

Bell High School
BTT10, Information and Technology Communication in Business, Grade 9, Open

Reliable Website Evaluation

Pseudoscience, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is “a system of theories, assumptions, and methods erroneously regarded as scientific.” Though the line between science and pseudoscience is sometimes blurred, it is important to be able to recognize when claims are being exaggerated, are unsupported by facts, or cannot be tested scientifically. Many websites make such claims. For this assignment, your job is to evaluate the reliability of the websites.

Part 1: Choose a topic

- Visit this Wikipedia page which lists topics that are characterised as pseudoscience:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_topics_characterized_as_pseudoscience

- Choose one topic that interests you and state that topic in the box below:

Crystal Healing

- Find a website that is in support of your topic and paste the URL in the box below:

<https://www.housebeautiful.com/design-inspiration/a22800001/healing-crystals-stones-home-guide/>

- Find a website that disputes your topic and paste the URL in the box below:

<https://www.livescience.com/40347-crystal-healing.html>

Part 2: Evaluate

Use the C.A.R.S. checklist to evaluate both websites and complete the following tables.

		Website #1			Website #2		
	Criteria	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A
Credibility	Is the author of the information on the site clearly identified?	X			X		
	Does the author have appropriate credentials and/or are they qualified to provide the information disclosed?		X		X		
	Can you contact the author of the information?		X		X		
	Is the purpose of the document clearly identified (i.e. to persuade, to educate, to entertain, to remind)?	X			X		
Accuracy	Is the date that the site was created provided?	X			X		
	Is the date that the site was last updated provided?		X			X	
	Are the links provided on the site all working?	X				X	
	Does the document provide detailed and comprehensive information?	X			X		
	Is the information scholarly in nature?		X		X		
Reasonableness	Is the information on the page based on facts?		X		X		
	Do I get a lot of prompts and windows to sign up for and/or purchase other products and services?	X			X		
	Does advertising for products and services interfere with my ability to freely navigate the “information” part of this site?	X				X	
	Is this information biased towards a particular group, business, or person’s beliefs?	X				X	
Supported	Are references and a bibliography provided?		X		X		
	Are there pictures and/or graphs that provide additional useful information?	X				X	
	If supporting software is necessary to view the site, is this provided?		X			X	
	Are there suggestions and options for better viewing of the information?		X			X	
	Is the information free?	X			X		

Part 3: Discussion

1. Based on your C.A.R.S. evaluation, is the first website reliable? Explain your answer.

The first website is not reliable for the following reasons:

Pros:

- Useful pictures are provided
- The date the site is created is also provided

Cons:

- The author does not have the proper credentials to make an article about a health-related topic
- A proper bibliography is not provided
- The article fails to be scholarly in nature
- The information provided is not based on facts
- An abundance of advertisements and sign-up prompts

2. Based on your C.A.R.S. evaluation, is the second website reliable? Explain your answer.

The second website is reliable for the following reasons:

Pros:

- A proper bibliography is provided with multiple different sources
- The article is scholarly in nature
- Both authors of this article have proper credentials to write about said topic
- Information in this article is based on facts
- The date the website was created is provided

Cons:

- An abundance of advertisements and sign-up prompts
- Fails to provide pictures with meaningful meanings

3. Which of the two websites are you most likely to believe? Explain your answer.

<https://livescience.com> is more reliable because the pros outweigh the cons. For instance, the mentioned website also provides contact with the authors of the paper, who both have the proper credentials to write a paper based on the effects of healing crystals on youth. In contrast, the first website (<https://housebeautiful.com>) fails to provide supporting sources and is based more on opinions than facts.

Rubric

	Level 4			Level 3			Level 2			Level 1		
COMMUNICATION D2. use appropriate technology to facilitate effective communication	The student presented their research, in tables and paragraph form, with a high degree of effectiveness			The student presented their research, in tables and paragraph form, with considerable effectiveness			The student presented their research, in tables and paragraph form, with some effectiveness			The student presented their research, in tables and paragraph form, with limited effectiveness		
	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-	2+	2	2-	1+	1	1-
APPLICATION A5: apply effective techniques when conducting electronic research	The student used effective techniques to conduct research, evaluate websites, and explain their thinking thoroughly			The student used effective techniques to conduct research, evaluate websites, and explain their thinking			The student used effective techniques to conduct research and evaluate websites			The student used effective techniques to conduct research		
	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-	2+	2	2-	1+	1	1-

Level: 4

Feedback: Excellent job completing the CARS table. It is very thorough. You provided many specific examples in the discussion responses which brought you from level 3 to level 4+ in that category.

Current Overall Level in BTT10: 4