Establishing Credibility*

This lesson is on reliability and credibility of sources.

1. Choose a secondhand source of information related to the topic you are studying. Ideally, this should be an article from a magazine, a newspaper, the internet.
2. Using the criteria identified on the following page, write a 1-page analysis which addresses the level of credibility you found in your source.
3. Create a single power-point slide and a 2-minute oral presentation that addresses the reliability and credibility of your source.
4. In class, students will be grouped into teams of 7. As a student presents, the Evaluators note how well the presenter argues the credibility of the source.
   a. Presenter
   b. Timekeeper
   c. Evaluator 1: Purpose
   d. Evaluator 2: Accuracy
   e. Evaluator 3: Authority
   f. Evaluator 4: Relevance
   g. Evaluator 5: Currency
5. When the speaker finishes, each team member provides feedback on how well his/her aspect was covered.
6. Everyone rotates roles and the next speaker presents.

Teacher Notes:

A downfall for students in this activity is that they feel obligated to spend the 2 minutes listing answers to each of the items for which evaluators are asked to consider. When introducing this activity, I suggest that students are encouraged first to spend a minute describing the content, using the power point slide as a reference for the listeners, and then to spend a minute evaluating the extent to which they believe the article is credible.

*This activity was inspired by one shared with me during an AP Summer Institute workshop; Emily Lott, Ed. D., Hall County School District (emily.lott@hallco.org)

PURPOSE	The reason the information exists
What to look for	**Evaluator Comments**
• What is the purpose of the information? • Do they inform, teach, sell, entertain, or persuade? • Is the information fact, opinion, or propaganda? • Does the point of view appear impartial? • Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional, or personal biases?	
ACCURACY	**The reliability, truthfulness, and correctness**
What to look for	**Evaluator Comments**
• Where does the information come from? • Is the information supported by evidence? • Has the information been reviewed or refereed? • Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge? • Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?	
AUTHORITY	**The source of the information**
What to look for	**Evaluator Comments**
• Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor? • What are the author's credentials or affiliations? • Is the author qualified to write on the topic? • Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?	
RELEVANCE	**The importance of the information for your needs**
What to look for	**Evaluator Comments**
• Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question? • Who is the intended audience? • Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?	
CURRENCY	**The timeliness of the information**
What to look for	**Evaluator Comments**
• When was the information published or posted? • Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work as well?	