Online Evaluation Checklist

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| Name: |  | Date: |  |

Use the following checklist to make sure an online source is reliable.

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| **CREATOR:** What person or organization created the message? (news publication, scholar, private citizen, advertiser)? |
|  | Is the creator an expert on the topic? |
|  | Does the content reveal a personal or professional bias? (For example, an advertiser would have a clear bias toward a certain product or service.) |
| **CONTENT:** What does the message say or not say? |
|  | Is the information based on facts? |
|  | Is the content balanced, addressing multiple points of view about the topic? (A one-sided or missing point of view can be a sign of bias.) |
|  | Is the language fair and respectful? (Be skeptical of overly emotional language—“It was an absolutely horrendous decision!”) |
|  | Are photos and other visuals fair and balanced? (In politics, one site may choose a photo that makes a candidate look inspiring, while another site chooses a photo that makes the same candidate look frustrated.) |
|  | Is the content current? (If the date of publication is old, the information may no longer be accurate.) |
| **CONTEXT:** What other factors matter? |
|  | Is the purpose of the message to educate and inform rather than sell or persuade? |
|  | Does the site or media look clean and professional? |
|  | Is there another source that verifies the same information? |