Website Evaluation Tool

**Name:**

*Write answers to the questions for each of the categories below in the column provided to the right. Give the site a score of 1-5 (1=poor/ 5=superior) for each of the categories below, based on the questions asked. The score is recorded at* ***after each chart*** *on the right.* ***Be sure to complete all pages of this evaluation tool***

**Author's Credentials and Affiliation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the URL? Does it end in .com, .org, .edu., .net, or something else? |  |
| Who is the author? Does the site offer credentials that make this author an expert in the subject? |  |
| Are there sponsors for the site? |  |
| Are the sources of information stated? |  |
| Can the author or organization be contacted for clarification by using the site? |  |
| Are there any organizational or author biases? If so, give 1 example. |  |
| How many other sites link to the site? (You can perform a link check in AltaVista or Google by entering "link:(URL)" in the search box. Are the type of sites that are linked to it more commercial, educational, or personal? |  |

**Score for this section:**

**Scope of Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the purpose of the resource? Is this site educational, political, commercial, or personal?  For example, is it trying to be purely informational, persuasive, promotional, or derogatory? |  |
| What subject area, time period, formats or types of material are covered? |  |
| Is the information filled with factual concrete evidence or generalizations and opinions?. |  |
| Does the site contain more original information or more links to other sites’ information? |  |
| When was the resource last updated? Is it recent, over a year, or not indicated? |  |
| Is there a counter of the number who visit the site? |  |
| Does the site have clear and obvious “pointers” to new content? |  |

**Score for this section:**

**Format**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Are there any basic spelling/ grammar errors? |  |
| What color is the text vs. background? Is it easy to read this contrast? |  |
| How many links/ clicks does it take to get to useful information. (“1-2” or “3 or more”) |  |
| What type of graphic images are on the page(s) (pictures, graphs, interactive etc.). What is the approximate percentage of images vs. content on the page(s)? |  |
| Who is the target audience? How do you know? |  |
| Describe how the links are arranged? |  |
| Does the site have its own search engine? |  |

**Score for this section:**

**Accessibility**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Is the site available on a consistent basis (if you go there on multiple days)? |  |
| Does the site load quickly, moderately fast, or slow? |  |
| How many links lead to a dead-end? (Check 6 or more links) |  |
| Does the site have a text-based alternative that you can send away for and receive? |  |
| Is this a fee-based site? If no, can non-members still have access to part of the site? |  |

**Score for this section:**

**Add up each of the scores in the 4 categories**

**Total Score for this Site:**

***Evaluating the Score***

Include a couple facts in your T-Chart from this site if you feel it is a valid source based on the following:

*16-20: Reliable or superior*

*10-15: Some information may be useful and worth citing*

*0-9: Too doubtful to include as a worthy source*

**Formal Writing Practice**

**Based on the results of your web evaluation, write 1 formal paragraph that explains why the site you evaluated is, or is not, a valid source of information. As per our formal writing recommendations, your paragraph must contain a topic sentence, 3 examples from your website evaluation chart to support the topic sentence, an analysis statement for each example, and a conclusion. Therefore your paragraph will be at least 8 sentences long. Remember to also follow all of the rules of formal writing.**

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