Library Assignment: Evaluating Information

Instructions: Complete a search on your topic using two different research tools. Compare the results for currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose.

This assignment should take 30-45 minutes. A tutorial from Penn State University on how to evaluate information can be found here: https://libraries.psu.edu/services/research-help/evaluating-information. If you have questions just ask for help at the Library Services Desk on the first floor of the Library.

Step 1: Browse for topics

Go to the New York Times Opinion section and browse the headlines. Select a topic that interests you.

Step 2: Select search terms

Write down some keywords you think might be helpful in conducting a search on that topic.

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Step 3: Search Google

1) Use your keywords to do a search in Google. How many hits did your search yield? __________

2) Circle the kinds of sources you found using Google: (Circle all that apply)

   Webpages  Research Articles  Blogs  Videos  Other: ___________________

3) Pick a source from the list that you think is credible enough to be used in a paper where you either support or argue against the opinion stated in the NYT piece you read. List three reasons why you think the source is credible.

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Step 4: Search in a Research Database

1) Do your search in a research database called Academic Search Complete. How many hits did your search yield? __________

2) Circle the sources you found using Academic Search Complete: (Circle all that apply)

   Webpages  Research Articles  Blogs  Videos  Other: ___________________
3) Pick a source from the list that you think is credible enough to be used in a paper where you either support or argue against the opinion stated in the NYT piece you read. List three reasons why you think the source is credible.

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Step 5: Compare

What were the main differences you found between Google and Academic Search Complete?

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