Evaluating Sources

Whether you’re searching in a library database or out in the wilds of the web, it’s crucial that you critically evaluate the sources you find. Use this worksheet to help you determine if a source is credible and relevant to your assignments. If you are ever in doubt, you can always contact your librarian for help!

Who is the author? What makes them an authority to speak on this topic?

What is the publication?

(Does the publication have an ‘about’ page?)

Something to think about for authors/publishers: have they won any awards or received acknowledgements for achievements or excellence? Involved in any controversies? What are their biases—are they known for being left or right leaning?
What type of source is this? Is it a scholarly source, popular source, a government report, or something else? How do you know?

(consider what type of editing or review process the source had to undergo)

Is the source credible/reliable? Why or why not? Consider the author, publication, whether it uses citations or other means to refer to other sources, and if the source is fair/objective.

Would you use this for your assignment? How would you use it?