



LOW HANGING FRUIT

Information Literacy

Without Walter Cronkite

By Jeannie Standal

We are bombarded with information everyday: news apps, social media, radio, television, and of course, websites. Gone are the days when Walter Cronkite on the evening news told us “the way it is.” Now there is conflicting information coming from many different sources, and it is tough to get a read on “the way it is.”

Today’s students are doing most of their research online—and they should! It is where the most current information lives. It is also true that any person with a computer can put stuff on the internet—and some of it looks deceptively factual. Armed with a few good evaluation tools and guiding rules, however, students can separate the fact from the fiction. Even without Walter Cronkite.

The CRAAP Test: The standard for high school and beyond, CRAAP stands for Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose, and there is a [great worksheet](#) to use to test sources. Sometimes finding the required information for this test is challenging—and that is a reliability test, too. The more evaluation questions that can’t be answered, the riskier the source.

For younger students (3rd-7th grades), the CRAAP Test is probably just too much, but the **FART Test** will do the trick. FART stands for Friendly to the Eyes, does the Author have Authority, is the information Repeated elsewhere, and is the information Timely. Please allow five to ten minutes at the beginning of class for necessary snickers and fart noises.

Remembering a few rules about the most common types of websites can help, too:

.gov— websites from government agencies are the most reliable. For example, loc.gov is the Library of Congress and archives.gov is the National Archives. Both are very reliable.

.edu—websites from educational institutions are also very reliable, but most are post-secondary and very high level.

.com—may have good information. Remember com stands for commerce and generally these websites exist to sell stuff. Information here will most likely be biased.

.org-intended for non-profit organizations, but anyone can use a org. They can have fantastic information, but know whose information it is. (LiLI.org is super-reliable!)

And finally, students can ask the librarian —the very best resource in the library—for help.

LINKS TO MORE LEARNING



FART Test—A website evaluation tool for the 3rd to 7th grade set

Help younger students determine where to find good information on the internet.

CRAAP Test—A website evaluation tool for 8th grade through life.

A more rigorous tool for use with more scholarly work.

Information Literacy LibGuide

Tools, standards, tutorials and more to help with all your information literacy needs.

Hoax Sites from teachbytes

A list of 11 hoax sites to practice evaluation.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



How To Do Research - A Guide

<http://www.worldbookonline.com.lili.idm.oclc.org/student/howtoresearch>

Both students and teachers benefit from the How To Do Research tool available in World Book. It has step-by-step instructions from planning research to evaluating sources, organizing data, and presenting one’s work. Teachers will love the additional educator resources to utilize during instruction covering information and research skills.

DIGITAL TOOLS



Citation Tools are built into the LiLI Databases (www.LiLI.org).

Whether exporting citations to bibliography software like EasyBib or copying to use elsewhere, use the easy access in these databases:

Explora: when viewing an article click CITE in the right sidebar.

World Book: Use the “tools and settings” icon at the top, right of the window.

GVRL: Citation Tools are at the top of the Tools list on the right side.

