

# ABCs of Evaluating Evidence

	 <b>PROCEED</b> RELIABLE	<b>USE WITH CAUTION</b> POSSIBLE PROBLEMS	<b>WARNING</b> SHOULD BE SKEPTICAL 
<b>A</b> uthoritative source (an organization may be the author)	Author's name is present. Author is qualified in this field. Publication is peer reviewed or written for a professional audience. If a web page, it is posted by a credible group: university, agency, etc.	Author is named, but searching may be necessary to locate the author. Author is not clearly qualified in this field. Publication is for a general audience, not a discipline specific audience. If a web page, the credibility of the source/host of the page is unknown.	Author's name is missing. If named, author's credentials missing. Publication has an explicit or implicit agenda and/or offers extremist views. If a web page, the source/host is of questionable reputation or may be known for strong biases.
<b>B</b> alance & bias of perspective or presentation	Arguments and evidence are presented objectively. Counterarguments are acknowledged and answered fairly.	Arguments and evidence sometimes include opinion & slight bias. Counterarguments are incomplete or inconsistently offered.	Arguments are obviously opinions or are extremely biased. Opposing arguments are countered with name-calling or inappropriate attacks on the person.
<b>C</b> ontent & evidence analysis	Evidence is sufficient, clear and specific. Evidence is logically sound & avoids fallacies. Evidence is cited or is original research. Evidence is explained or analyzed.	Evidence is offered, but may be general. Some logical fallacies may be present. Evidence is only sometimes cited. Evidence is inconsistently explained or analyzed.	Evidence is missing for several points. Evidence is misleading - seems presented for shock value or is purely emotional. Misleading graphs, illustrations, photos, or headlines are offered as evidence. Source of evidence is not presented.
<b>D</b> ate appropriate for the discipline	Source offers the date published (& revision date if electronic.) Information is current according to the standards of the discipline.	Dates are present, but may not represent the date the information was actually produced or written (for example: copyright range of years 2008-2013). Information is marginally within the discipline's standards for currency.	Source offers no date of publication or revision. Information is clearly older than the discipline's standards for currency.
<b>E</b> valuate for topic & discipline-specific issues			