**Checklist for Evaluating Online Sources**

Not all online information is trustworthy. The more times you can answer “yes” to these evaluation questions, the more trustworthy the source is.

**Sender**

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the sender an authority on the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the sender avoid bias?

**Message**

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the information complete? Avoid sources that leave you with more questions than answers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the information fair and balanced? Factual information is more reliable than personal opinions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the language evenhanded? Exaggerated or threatening language is a sign of untrustworthy information.

**Medium**

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the form reliable? For example, information that comes from academic Web sites is generally more reliable than from a person’s social media account.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the layout and design clear and professional?

**Receiver**

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the message meant for learners? Be skeptical of sources that attempt to sell you a product or an idea.

**Context**

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the information current or timely? If it isn’t, is there any new information that is needed to understand the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do other sources support the information? If two or three trustworthy sources all say the same thing, the information is probably accurate and reliable.

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