My Learning Essentials

Checking resources for reliability, objectivity and relevance.

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|  | Reliability  | Objectivity | Relevance |
| What?…type of source is it? The format of the source may give some indication of its quality…are the main arguments of the source? | Has the information been verified in any way? | Does the information in thesource cohere with othersources you have read? | What is the content of theinformation in the source?Is this relevant to yourresearch? |
| Why?…was it produced? | Does the purpose of the source influence its reliability? | Was the source created topersuade, sell, entertain,inform, or for another purpose?Does the purpose of the source influence the objectivity of the information? | Was it produced in responseto a particular event, time orsituation?Does this have an impact onthe relevance of theinformation? |
| When?…was it published orlast updated? | If it's a website, has it been updatedrecently? | Is there any bias about thepiece relating to when it waswritten or produced? | Is it recent?Does this impact upon therelevance?What is the scope of yourresearch? |
| How?…was it published? | Was it published in an academicjournal? If it's a website, what is the URL? | If it's a newspaper article,which paper was it publishedin? | Is it UK-based or international? Does the geographical context impact upon the relevance of the information? |
| Where?…was it produced? | Does the purpose of the source influence its reliability? | Was the source created topersuade, sell, entertain,inform, or for anotherpurpose? Does the purpose of the source influence theobjectivity of the information? | Was it produced in responseto a particular event, time orsituation? Does this have an impact on the relevance of theinformation? |
| Who?…wrote or produced thesource?…is the target audiencefor the source? | What are the author's credentials?Have they written anything else in this area?Are they qualified to be writing on this topic? | Is the author objective, or dothey have an agenda or bias?Is it an independent author,or are they writing on behalfof an organisation?Is the author affiliated to anyorganisations that may affecttheir objectivity? | What audience was the source produced for?Does this affect its relevance? |