

## Sample criteria for evaluating sources

### Reliability

- Is the author an expert in the field?
- Is the publication respected?

Most works in a scholarly (peer-reviewed) journal will pass the reliability test. Most of the time, so will Internet sites from government offices or from universities; however, many popular magazines or common internet sites, like Wikipedia, will not.

### Timeliness

- Is the source recent enough to contain the most up-to-date information?

This is important whenever recent information has affected the topic you're researching. Science and medicine are good examples.

An article written about global warming in 1991 might not contain up-to-date information and would probably not be appropriate to use in your research. However, if you're researching "Attitudes about Global Warming in Late 20th Century America," this could be a fine source to use.

### Context

- Does the source really address your research question?

If the source's time period, population, or geography does not match what you're researching, then you need to think twice before using it.