

RATE IT!

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Condensed version of Rate It! for source evaluations for basic researched compositions.

R	Relevance & Reliability What content from the source (article or website) is related and relevant to the research question, argument, issue, or topic? What evidence shows you can trust that the source (or website or publisher) is providing reliable information? What other web sources share this content (Consider the SIFT method including the lateral reading strategy for researching online)?
A	Accuracy, Accessibility, and Authority - How do you know that the information in the source is accurate? - Is the source accessible online without multiple ads? Are there other ways to access the source or source-related content (video, audio, alternative file types, etc), or is there an obstacle that prevents access and readability? <i>(If so, search the title and author on the general internet. If it is not accessible that way, consider moving on to other options).</i> “Authority” refers to the creator/composer/writer as well as the publisher - is there “expert” knowledge or experience for both? <i>(Check the “about us” or “creator” or “webmaster” tab for nonacademic publications and websites).</i>
T	Timeliness and Trustworthiness - What information is needed from the source? Is the date of publication aligned to these needs? In other words, if it is historical information needed on factual information, older (reliable) sources may be the better option. If you need current information, an older source may not be a good choice - Do you need current information related to the issue? Is the source’s publication date the most recent available to provide this? - Is the author and publisher reputable in the field? How do you know?
E	Expertise and Experience - Who are the authors and members of any organizations identified as authors? - What evidence shows he, she or they are experts in the field with related experience?
IT!	Information Technology (source location; human or AI generated). - Where is the source located on the internet? What website is it a part of? - What makes the publisher (or website, journal, book, etc) credible? - Is the source self-published? What information indicates that? If so, what makes the writer/creator credible without support from a website/publisher? - Is the content generated by humans or artificial intelligence text generators? How do you know? - Which internet browser was searched? Did you compare those results with another browser?

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Source Evaluation Guide - **Extended version** for research using research questions and requiring literature reviews

R	Relevance & Reliability Does the source provide information needed to answer the research question or guide/sub questions? Consider main arguments and supporting arguments: which questions or arguments does the source address? What information is useful, specifically? Why? How? Is the website or publisher known in the field? What is its reputation regarding reliable information and unbiased sharing of information? How do you know? (Consider the SIFT method including the lateral reading strategy for researching online)?
A	Accuracy, Accessibility, and Authority - Is the source information accurate? How do you know? What other online sources confirm this accuracy? - Is the source well-written (or spoken)? Is the content logically organized? What evidence is there of quality? - Is grammar and sentence structure clear and accurate? Are there word arrangements that make it confusing and difficult to work with? <i>If “yes” reconsider this source and use new search terms and phrases in library databases for similar information that is easier to understand or presented in an alternative way.</i> - Does the publisher offer a text copy only or does the website and source provide accessibility options such as read aloud, pdf version, video version, transcripts of video, etc? <i>If access is limiting your progress, save this link for later and continue your search for other sources within the search results returned. Also, you can search the title and author on the general internet to locate the source online in an open access website).</i> - If the source is informational or an academic research study, is it free from bias and other language that may indicate the author's personal opinions beyond the content and evidence presented in the text? What text is questionable? Why? Reconsider any text that raises questions regarding researcher bias. - Consider how the content will be used in your research, then answer the question: Should this source be eliminated since it threatens my own credibility as a composer and expert on this issue I am reporting on? - Is the content in the source accurate? How do you know? What evidence do you have on accuracy? - Authority refers to the creator as well as the publisher - Is there “expert” knowledge or experience regarding the topic for both the author and the publisher? How do you know? What evidence helps you to identify this?
T	Timeliness and Trustworthiness - What is the purpose for using the content in the source? Is the publication date and source content aligned with your specific purpose? Is a more current source needed for your specific purpose? If yes, adjust search features (limit dates) to sources published within the last few years. - Is there a source with similar information and content that is more trusted in the field?
E	Expertise and Experience - Who are the authors and members of any organizations identified as “authors” of the source? Is the publisher established in the field? How do you know? If not, what makes this publisher credible? Consider years in service, individuals & organizations associated with publishing companies or databases, and other affiliations. - What evidence is there of expertise in the field for the source?
IT!	Information Technology (Source location; human or AI - generated) - Where is this source located on the internet? Which specific database or internet browser was searched? - What makes the publisher (website, journal, database, or browser) credible? - Is it self-published? What do you know about the author's or an organization's expertise, ethical practices? - Are the affiliations to the location containing this source available online? Can you confirm unbiased, reliable information, specifically when considering the topic and research questions the research is focused on? - Might the content be generated by artificial intelligence but with specific ‘human’ prompting? How do you know? Why does “human prompting” make a difference?

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R	Relevance & Reliability Does the source provide information needed to answer the research question or guide/sub questions? Consider main arguments and supporting arguments: which questions or arguments does the source address? What information is useful, specifically? Why? How? Is the website or publisher known in the field? What is its reputation regarding reliable information and unbiased sharing of information? How do you know? What other web sources share this content (Consider the SIFT method for researching online)?
A	Accuracy, Accessibility, and Authority - Is the source information accurate? How do you know? What other online sources confirm this accuracy? - Is the source well-written (or spoken)? Is the content logically organized? What evidence is there of quality? - Is grammar and sentence structure clear and accurate? Are there word arrangements that make it confusing and difficult to work with? <i>If “yes” reconsider this source and use new search terms and phrases in library databases for similar information that is easier to understand or presented in an alternative way.</i> - Does the publisher offer a text copy only or does the website and source provide accessibility options such as read aloud, pdf version, video version, transcripts of video, etc? <i>If access is limiting your progress, save this link for later and continue your search for other sources within the search results returned. Also, you can search the title and author on the general internet to locate the source online in an open access website).</i> - If the source is informational or an academic research study, is it free from bias and other language that may indicate the author's personal opinions beyond the content and evidence presented in the text? What text is questionable? Why? Reconsider any text that raises questions regarding researcher bias. - Consider how the content will be used in your research, then answer the question: Should this source be eliminated since it threatens my own credibility as a composer and expert on this issue I am reporting on? - Is the content in the source accurate? How do you know? What evidence do you have on accuracy? - Authority refers to the creator as well as the publisher - Is there “expert” knowledge or experience regarding the topic for both the author and the publisher? How do you know? What evidence helps you to identify this?
T	Timeliness and Trustworthiness - What is the purpose for using the content in the source? Is the publication date and source content aligned with your specific purpose? Is a more current source needed for your specific purpose? If yes, adjust search features (limit dates) to sources published within the last few years. - Is there a source with similar information and content that is more trusted in the field?
E	Expertise and Experience - Who are the authors and members of any organizations identified as “authors” of the source? Is the publisher established in the field? How do you know? If not, what makes this publisher credible? Consider years in service, individuals & organizations associated with publishing companies or databases, and other affiliations. - What evidence is there of expertise in the field for the source?
IT!	Information Technology (Source location; human or AI - generated) - Where is this source located on the internet? Which specific database or internet browser was searched? - What makes the publisher (website, journal, database, or browser) credible? - Is it self-published? What do you know about the author's or an organization's expertise, ethical practices? - Are the affiliations to the location containing this source available online? Can you confirm unbiased, reliable information, specifically when considering the topic and research questions the research is focused on? Justify. - Is the content generated by humans or artificial intelligence text generators? How do you know?

Evaluating your sources with the RATE IT! Guide

1. Choose questions from each section/letter of the RATE IT! Guide (tabs 1 or 2).
2. Answer these questions by examining your sources and the websites or databases they are located on.
3. Write down your notes, observations, answers the questions selected.
4. Turn these notes into concise 150-200 word "evaluative" paragraphs for each of your sources.
5. Format these notes in annotated bibliography format as [shown in this document -](#)

[See the tab with the green check mark](#)



RATE IT! Instructional Activities

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Multiple uses of the ***RATE IT! Tool*** for educators *differentiating instruction* with *flexible grouping*

 from whole group to independent application 

Educator led: whole group	Educator facilitated: small group	Educator facilitated: Partner application	Educator-led & facilitated Individual application
Use as an <u>introduction lesson to information literacy</u> and navigating online content mindfully and with attention on the trustworthiness and accuracy of source information.	Use for <u>specific research projects and small group inquiry-based activities focused on higher level critical thinking</u> requiring students to analyze and evaluate online content for specific uses.	Use for <u>peer composing activities involving online research and analysis</u> and the selection of reliable and credible source information that meets the intended purpose of the activity.	Use for <u>activities that follow whole group instruction on source evaluations, citing text, or supporting opinions based on a text or collection of texts related to a specific issue.</u>
1. Choose one letter /category: R.A.T.E. or IT - for modeling <i>the source evaluation process</i> with a selected reading or excerpt from a reading. Annotate on the main screen with students annotating on their own E-copy or hard copy.	1. Have students peer compose in a Google doc to create an informational /factual annotation of the article followed with an evaluative annotation that uses textual evidence to support their opinions on the relevance and credibility of the source for a specific purpose.	1. Partners are provided with two related readings and five questions related to both. The task is to have students determine which article is fit for supporting answers to the five questions. Students are directed to share their ‘findings’ and “recommendations” regarding the sources and their match to the questions.	1. Provide students with a ‘research assignment directions’ doc and the following task: consider the requirements of the assignment that involves online research. Determine what the focus should be for the analysis of sources located online for completing the research project assigned. Advise students to use the <i>RATE IT!</i> guide to identify and then justify their choices based on the assignment provided.
2. Use one question from each category of the RATE IT! guide for evaluating a sample text in whole group along with students’ contributing responses to questions selected by the educator from the different categories of the guide. The educator or a student annotates the text on display while others complete that on their personal copies. Next, students use the annotated text sample to write evaluative annotations in partners or individually.	2. Assign student groups different sources and different letters for their evaluation of a text for a specific purpose and have them create an audio evaluation of that source, which can be recorded in Canvas assignments as a submission	2. Extend the above partner activity by having students create a visual for sharing their findings (with the whole group) and justifications. This can be in a shared space online (google doc; google slides; canvas page; discussion posts; etc).	2. Provide students with a list of three internet links to academic sources. Ask students to eliminate the source that is least credible and relevant to answering the question. Have them use the RATE IT! Tool to evaluate the sources and then explain the process of analysis as the final product in a 2 minute audio or 300 word composition.

***RATE IT!* Instructional Activities**

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◀ from whole group to independent application ▶

3. With the students, educators label/annotate a text in whole group using the letters in the margins of a text: R.A.T.E and IT - for identifying textual evidence showing the answer to different questions in the RATE IT! tool. Then students use that annotated text for selecting textual evidence to support opinions on the sources' relevance, accuracy, trustworthiness, expertise, etc.	3. Have students share a reading in small group and then discuss the reading around a specific question. Direct students to assign each person in the group a different section of the <i>RATE IT!</i> guide for an analysis of the text. Then have students collaborate on their ideas and compose a doc that shares their responses (a visual or a formal composition in paragraphs with subheadings. Direct students to use the <i>RATE IT!</i> guide as a starting point for organizing their content.	3. Direct students to locate two articles on a specific current issue. Then direct students to assess their sources for use in a scholarly publication using the <i>RATE IT!</i> tool.	3. For projects involving technology and societal arguments and current issues and related solutions, focus on the R, T and E categories.
4.	4. Assign each small group of students an article with a list of five or more references. Direct students to read the article together and reverse outline it in a google doc (see the tab titled "reverse outline template"). Then direct them to determine how the sources contribute to the quality of the publication. Require students to present their conclusions with textual evidence as support for their opinion in a shared online space or as a real time presentation at the end of a session.	4. Assign each pair of students a published article online from a popular website (not a scholarly website/journal). Require students to review the references page and then read the article together. Then have students determine the author's success at meeting his or her purpose using the RATE IT! Questions as a guide for developing a response based on textual evidence.	4. Assign students the task of analyzing two sources for answering a specific research question. Have students determine which source is most relevant and reliable for answering which question. Students should be directed to first evaluating the source by either (1) using one question from each category or (2) by focusing on specific categories as identified by the educator.

Evaluating information with the *RATE IT!* guide

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Using *RATE IT!* Independently during the research and writing process

Purpose	Process
To eliminate sources from a collection / bibliography	Evaluate sources for eliminating those that are the least useful for providing background information, answering the main research question and answering the guide questions.
To support points with scientific, evidence	
To establish that an issue is important	
To establish ethos in your composition	
To identify unbiased sources for a research paper	
To determine the best sources for identifying and countering an opposing viewpoint in an analysis or argument composition.	
To determine credible sources for using in a problem solution composition.	

Reverse Outline Template for use with the *RATE IT!* guide

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Citation Content	
Author or organization identified as author	
Date of publication	
Title of source/publication	
Website name, publisher name (which may be the same) and journal name, if this is a website with a collection of journals. Also, Hyperlink the web address to the short name of the website.	
DOI , ISSN, ISBN number	

The Composition Considerations or the Rhetorical Situation for Composing	
Who is the intended audience? How do you know?	
What is the content mainly focused on? What information is included?	
Why was it written? What is the author's purpose?	
How is the composition shared? Audio? Traditional composition? Visual composition? etc...	

Reverse Outline - Content from Source

What is the main thesis, claim, or argument statement?		
Is it implied or explicit?		
	Description/paraphrase/direct quotation	Page number or paragraph number
Point 1/Sub-claim 1/ Reason 1/Section 1		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Point 2/Sub-claim 2/ Reason 2/Section 2		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Point 2/Sub-claim 2/ Reason 2/Section 2		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Content / Evidence or explanation		
Counter Argument included in the closing? If the opposing views and rebuttals are within the body sections, identify in the sections above.		
Conclusion: what is suggested, recommended, emphasized, encouraged, or discouraged?		