

Web Page Evaluation Checklist

1. Go to Google and perform a search on a controversial topic, such as:
prions safe or **"nuclear armageddon"** or **"stem cells" abortion**
2. Use this Checklist to try to evaluate systematically some of the search results.

	Title of page you are evaluating:	Title of page you are evaluating:
1. Look at the URL:		
Personal page or site?	<input type="checkbox"/> ~ or %, or users, members, or people	<input type="checkbox"/> ~ or %, or users, members, or people
What type of domain is it? Appropriate for the content?	<input type="checkbox"/> com <input type="checkbox"/> org/net <input type="checkbox"/> edu <input type="checkbox"/> gov/mil/us <input type="checkbox"/> non-US _____ <input type="checkbox"/> other:	<input type="checkbox"/> com <input type="checkbox"/> org/net <input type="checkbox"/> edu <input type="checkbox"/> gov/mil/us <input type="checkbox"/> non-US _____ <input type="checkbox"/> other:
Published by entity that makes sense? Does it correspond to the name of the site?	Publisher or Domain Name entity:	Publisher or Domain Name entity:
2. Scan the perimeter of page, looking for answers to these questions:		
Who wrote the page?	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Name:
Dated?	Date _____ Current enough?	Date _____ Current enough?
Credentials on this subject? <small>(Truncate back the URL if no useful links.)</small>	Evidence?	Evidence?
3. Look for these indicators of quality		
Sources well documented?		
Complete? If 2nd-hand information, is it not altered or forged?		
Links to more resources? Do they work?		
Other viewpoints? Bias?		
4. What do others say?		
Who links to it? <small>Hint: In Google search: <i>link:all.or.part.of.url</i></small>	Many or few? Opinions of it?	Many or few? Opinions of it?
Is the page rated well in a directory? <small>http://lii.org or http://infomine.ucr.edu or http://about.com</small>		
Look up the author in Google		
5. Does it all add up?		
Why was the page put on the Web?	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform, facts, data <input type="checkbox"/> Explain <input type="checkbox"/> Persuade <input type="checkbox"/> Sell <input type="checkbox"/> Entice <input type="checkbox"/> Share/disclose Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform, facts, data <input type="checkbox"/> Explain <input type="checkbox"/> Persuade <input type="checkbox"/> Sell/entice <input type="checkbox"/> Share/disclose Other:
Possibly ironic? Satire or parody?		

BOTTOM LINE: Is the web page as good as (or better than) what you could find in journal articles or other published literature that is not on the free, general web?

