



# J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College

Your first stop for information and research needs!

## Evaluating Information Sources Worksheet

Last updated on 5/31/2011.

Choose any topic to research. Provide some search terms or keywords that describe your topic and write them below.

Search Terms: \_\_\_\_\_

### A. Google

- Using the search terms you listed above, perform a search using Google at <http://www.google.com>.
- Review your Google search results list and select one web site to evaluate. List the name and URL address of the web site below:

Name of web site: \_\_\_\_\_

URL address – http://\_\_\_\_\_

- Use the criteria below to evaluate this web site:
  - What?** What does the web site cover? Is it relevant to my topic? Does the web site provide general or comprehensive information? What type of audience is the web site written for? If there is an issue, are both sides presented?

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- When?** Is it clear when the web site was last updated? Is the information up-to-date enough for my topic?

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- Who?** Who is the author or sponsoring organization of this web site? What makes the author an expert in the field written about? What credentials does the author or organization have? Is there any contact information listed for the author or organization?

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- d. **Why?** What is the purpose of this web site – to educate, entertain, inform, persuade, sell something, etc.? Does the site contain any advertising? Is the information biased or does it push a specific perspective?

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- e. **How?** Is the site easy to navigate? Are there any obvious signs of typos or errors? Does the author provide references so you can verify factual information?

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- f. Would you use this web site for a college level research assignment or paper? (*Select one*)

Yes       No

4. **Print out and attach the 1<sup>st</sup> page** of this web site to this worksheet.

## B. Academic Search Complete Database

- Using the same search terms you used in the Google exercise, perform a search using the library database, **Academic Search Complete**.
- From the library's home page at <http://library.reynolds.edu>, click on **Academic Search Complete** from the *Popular Databases* menu on the left. If you are accessing any of the databases from off-campus, you will be brought to a Virginia's Community Colleges login screen. Type your – **My JSRCC** (Blackboard) username and password to login.
- When the Academic Search Complete search screen appears, **type your search terms** in the search windows provided. Checkmark the **Full Text** box under the *Limit your results* section. Press the <Enter> key or click on the **Search** button to execute the search.

The screenshot shows the EBSCO Academic Search Complete search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Publications', 'Subject Terms', 'Cited References', 'More', 'Sign In to My EBSCOhost', and 'Folder'. Below the navigation bar, the search area is titled 'Searching: Academic Search Complete' with a 'Choose Databases' link. The search input fields contain 'organic foods' and 'health' with 'and' operators. Each input field has a dropdown menu labeled 'Select a Field (optional)'. A 'Search' button is located to the right of the input fields. Below the search area, there is a 'Limit your results' section with two options: 'Full Text' (checked) and 'Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals' (unchecked).

4. When the results screen appears, review your results list and **select one article to evaluate**. List the author's name (if available) and the article title below:

**Author's name** (if available): \_\_\_\_\_

**Article title:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. Use the criteria below to evaluate this article:

- a. **What?** What does the article cover? Is it relevant to my topic? Does the article provide general or comprehensive information? What type of audience is the article written for? If there is an issue, are both sides presented?

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- b. **When?** What is the publication date of this article? Is the information up-to-date enough for my topic?

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- c. **Who?** Who is the author of this article? What makes the author an expert in the field written about? What credentials does the author have? Is there any contact information listed for the author?

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- d. **Why?** What is the purpose of this article – to educate, entertain, inform, persuade, sell something, etc.? Does the article contain any advertising? Is the information biased or does it push a specific perspective?

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e. **How?** Are there any obvious signs of typos or errors? Does the author provide references so you can verify factual information?

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f. Would you use this article for a college level research assignment or paper? (*Select one*)

Yes       No

7. **Print out and attach the 1<sup>st</sup> page** of this article to this worksheet.