

## East Los Angeles College Library *Credible Sources on the Web*

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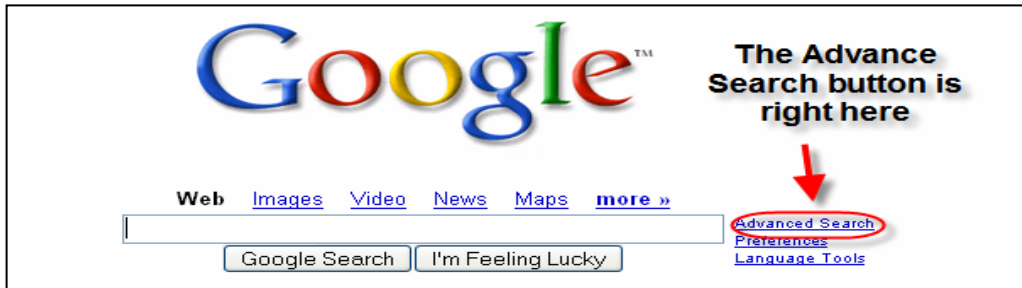
The Web has a lot to offer when it comes to research, but you can't trust everything you find on the Web. The following **criteria** can help you figure out if what you've found on the Web is useful for your research assignment or not:

<b>Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who wrote the material?</li> <li>• Do you see contact information for the author?</li> <li>• Is the author an expert about this topic?</li> <li>• What can you find out about the author or organization?</li> <li>• Who is sponsoring the web site?</li> </ul>
<b>Accuracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How complete and accurate are the information and the links provided?</li> <li>• Are most of the links working?</li> <li>• Does any of the information sound suspicious?</li> </ul>
<b>Objectivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is any sort of bias evident? Does the site want you to accept their beliefs?</li> <li>• Does the site provide several points of view or only one?</li> <li>• Does the site reflect the agenda of a political, religious, or social group or institution?</li> </ul>
<b>Currency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For your topic, does it matter if the information on the web site is current?</li> <li>• When was the site produced?</li> <li>• When was it last updated?</li> <li>• How up to date are the links?</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is the audience for the site? (e.g., third graders, college students, etc.)</li> <li>• What is the purpose of the Web Page &amp; what does it contain?</li> <li>• What is the site's domain?</li> <li>• What is the relative value of the Web site in comparison to the range of information resources available on this topic? (<b>Note: Be sure to check with a librarian.</b>)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What other resources (print &amp; non-print) are available in this area?</li> <li>○ How comprehensive is this site?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Google is a great tool for searching the Web. However, the results you get back when you do a search using Google are not evaluated. Basically, they are ranked only according to popularity. This is why it's a good idea to do an advanced search on Google.



When you do an advanced search, think about limiting your results to domains that might provide the best information on your topic:

<b>.edu</b>	educational institutions
<b>.gov</b>	government sites
<b>.org</b>	non-profit organizations
<b>.com</b>	commercial sites
<b>.net</b>	also used by commercial sites

There are also other great tools you can use to find information on the Web. Below are some examples:

### News Sources

- *CNN* <http://www.cnn.com/>
- *BBC News* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>
- *Common Dreams News Center* <http://www.commondreams.org/>

### Subject Directories/Gateways

- *Librarians' Internet Index* <http://lii.org/>
- *Infomine* <http://infomine.ucr.edu/>
- *Open Directory Project* <http://dmoz.org/>

### Meta-Search Engines

- *Clusty* (Currently searches a number of free, search engines and directories, not Google or Yahoo. Results accompanied with subject subdivisions based on words in search results, giving usually the major themes. Click on these to search within results on each theme.) <http://clusty.com/>
- *Dogpile* (Searches Google, Yahoo!, Live Search, and Ask.) <http://www.dogpile.com/>

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### Exercise 1

You are writing a research paper on Martin Luther King, Jr. Evaluate the following websites using the criteria you just learned and decide which website is more credible.

<b>Decide which Website is more appropriate for your assignment.</b>	
1.) Biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.	<a href="http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/">http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/</a>
2.) Martin Luther King, Jr.: A True Historical Examination	<a href="http://www.martinlutherking.org">http://www.martinlutherking.org</a>

	Web Site 1	Web Site 2
<b>Authority</b>		
<b>Accuracy</b>		
<b>Objectivity</b>		
<b>Currency</b>		
<b>Content</b>		

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**Exercise 2 Try to Find Another Credible Website Using Either Google’s Advanced Search Features or One of the Subject Directories You Just Learned.**

Using **Google’s Advanced Search**, find another credible web site on Martin Luther King, Jr. or one on your own topic.

What is your topic? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the site called? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the site’s URL? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the domain? \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, use the criteria we talked about to evaluate if this is a good web site for your research project or not:**

Authority	
Accuracy	
Objectivity	
Currency	
Content	

Using one of the **Subject Directories** you just learned about, find another credible web site on Martin Luther King, Jr. or one on your own topic.

What is the site called? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the site’s URL? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the domain? \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, use the criteria we talked about to evaluate if this is a good web site for your research project or not:**

Authority	
Accuracy	
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