

Research Project
Guidelines for Evaluating Sources

Name: _____
Period: _____
Date: _____

As you begin to look over potential sources to use in your research paper, you need to be able to evaluate each of them quickly and effectively so that you do not waste precious time reading material which may not be useful. It is important that you choose the strongest, most accurate sources, not just the first ones that you find. Therefore, be sure to **assess** each source for **accuracy/authority, objectivity, substance and currency**. See descriptions below.

- **Accuracy/Authority** – *Is there an author? Is there an editor or someone who verifies/checks the information? Is the author qualified? What is the reputation of the author, site, or source?*
- **Objectivity** – *Does the source reflect a particular point of view? Is the source designed to sway opinion? With which organization is the source affiliated, and how would you describe the organization's bias? Is there advertising within the source? Does the source attempt to present both sides of an issue?*
- **Substance** – *Does the source have enough content to help you answer your research question? What does the source offer that others sources do not? How much detail and how many examples does the source provide?*
- **Currency** – *Is the source dated? What does the date mean exactly? Is the date near enough to the present to give you up-to-date information?*

(over for information on using the Internet)