Evaluating Websites

National Educational Technology Standards-Students

3 Research and Information Fluency

c. Students evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks

Once students have located information, they must evaluate it. This involves reflective thinking as students seek to understand the information they have found by asking such questions as: Is the information useful and does it relate to the topic? Is the information believable? Students should evaluate both the source of the information and how the topic is treated. Depending on the students’ grade level and the type of site, the following information should be considered in a website evaluation. (Adapted from (Jonassen et al. (2010), p. 22)

1. Is the author(s) listed? What are the author’s credentials?
2. If the website is sponsored by an organization, what is its purpose? Does the site try to sell a product or point of view?
3. Does the organization have a bias towards the information?
4. What is the nature of the website? (.com, .gov, .edu, .org, .net, .mil) How might the source of the information influence its accuracy?
5. Does the information seem factual or is it an opinion? If it is an opinion, is the language inflammatory?
6. Is the information current? When was the site last updated?
7. Is the information presented clearly and logically?
8. Does it seem like some information is missing?
9. Does the site include legitimate references? Can you check those sources?
10. How do visuals, sound, or animation influence the interpretation of the information?

Click on<http://www.teacher-degrees.com/bb_files/flash/PG507/week2/default.htm> segment 2

1. In the video, *Selecting the Right Information Source*, in what ways might teachers use Wikipedia as an information source? Think about some of the advantages and disadvantages of using Wikipedia

2. What concrete strategies can you provide students to help them be critical consumers of information**?** Think about purpose, relevance, and reliability.

Click on<http://www.teacher-degrees.com/bb_files/flash/PG507/week2/default.htm> segment 1

3. In the video, *Evaluating Information Sources*, what advice do students give for conducting an effective search? Listen to what the students say about the types of sources they seek.

4.How do the students decide which are reliable sources? Listen to the questions the students ask about the websites they find.