CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WEB RESOURCES

1. **Authority -** *Who is responsible for the content on the page?*
   Individuals: Does the person have authority in the topic area? How do you find out?
   - Where does the author work? What is his/her job title?
   - Can you confirm employment through an employer's Website directory?
   - Has this author published other material on this topic?
   - Is there a list of other works provided by the author?
   - Are the author's books or articles indexed in library catalogs or periodical indexes?
   - What do other people have to say about the author's work (reviews)?
   - What other information is there to indicate expertise?

   Organizations: What kind of entity is it? Do you consider them reliable?
   - A professional association
   - An activist organization
   - A college or university department
   - A government agency
   - A hobbyist group
   - A commercial publisher

   Web address (URL): Is the site academic or commercial?
   - education sites (United States) = .edu
   - commercial sites = .com
   - government sites = .gov
   - organizational sites = .org
   - For more URL extension possibilities, see http://www.iana.org/domain-names.htm

2. **Bias or Objectivity -** *What is the target audience for this information?*
   - Is there nonprofit or corporate sponsorship?
   - Are they trying to sell a product or service?
   - Are they promoting a political point of view?
   - Is there information about any sponsors so you can learn more about their purposes?
   - If there is advertising, does the information appear to be influenced by the advertisers?
   - What bias, if any, do the authors of the information appear to bring?

3. **Currency** *- When was it published or last updated?*
   - When was the piece written, created, or last updated?
   - For this topic, is it important whether the information is current?
   - Is the page automatically updated daily or manually updated when the information is created or revised?

4. **Accuracy** *–Where do they get their information?*
   - How can you determine the information's accuracy?
   - Does the author specify the source(s) for information presented?
   - Is there a bibliography?
   - Should you cross-check the information elsewhere?

5. **Relevance & Usability** *- Why choose this information above others?*
   - Is the information presented relevant to your research?
   - Is the material useful to you at your level? Is it too elementary? Is it so full of professional jargon that you have a hard time making sense of it?
   - Is the site well organized?
   - Is there better information elsewhere?