Identifying High-Quality Sites

Anyone can be an "author" on the World Wide Web. Site creators don't have to be experts in any subject. Their "facts" don't have to be true. They don't have to fix errors if some are found. They can pretend that their opinions are true facts. They can even choose to include unkind or harmful statements.

All that's really needed in order to be a Web author is knowledge of how to build a site. With the software available today, it is even easier to create a site than it was a couple of years ago.

So, when you need to research a topic, which Web sites should you trust? It's up to you to judge which sites are the good ones. You also need to judge which sites meet your needs. The questions on the next two pages will help you decide whether or not to use an informational site for research. If a site doesn't measure up, move on and find another one.

Name _____ Date _____

Title of Site _____ URL _____

Site Evaluation Form

Purpose of the Site	Circle one	Add details to explain
Can you tell if the site is fact or opinion? (If the information seems one-sided, or biased, you will have to go elsewhere to hear the other side of the issue.)	yes no	
Is the site free of advertising?	yes no	
If there are ads, is it easy to tell the difference between ads and content?	yes no	
Is the site sponsored by any organizations?	yes no	
Is it clear who the site is for? (for example, college students or young children)	yes no	
Is the tone calm and fair? (Sites that are hateful and angry may not be good sources of information.)	yes no	
Is the site open to everyone? (no age requirements, fees, passwords, or registration)	yes no	
Trustworthiness of the Author	Circle one	Add details to explain
Is the author identified by name?	yes no	
Is the place the author works or the organization he/she belongs to given?	yes no	
Is the site's domain .edu, .net, .org, or .gov? (If you see a ~ in the URL, it may be a personal site, not an official site.)	yes no	
Has the author or site received any respected awards?	yes no	
Was this site recommended by a site you trust? (for example, by a homework help site)	yes no	
Are sources given for statistics?	yes no	

Name _____ Date _____

Trustworthiness of the Author (continued)	Circle one	Add details to explain
Can the author be contacted if you have questions? (E-mail address, street address and phone number)	yes no	
Is the site without spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors?	yes no	
Usefulness of Information	Circle one	Add details to explain
Does this site have enough information for your research?	yes no	
Is most of the information useful for your research? (If not, it may be hard to find what you do need.)	yes no	
Up-to-Date Information	Circle one	Add details to explain
Is the date the article, page, or site was created given?	yes no	
Is the date last revised given?	yes no	
Do all the links lead to active pages? (no dead links)	yes no	
Ease of Use	Circle one	Add details to explain
Is the text understandable?	yes no	
Is the type easy to see?	yes no	
Do the titles and headings give a clear idea of the content?	yes no	
Is there a "what's new" feature?	yes no	
Is there a site map?	yes no	
Is there a tool for searching the site?	yes no	
Do pages load quickly?	yes no	
Are links labeled clearly?	yes no	

How many yeses did you circle ? _____ out of 28 total