Website Evaluation

**URL**

- The address of the website used to give you a good insight to the type of website it is, and it's country of origin. However the rules for domain names (.ie for Ireland, .jp for Japan, .es for Spain etc.) have been relaxed, and anyone can purchase a .com or a .me or a .ie domain name now.
- .Gov-Usually a government website, .edu-usually an educational website, .mil-American miliatary,.org-typically (but not always) an organization

**Purpose**

- Is it a wiki, blog or website? Does the site contain facts or opinions?
- What is the purpose of the site? To inform? To sell something? To change your opinion?
- Is the site objective, showing both sides of an argument? Bias is not always a reason to reject a source - but be sure to notice it.
- Who is the intended audience? Scholars and academics? college students? Primary school teachers? Gardeners? Wildlife enthusiasts?

**Author**

- Who is responsible for the website? What are the author’s credentials? Is the author an authority on the subject? Is it another student? A lecturer? The woman who lives down the street? Is the author an organization?
- What do you know (or what can you find out) about this organization? What is its purpose? An organization can have a bias. They might be political for example, or funded by a big multinational company and therefore have a hidden agenda.

**Accuracy**

- Is the site edited well? Are there spelling or grammar errors?
- Don't Just believe the information- you'll need to take time to consult other sources (including non-web sources) to verify accuracy fully
- Does the information on the site "fit" with other information that you have on the topic? Or are there discrepancies with other sources of information?
- Are there references or links to other sites/documents that are official that back up the authors claims? Are footnotes, citations, or sources provided?

**Currency**

- How current is the information? Does this fit your needs? Note that website content written in 2014 might contain data from 1983.
- When was the site updated last? It might be too old. (Tip: use your search tools in Google to limit by date) Be aware that "Last updated" may mean any update on the page, such as different colors or the addition of a full stop.

**Content**

- How detailed is the information - is it too basic or too advanced?
- Is the coverage of the topic complete? Does it leave out important information? Does it offer more than one perspective?
- Is there a bibliography or links to other information on the topic? Are the other sources relevant and credible?
- How does the content compare with other resources (books, journal articles, other web pages) on the same topic?

**Design**

- Is the website difficult to use, to navigate or slow to load?
- Does the website look tacky, with flashing images and popups
- Does the website keep on trying to get you to download dodgy software?