WEBSITE EVALUATION

- **Authority:**
  - Check the URL: Is the website built to mimic a more well-known news group or company? Know what each URL domain indicates about the content and authority of the site:
    - .com, .co, or .biz: commercial site
    - .edu: educational site
    - .gov or .mil: US military or government website
    - .net: personal website
    - .org: a website for a non-profit organization
  - Who produced the site? Check the About Us page to understand more about the purpose of the site.
  - Who is the author of the page? Are they credible and authoritative? Is there a way to contact the author or organization?
  - Use google or another search engine to research the author or organization of your source. Look for content from external websites about the person or organization to give you additional insight.

- **Bias and Objectivity:**
  - What is the purpose of the site, why was it created?
  - Does the site push a specific viewpoint or agenda?
  - Can you detect circular reasoning or logical errors? Do you detect language that appears to attack someone personally, as opposed to challenging his/her ideas?

- **Sources and Documentation:**
  - Look for sources: is there adequate documentation for factual statements? If sources are available, are they reliable? Are the sources cultivated from multiple sources, or from one source only (including self-referential sources)?
  - Can you verify the information from a second, separate, reliable source? Cross check suspicious information from widely-recognized credible sources.
  - Is there enough information on the page to create a citation (author, title, date, etc.)?
  - Are photographs attributed to credible sources?

- **Quality and Currency:**
  - Evaluate the quality of the content: is the writing without error, well sourced, and clear?
  - Is the information on the page current? Is the site updated regularly? If there is a news section, how recently was it updated?
  - Are statistics well sourced and current?
  - Do photographs appear to be doctored, photoshopped, or altered in any way?

- **Read and Decide:**
  - Read the entire page: Read the information on the page you would like to use as a source before you decide to use it in your research.
  - Do you feel that the source is credible? Would you be comfortable basing an argument on the facts and information provided?
SITE LIMITING

- By limiting your search to a specific domain you can direct your Google search to a narrower result. To limit to a specific domain in Google enter the following after your search:

  ![Google search for climate change site:.gov](image1)

  You can also limit to a specific website:

  ![Google search for climate change site:.nasa.gov](image2)

- Using the Advanced Search (found under settings) in Google will also allow you to craft a search that is more specific to your research needs.

  ![Google Advanced Search](image3)

  Then narrow your results by...

  - language:
    - any language
  - region:
    - any region
  - last update:
    - past month
  - site or domain:
    - .nasa.gov
  - terms appearing:
    - in the title of the page
  - SafeSearch:
    - Show most relevant results
  - file type:
    - Adobe Acrobat PDF (.pdf)
  - usage rights:
    - not filtered by license

  Advanced Search