

NETTING SOURCES (from "veteran" = "old")

1. CURRENCY - How old is it?

Depending on the kind of information you want, you may want "old" information; that is, information that is the closest in time to your subject (historical). You will want the most recent information, however, for medical research or technological topics, for example. Know your topic, and keep close in time to the actual topic. Check publish dates on the source and any updates that are noted to an older work (i.e., revisions).

2. AUTHORITY - Who is writing it?

The author of the source first must be *known*. Unsigned works are not acceptable for source material, though they may be acceptable for popular material such as anecdotal material relating to the popularity of a certain opinion, etc. Secondly, the author must have universally accepted, scholarly knowledge of the topic. Teams or organizations should be relevant to the topic and not based on opinion, but peer-reviewed scholarship. The source should be free of BIAS or any self-serving agenda.

4. PURPOSE - Is there bias?

Who is the audience for the material and what is the message? Is it partisan or is it universal in application and truth? Has there been any remuneration (payment in money or favors) for the research or outcome of the research? Bias can be on any level (e.g., political, religious, social, economical, cultural, personal).

3. RELIABLE - Is it peer-reviewed?

There should be checks and balances in place concerning the quality of research and the conclusions drawn. Is there a "vetting" agency in charge of reviewing the statements? If not, use the material as incidental or illustrative material and not for supporting your point.

5. RELEVANCE - How closely does the source material relate to your topic and main points?

Not all information will serve your points equally. Some sources will directly provide support to your topics or more closely illustrate, and some will not press your purpose further. You must decide.

6. INTERNET -

Look for URL protocols that are professional and fulfill the same mandates as points 1-5.

Education: .edu Organization: .org (be careful here for bias)

Academic: .ac Commercial: .com (be careful here)

Government: .gov Network: .net

Be careful to note if the internet source is from a different country (.uk, .au, etc.). This may be helpful if you are writing about the global effects of attention deficits in college students, but it may provide biased information if you are writing about the war in Syria.

7. CHECK STYLE GUIDES FOR CITING