



## Searching The Internet

Lateral Search: Check other sites if your source seems suspicious!

- Look up the author or website in **Wikipedia**. Does it say anything about them being controversial or unreliable? You can also check other sites like **Snopes** and **Politifact**.
- Try to **find the original source of information**. A lot of articles and videos on the web are not original. In addition, the site you are reading or the video publisher you are watching might be owned by an organisation that is not neutral.
- Do a **web search** with the name of the information source. Are there newspaper articles about the author or website? If there are, do any of them indicate that your information source might be problematic?
- Try to find **at least five trusted articles** (news articles, Wikipedia entries, etc.) that mention your information source. If you can't find that many, it's possible that your information source is not well established.

CRAAP: Ask Yourself these Questions About Your Source!

- **CURRENCY**: When was the page or article created? When was it updated? Are all of the links current?
- **RELEVANCE**: Is the information related to what you are researching? Is it at a level that you understand?
- **AUTHORITY**: Does the person or institution responsible for the site have the qualifications and knowledge to do so?



- **ACCURACY:** Are there references? Do those references check out? Sometimes authors will cite a reference that actually disagrees with their idea!
- **PURPOSE/POINT OF VIEW:** The author should be clear about the purpose of the information presented in the site. Sites can be meant to inform, persuade, entertain, or to sell products.

## Beware of Fake News!

- [VPL's Guide to Disinformation and Fake News](https://www.vpl.ca/guide/disinformation-and-fake-news)  
<https://www.vpl.ca/guide/disinformation-and-fake-news>
- [Factcheck.org/scicheck](https://factcheck.org/scicheck) – Get the real deal on suspicious science claims.
- [Snopes.com](https://snopes.com) –Great for debunking urban myths.
- [Politifact](https://politifact.com) – A politically neutral organisation that fact-checks US news and claims by US politicians.
- Five Ways to Spot Fake News
  - Check out this great video about thinking critically about online content: <https://youtu.be/y7eCB2F89K8>



## Searching the Internet Class Discussion Teacher Guide

Before class, open the YouTube video called [This Chubby Cat is Ready for Lift Off](https://youtu.be/IKAIEoq3Ow8) (<https://youtu.be/IKAIEoq3Ow8>). **Then watch together as a class.**

Discussion Questions:

- What information did the presenter give the audience?
  - Declawing is bad.
  - Even pets that groom themselves (like cats) need to be bathed.
- Discuss the assertion about bathing cats using CRAAP (specifically, Authority and Purpose).
  - **Authority:** Does the video maker have authority to talk about the necessity of bathing cats? Is there anyone else who would have more authority on the topic?
    - They groom animals for a living so know a lot about grooming and washing pets.
    - A veterinarian would have more authority on the topic of whether cats should be bathed or not, as they read scientific literature about pet care.
  - **Purpose/Point of view:** What is the purpose of this video? What is the creator's goal? Does the creator's goal impact the trustworthiness of their information?
    - Entertainment
    - Ad revenue
    - Selling products (notice links in the video description)
    - The video creator cannot be objective about the topic of grooming cats, as their livelihood depends on people bringing in their pets to be bathed.
  - **Currency:** How long ago was this video made? Is the content time dependent? Could this information have changed over time?
  - **Relevance:** Is this video relevant to any recent school assignments? How about at home? Is this video relevant to any decisions you might make in your personal life?
  - **Accuracy:** Does the video provide any references? How do we know where they got their information?
- **Verdict:** How do we feel about this video? Is it a good source of information about cat care?
  - Group will come to its own conclusion, but may decide that the videos are great for entertainment but should not be used as a reliable source of information about pet care.



## Searching the Internet Word Search

Accuracy	Disinformation	Politifact	Search engine
Authority	Fake news	Purpose	Snopes
CRAAP	Lateral reading	References	Wikipedia
Currency	Misinformation	Relevance	

P O L I T I F A C T Q W E S A P P E N I G N E H C R A E S  
 A D D A K T N P I Y J F D A P I N W M F G V E U N F B J Z  
 O Y P O S K T O W P O N S A U L T H I C T R U A Z D L Z R  
 X L O A S E C N E R E F E R B P R N L K F H I J S H Y I V  
 U A U W E U N S A U E S V U C U Z P L N I S I T A R W S L  
 T H Y F D C F B M C G R A M T R X P E S C R A A P H G A N  
 E A S V I Z L A T I C O N Y U P H Q I N F O I N J W T D O  
 N C S T S C I W K D I S I N F O R M A T I O N O I E Q W I  
 O C V R W G N R I H E Q H I W S I T J A Y I W K R O A S T  
 G U N U I R Y O A K R I X P B E I O N E W I I A S D I A A  
 I R O P Z S C S A C A T Y E K A R C Y R E P L Z X G V N M  
 K A E K X F N R P U L V A P P L E X D I E R I M R A B P R  
 Q C C L I S T O F A K E N E W S G F T D E O L M A R T G O  
 U Y S E E U E M P L C B A M Y Q E U I A T H P J E F O L F  
 P D O G S V J U C E Z X P S A Z J A D U A K V N S T E I N  
 P N Q Y H T A W N K S Y N S A C L I T R Y C N E R R U C I  
 H E O F E R B N Q P L F A R A P N E W R E S O P Q U R W S  
 S G D I O U K Z C I M V C L E G K H S U L J N T S A C U I  
 A W P S B N K T B E W E S Y T A U T H O R I T Y E G Y O M  
 T K O X V W D U C Q U M O S J A B C H D B O W O R R D W K



## Searching the Internet Word Search Key

**Accuracy:** Does the author provide references for their work? Do those references check out?

**Authority:** Is the author qualified to talk/write about the topic?

**CRAAP:** Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, Purpose/Point-of-view

**Currency:** When was the article or video created? Has it been updated since?

**Disinformation:** Information that is untrue and was created with the purpose of misleading the audience.

**Fake news:** A popular term for disinformation.

**Lateral reading:** Lateral reading looks at what other sites say about a publication, author, or detail. The next time you read an article try searching the internet for the name of the article's author. What do other people say about them?

**Misinformation:** Untrue or partially untrue information that is spread without the intention of misleading the audience (in other words, the author thought it was true when they shared it). Rumours and viral social media posts are often examples of this. The author "missed the mark".

**Politifact:** A politically neutral organisation that fact checks US news and claims by US politicians.

**Purpose:** Sites are usually meant to inform, persuade, entertain, and/or to sell products. What is the author's goal? Is the author objective?

**References:** A list that tells readers where the author got their information from.

**Relevance:** Is the information appropriate for what you are researching? Is it on topic? Is it at a level you understand?

**Search engine:** Search engines are what you use to search the web. Eg.: Google, DuckDuckGo, Yahoo, and Bing.

**Snopes:** Snopes.com is a great site for uncovering fake or misleading articles, memes, and viral emails.

**Wikipedia:** When first exploring a topic, Wikipedia is often a good place to start.

**P O L I T I F A C T** Q W E S A P P **E N I G N E H C R A E S**  
A D D A K T N P I Y J F D A P I N W M F G V E U N F B J Z  
O Y P O S K T O W P O N S A U L T H I C T R U A Z D L Z R  
X L O A **S E C N E R E F E R** B P R N L K F H I J S H Y I V  
U A U W E U N S A U E S V U C **U** Z P L N I S I T A R W S L  
T H Y F D C F B M C G R A M T **R** X P E S **C R A A P** H G A N  
E **A** S V I Z L A T I C O N Y U **P** H Q I N F O I N J **W** T D O  
N **C** S T S C I W K **D I S I N F O R M A T I O N** O I E Q W I  
O **C** V R W G N R I H E Q H I W **S** I T J A Y I W **K** R O A S T  
G **U** N U I R Y O A K R I X P B **E** I O N E W I **I** A S D I A A  
I **R** O P Z **S** C S A C A T Y E K A R C Y R E **P** L Z X G V N M  
K **A** E K X F **N** R P U L V A P P L E X D I **E** R I M R A B P R  
Q **C** C L I S T **O F A K E N E W S** G F T **D** E O L M A R T G O  
U **Y** S E **E** U E M **P** L C B A M Y Q E U **I** A T H P J E F O L F  
P D O G S **V** J U C **E** Z X P S A Z J **A** D U A K V N S T E I N  
P N Q Y H T **A** W N K **S** Y N S A C L I T R Y **C** N E R R U C I  
H E O F E R B **N** Q P L F A R A P **N** E W R E S O P Q U R W S  
S G D I O U K Z **C** I M V C L E **G** K H S U L J N T S A C U I  
A W P S B N K T B **E** W E S Y T **A** U T H O R I T Y E G Y O M  
T K O X V W D U C Q U M O S J A B C H D B O W O R R D W K



## Searching the Internet Challenge Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Let's say that you have just read an article about **climate change** that quoted someone called **Natalya Gomez**. Do a quick lateral search online. Is she a good source of information? Why or why not?

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- 2) Search "**understanding the global warming debate**" and click on the Forbes article.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/warrenmeyer/2012/02/09/understanding-the-global-warming-debate/> Scroll down to the end of the article and

read the author's biography (you may need to click "Read more").

What do you think about the **author's authority**? Is he qualified to explain and examine **climate science**? Why or why not?

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## Searching the Internet Challenge Answers

1. You read an article about climate change that quoted someone called Natalya Gomez. Do a quick lateral search online. Does it seem like she is a good source of information? Why or why not?
  - a. **Yes. She is a professor at McGill University and researches topics related to climate change. Her masters and PhD both relate to climate.**
  
2. Search “understanding the global warming debate” and click on the Forbes article. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/warrenmeyer/2012/02/09/understanding-the-global-warming-debate/> What do you think about the author’s authority? Is he qualified to explain and examine climate science? Why or why not? *Hint: Read his full bio.*
  - a. **No. The author has not consulted with experts in the field, cited any sources by providing a bibliography and does not have any formal education in the area of climate science.**