

# Information Literacy 101: A Primer for Secondary Students

## **Welcome to the hands-on part of this week's technology work!**

Below you will find five activities associated with the online reading tasks our research suggests are particularly challenging for students who read to learn on the Internet.

We will explore each of these individually throughout this week taking time to communicate with other students.

- **Challenge 1: Evaluating Relevancy**
- **Challenge 2: Evaluating Reliability (Part 1)**
- **Challenge 3: Evaluating Reliability (Part 2)**
- **Challenge 4: Detecting Bias**
- **Challenge 5: Evaluating Bias**
- **Challenge 6: Evaluating Validity**

## **Challenge 1 - Evaluating Relevancy: Reading Search Results**

**Question: Which link is most useful?**

**Learning Objective: Evaluating Search Results**

You are trying to find the following information: How many Wells Fargo ATMs are in the "90036" zip code? Please do a search using whatever words you choose, and then answer the questions below.

**Learning Objective: Evaluating Search Results**

- What clues do the words after the link give me?
- Are the results in any special order?
- Who sponsors the site?
- What's missing from this list?
- How do you know and Why is it important?

Apply these questioning strategies to the list of search results in your handout.

## **Challenge 2 - Evaluating Reliability: Investigating the Author**

**Question: Who created this website and what is his/her level of expertise?**

**Learning Objective: Evaluating Search Results**

Locate the "About Us" link on each website below. Complete the activity in your handout by following these steps:

- identify the name of hyperlink that led you to the website's creator;
- tell one thing you learned about the author;
- search off the website for the author's name and tell one other thing you learned about the author;
- is there anything about the site that appears to increase or decrease the reliability of information at this site?
- rate each creator's level of expertise from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

- [Pathways to Freedom: The Underground Railroad](#)
- [Summer Olympic Sports](#)
- [Biographies for Kids: Famous Leaders for Young Readers](#)

## **Challenge 3 - Evaluating Reliability: Investigating the Validity of a Website**

**Question: How do I know if the information is true?**

**Learning Objective: Evaluating The Validity of Online Information**

1. Work with at least one other student to brainstorm strategies for evaluating the validity of information at

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a website. Create a list of these ideas in your handout.

2. See if you can determine if each of these sites is real or not real. If you determined that it is real, what evidence do you have to prove it? If you think it's a hoax, how do you know for sure?

Site A: [Boilerplate Mechanical Marvel of the 19th Century](#)

Site B: [Dog Island](#)

Site C: [True but Little Known Facts About AIDS](#)

Site D: [Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus](#)

3. Share with the larger group by email the strategies that helped you determine the validity of each website. Add to your own list any new strategies you learned from someone else in the group.

Related resources:

- [Snopes.com](#)

## Challenge 4 - Detecting Bias: Separating Fact from Opinion

**Question:** How does the author shape the information at this website?

**Learning Objective:** Evaluating the bias in information (Level 1)

- **Detecting Fact vs. Opinion:** Tell which website you think has the STRONGEST opinions about the use of sled dogs in the Iditarod. Tell whether you think the author of the website you chose is for or against racing sled dogs for competition. Select a quote from the website you chose and explain why you think it is an example of the author sharing strong opinions.
- **Detecting Bias and Considering the Author:** Tell which website (Site A, B, or C) gives opinions from more than one side of the issue. Who are the two people whose opinions are given in the website you chose in number 1? What factors make these two people feel the way they do about the treatment of sled dogs ?

- [Yukon Quest Dog Care](#)
- [Racing for the Grave](#)
- [Scholastic's Is the Iditarod for the Dogs?](#)

## Challenge 5 - Evaluating Bias: Developing a Healthy Skepticism

**Question:** How does the author shape the information at this website?

**Learning Objective:** Evaluating the bias in information (Level 2)

Investigate each of the following websites while considering the answers to the following questions:

- Who created the information at this site?
  - What is the purpose of this site?
  - When was the information at this site updated?
  - Where can I go to check the accuracy of this information?
  - Why did this person, or group, put this information on the Internet?
  - Is there anyone that might be offended by the information at this site?
  - Does the website present only one side of the issue, or are multiple perspectives provided?
  - How is the information at this site shaped by the stance taken by the creator of the site?
- [National Wildlife Federation](#)
  - [Athletes.com](#)

## Challenge 6 - Evaluating Content: Developing a truth meter

**Question:** Can you trust everything you read?

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**Learning Objective: Determining truth when it all sounds reasonable.**

- Go to <http://www.allaboutexplorers.com/webquest/> and choose an explorer next to a green dot. You will be taken to a page with four questions and links to several Websites where you can find answers to the questions.
- Answer the first three questions on the page about that explorer, using both Websites listed on the page for information. If the Websites have different answers for the same question, write down both answers.
- Answer the fourth question about the different answers given by both Websites.
- Answer this question-What did this exercise tell you about the truthfulness of information on the Internet.