

RADAR Transcript

Are you seeking good quality information sources for your assignment? Use RADAR to help you locate what you need.

Before you get started with searching, you need to select a topic. For our topic, let's use the health benefits of exercise.

Your assignment should give you information about what type of resources you need such as images, journal articles or books (if it doesn't or you can't find it – ask your instructor). Your assignment says that you are expected to include good sources of information, but what does that mean? How will you be able to tell if something is good?

Use RADAR's 5 easy steps: relevance, authority, date, accuracy, and the reason for creation. Let's look at each step in more detail.

Step 1: Relevance

This is the most important step. You can ask yourself "Is this information going to answer my question? Is it relevant to my topic? Will it work for my assignment?" If the answer is no, keep looking. There's a lot of great information available but if it doesn't fit your topic, you shouldn't use it.

Step 2: Authority

This refers to who created the information. It may be a person, a few people or a corporation. Either way, you can ask yourself "Can I trust the author? Are they an expert or have specialized knowledge on this topic?" You may need to do additional searching to find out more about the author. Biographies and credentials can be used to evaluate authors. For example, a credential is the letters behind someone's name -- so when doing research about nutrition you might

find information written by a registered dietitian, that person would have an RD behind their name.

Step 3: Date

The topic of your assignment will help you decide if an information source is too old. Consider how recent you need the information to be for your topic. Is your topic on a subject that is rapidly changing like technology? Or is your topic more stable like historical events? Look for a date on the source you have selected. When was the information made? Most reliable sources will have a clear date on them like book and journal articles. But, websites can be tricky. The copyright date, usually at the bottom of a website, is not necessarily the date when the information was posted. Many web pages don't specify the date so it is difficult to determine if the information is new or has it been updated? This could mean the source is less reliable. Try to find information that does include a date.

Step 4: Accuracy

Evaluate your source to determine if the information presented is accurate. Is it reporting facts? Does it tell both sides? Or is it someone's opinion? Are there references? Good sources will often list references and cite where the information was found.

Step 5: Reason for creation

Everything is created or written for a reason. Why was source created? Is it trying to inform? Or, is it trying to sell you something? Is it meant to entertain you such as a joke, parody or gossip? Your emotions can be a clue about the reason a source was created. Some social media posts and news articles are written to create a strong emotional reaction such as fear or anger. Take some time to evaluate the reason the author created this information.

Remember the 5 steps of RADAR will lead you to good information. Relevance, authority, date, accuracy and the reason for creation. Use RADAR to pick the best sources for your assignment.