**EVALUATION OF WEB SOURCES**

1. **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this assignment, you will be able to…

* Identify web sources related to your topic (GMO).
* Analyze and evaluate the reliability of websites in providing scientific information about your topic.
* Summarize how you will use content from a reliable web source to complete your project.

1. **INSTRUCTIONS**

Find **one** high-quality, scientifically reliable **web source** that contains information about your topic and complete a ***Web Source Evaluation*** worksheet for the source.

***Important Guidelines for this assignment…***

* Select and use the website that is the highest quality, the most scientifically reliable & reputable, and the most trustworthy source of information about your topic.
  + Do not use any general online encyclopedia (e.g., **Encyclopedia Britannica**) as your web source. These sources are too general to be useful beyond helping with background research.
  + Select a website that has **web-published** content about your topic.

In other words, when you list this source in your references, it should be properly formatted as a website, not as a journal, magazine, or book.

* + - **Do not use e-versions of articles that are published in journals, magazines, or books.** Many websites may link to journal, magazine, or book articles, but these articles are not classified as “websites”. They are classified and formatted as journals, magazines, and/or books, even though you may find them on the web.
    - **Example**: Wikipedia is web-published content on a website, but scientificamerican.com contains some digital content that is from their printed magazine.
    - ***Hint***: If you see page numbers, then it is probably not a website!
  + Use your selected website to complete the ***Web Source Evaluation*** worksheet. Please **type** and print your Web Source Evaluation worksheet for submission. (A blank template of the ***Web Source Evaluation*** worksheet is posted on the Blackboard course site.)

1. **GRADING** *(See rubric on the next page.)*

This assignment will be graded based upon:

1. its completeness & accuracy according to the instructions
2. the quality and thoughtfulness of your evaluation / analysis
3. the quality of writing (i.e., appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation).

*Genetically Modified Organisms*

**Evaluation of Web Sources – *Grading Rubric***

Evaluation of a **high-quality, reliable, trustworthy website** about your topic

* **identified source meets criteria** \_\_\_\_\_ / **3** points

*Comments / Concerns…*

not a website – a journal / magazine / book / other

limited relevance to the project topic

higher-quality web sources available

* **thorough & accurate evaluation of source** \_\_\_\_\_ / **2** points

*Comments / Concerns…*

inaccuracy in evaluation – minor / significant

more thorough analysis needed – targeted / widespread

* **thorough & well-developed summary**  \_\_\_\_\_ / **2** points

*Comments / Concerns…*

limited and/or some vague content; important details missing;

needs expansion and/or more development

minimal and/or insufficient content; mostly vague with little detail;

needs significant work

* **Worksheet typed & printed**  \_\_\_\_\_ / **3** points

**Web Source Evaluation Worksheet**

**Instructions**: Complete a copy of this worksheet for each website that you use in your research.

**Website (URL):** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please provide a* ***complete******URL*** *for your source.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| QUESTION: | **YES** | **NO** | **\*COMMENTS** (*\*necessary to receive full credit*) |
| **1. Who is the author (or source institution, if no author is identified)?** |  |  |  |
| • Is the author or source an authority on the subject? How do you know? |  |  |  |
| • Does the author or source have an e-mail address? |  |  |  |
| • What does the domain extension of the URL tell you about the author or source? (E. g., “.MIL”, “.ORG”, etc.) | N/A | N/A |  |
| **2. Is the information accurate?** |  |  |  |
| • Can it be verified in another source? |  |  |  |
| • Is it relevant to your topic? |  |  |  |
| • Does the author indicate where he/she found the information? |  |  |  |
| • Is there a list of references? |  |  |  |
| **3. Is the information biased?** |  |  |  |
| • Is it trying to persuade you to another point of view? |  |  |  |
| • Is it trying to persuade you to buy a product? |  |  |  |
| **4. Is the information current?** |  |  |  |
| • When was the last time the website was updated? |  |  |  |
| • Are the links broken? |  |  |  |

5. **Overall Evaluation**

Is this website likely to be a reliable / trustworthy source of scientific information about your topic? ***YES*** or ***NO***

**Explain your reasoning for this conclusion.** (*You may include an additional page for more space.*)

6. **Summary of Web Source Content or Reflection**

If this website is a ***reliable / trustworthy*** source of scientific information about your topic, summarize the information relevant to your topic and explain how you will use it to complete your project.

Paraphrase and/or quote ideas appropriately in your summary.

(*You will need more space to answer this question. Please include an additional page for more space.)*

Questions provided by: Christine King Tracey, Rockville Faculty Services Librarian, Montgomery College, 240-567-7252, [christine.tracey@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:christine.tracey@montgomerycollege.edu)