WHY DO WE NEED TO EVALUATE WEBSITES?
As you know anyone can contribute to information available on the web through blogs, wiki pages, comments, etc. Some sites are created by experts, but the vast majority of the websites are designed and written by non-experts. It’s our job as good researchers to know what information we’re looking at. Use the criteria below as a guide to help you identify information on the web.

AUTHORSHIP
Websites can be produced by individuals or organizations. Reputable websites will have authorship information easily visible, including both the authors’ names and credentials.

_Evaluation Questions:_
- Who is the author of this page?
- Are the authors' credentials available, can you contact him or her?
- What authorship clues does the URL provide (e.g. .com, .edu, .gov)?

ACCURACY
To use information in your research it must be judged accurate and verifiable before use.

_Evaluation Questions:_
- Is the site well edited, free of spelling/grammatical errors? Does the writing style match the topic and audience?
- Does the information “fit” with other research you have done on the topic?
- Does the author include sources for his/her information.

CURRENCY
Look for the publication date of the website, frequent updates, and dates for specific articles.

_Evaluation Questions:_
- Is the page or website being updated and maintained?
- How current is the information? Does it fit your research need?
- When was the page written and last updated?

CONTENT
Does the information provided by the website meet your research need?

_Evaluation Questions:_
- How detailed is the information provided?
- Is their information, or gaps in the topic, that are left out?

PURPOSE
A website’s purpose is the reason it was created. This should be very clear. Note that some websites might present opinions as facts but they are actually attempting to sell a product or persuade you.

_Evaluation Questions:_
- Does the site present fact or opinion?
- What is the purpose of the site? To inform? Persuade? Sell?
- Does the information being presented acknowledge all perspectives on the issue?
- Does the site include advertising? If yes, does this impact the content?