A CAPS Guide to Evaluating Online Information
You can't believe everything you read, see, or hear. Use this checklist to select the best.

Currency
✓ Is the publication date noted?
✓ Has the information been recently updated?
✓ Are links from a web page still active and useful?
✓ How old is the information contained compared to the publication date of the source?

Accuracy
✓ Is the author/creator clearly identified? Are they a reliable source of information? (e.g., journalist, expert within their field?)
✓ Is there any way to verify the author/creator’s credentials?
✓ Who is ultimately responsible for the content?
✓ If you trace back the URL to view a page higher in the directory, is the sponsor/location of the site appropriate for the material contained?
✓ Can you tell where the information came from?
✓ Can you contact the creator by email if you have a concern?

Purpose
✓ Why was this article written? Is the information provided as a public service, to sell something, to educate, to convince you, or for some other purpose?
✓ Are ads present? If so, are they clearly separated from the information content?
✓ Are opinions identified as such? Does the creator’s affiliation or employment have any impact on his/her point of view?
✓ Does the source provide a comprehensive/broad overview of a subject, or is it limited to a specific time period or narrower aspect?
✓ Are sources given?
✓ Are several points of view included or is there evidence of bias and one-sidedness?

Suitability
✓ Who is the intended audience, based on the source’s content, tone and style?
✓ Does this tone, level and content meet your needs?
✓ Are there navigation aids to help you use the resource and locate specific information?