RADAR

When critically appraising your sources, RADAR is a framework that you can use to ask questions about an information source and determine its quality and usefulness in your research.

RELEVANCE	Relevance is important because you are expected to support your ideas with pertinent information. A source detailing Einstein's marriage would not be very relevant to a paper about his scientific theories.	○ How does this information help me accomplish my goals and/or answer my question? ○ Which discipline is this information from? ○ Who is the intended audience? ○ How is this information related to the task at hand?
AUTHORITY	Authority is important in judging the credibility of the author's assertions. In a trial regarding DNA evidence, a jury would find a genetics specialist's testimony far more authoritative compared to a testimony from a random person off the street.	○ Who created the information? One person? Many people? Government? A Corporation? A Non-Profit? ○ What is the reputation of this author? Do they do work in this field often? Who are they affiliated with? ○ Have they cited the important works on this topic? ○ Have other people cited this work or author? What did they say about it?
DATE	Date, or currency, is important to note because information can quickly become obsolete. Supporting your research with facts that have been superseded by new research or recent events weakens your argument. Not all assignments require the most current information; older materials can provide valuable information such as a historical overview of your topic. In some disciplines, the date of the source is less important.	○ When was the information created or last updated? ○ Is currency important to this question or discipline? ○ Could this information be outdated? ○ Is this a landmark piece of work, well-known in the field? ○ Could this work be used to provide historical context or comparison?
APPEARANCE and ACCURACY	Appearance is important as different types of sources are identifiable through their appearance and context clues. Accuracy is important because errors and untruths distort a line of reasoning. When you present inaccurate information, you undermine your own credibility.	○ Is the information presented professionally and/or academically? ○ Are there clear editing errors such as spelling, grammar, or typos? ○ Does the author use outside sources to strengthen claims? Are the outside sources any good? ○ Does the presentation follow the appropriate scholarly formats? ○ Has this information been peer-reviewed?
REASON	Reason is important because books, articles, web pages, and other information sources are made to serve a purpose. They can educate, entertain, or sell a product or point of view. Some sources may be frivolous or commercial in nature, providing inaccurate, false, or biased information. Other sources are more ambiguous about any potential partiality. Varied points of view can be valid if they are based on good reasoning and careful use of evidence.	○ Why has this information been made available? To inform, sell, educate, entertain, or convince? ○ How has the information been presented? A book, an, academic journal, a popular magazine, a website, or a trade periodical? ○ What type of information is this? New research? An experiment, a research study, a theoretical model, a case study, an opinion piece, propaganda, or something else? ○ Who has funded this research? is this stated? ○ Has the information been written with an objective, impartial point of view? is it biased? ○ Have they included their methodology, population, and/or data? Is it appropriate?

Information adapted from:

Mandalios, J. (2013). RADAR: An approach for helping students evaluate Internet sources. Journal Of Information Science, 39, 470- 478. doi:10.1177/0165551513478889.

William H. Hannon Library at Loyola Marymount University. (28 June, 2018). *Evaluating sources: Using the RADAR framework*. Retrieved from http://libguides.lmu.edu/aboutRADAR.