Evaluating the Credibility of Information Sources

The purpose of the worksheet is to provide a framework for analyzing important characteristics of an information source, whether it is a web site, journal article, or any other type of source. It will help you judge if information is credible and make an informed decision about the appropriate use of a source for your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication:</td>
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</table>

1 To Evaluate the Author’s Credibility:

Answer the questions with explanation of how you know (support your answer):

- Who is the author/s?

- What are the author’s credentials or organizational affiliations?

- What makes the author qualified to write on the topic?

- Is the publisher of the information commercial, academic, governmental, other?

2 To Evaluate the Author’s Purpose:

Answer the questions with explanation of how you know (support your answer):

- What is the intended purpose? (to inform, to argue, to persuade, etc.)

- What is the type of publication in which the source appears? (scholarly journal, magazine, newspaper, trade, blog, etc.)
## To Evaluate Audience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is the intended audience of this source (those with knowledge of a specific discipline or the general public)?</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

## To Evaluate Accuracy and Quality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the information primarily fact or opinion?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the author’s biases?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the author present multiple sides of issues?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Was the information reviewed by editors or subject experts before it was published?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What evidence is provided for claims? Are sources cited, and if so, how?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## To Evaluate Timeliness/Currency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the date of publication?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent is the timeliness of the information crucial to your research?</td>
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</table>

## Overall Evaluation

Drawing on the categories above, to what extent is this a credible source? Why or why not?

Is this source appropriate for your purpose? Why or why not?