient?
- •Currency: Can you tell: the date the information was created? the publication date? the date the material was last revised? Are these dates meaningful in terms of the subject matter?
- •Would you get better information in a book? an encyclopedia?
- •Would you include this site in your bibliography?

3. Bias/purpose

- •Why was this site created? (to persuade, inform, explain, sell, promote, parody, other?)
- •Is it a personal, commercial, government or organization site?
- •Is there any bias? Is only one side of the argument presented? Does it appear that any information is purposely omitted? Is there a hidden message? Is it trying to persuade you or change your opinion? Is the bias useful to you in some way?
- •Can you distinguish facts from opinion?
- •Would you include this site in your bibliography?

2. Authority/Credibility

- •Who is responsible for this site? Who sponsors it? Hint: truncate each section of the URL back until you are able to find the sponsor.
- •What are his/her credentials?
- •Have the authors of the site cited their own sources? Are the sources documented appropriately?
- •What is the domain name? Does it end in .com, .gov, .edu, .org, .net? Is it a personal page?
- •Is that a meaningful clue in evaluating the site? (You can't always judge a web page by its suffix. Some commercial sites provide solid information. Some university sites offer less-than-serious personal pages to graduate students.)
- •Who else links to the site? (You can perform a *link check* in AltaVista or Google by entering "link:webaddress" in the search box. Is it linked to by reliable sites? What do other sites say about this one?
- •Would you include this site in your bibliography?

4. Usability/design

- •Is the site easy to navigate (user-friendly)?
- •Is there a well-labeled contents area?
- •Do all the design elements (graphics, art, buttons, etc.) enhance the message of the site? Is there consistency in the basic formats of each page?
- •Are there any errors in spelling or grammar?
- •Do the pages appear clean, uncluttered?
- •Do the links on the site work?
- •Would you include this site in your bibliography?