

CAPPS

Use the acronym CAPPS to help you determine if a source is credible and worth using in your assignment.

C is for CURRENCY C

When was the source published? Is that current enough for your topic?

If you can't find the date, how recent is the information the author uses to support their argument?



A

A is for AUTHOR

Who is the author of the source? Are they an expert on the topic? How do you know?



Look outside the source itself for information on the author. The author's website or Wikipedia entry may be helpful, for example.

P is for PUBLISHER



Who published the source? What is the mission of the book publisher, journal, or website?

Is the publisher's mission to inform, entertain, or persuade the reader? How does that impact your view of the source?

P



P is for POINT OF VIEW

What is the purpose of the source? Is it to inform, entertain, or persuade?

Does the author provide multiple points of view, for example both sides of the argument?

What bias does the author show? Who is the intended audience?

If there's strong bias or persuasion, that might be okay, depending on your use of the source, but be aware it's there.

S is for SOURCES

Can you determine where the author got their information? Are outside sources cited in references, footnotes, or in the text? Are the outside sources from trustworthy publications?

If no outside sources are mentioned, can you verify the author's main claim yourself using other sources on the topic?

S



Adapted by librarians Rachel Wightman and Lacey Mamak from work by the librarians of Minneapolis Community and Technical College