Title: Evaluating Resources

Objectives	Time frame to Complete
Students will be able to evaluate resources for accuracy and appropriateness.	30-45 minutes
	NRS EFL 4

Stackable Cert. Documentation	Technology	Study / Life skills	EL-Civics	Career Pathways	Police	Paramedic	Fire Rescue	Medical Asst.	EKG / Cardio	Phlebotomy	Practical Nursing	Healthcare Admin	Pharmacy Tech	IMT	AMT	HVAC	Welding	Other:			
X		X																			

Standard(s) Addressed in Lesson
Read for Understanding
Write to Convey Ideas

Benchmark(s) Addressed in Lesson

- W.4.6. Determine the relevance, accuracy and credibility of level-appropriate sources to support a controlling idea.
- R.4.1. Identify purposes for reading (for example, to generate and answer questions about a topic, to solve problems).
- R.4.2. Select text to match purpose, appropriate complexity and reading level.
- R.4.11. Apply, monitor and adjust comprehension strategies (for example, note subtle details in texts, pose questions about text) to understand text at an inferential level.
- R.4.14. Analyze how an author uses argument and provides evidence to persuade others.
- R.4.15. Draw conclusions about text using knowledge of main idea(s) and supporting details, consistent with complexity of the text.

Materials
Evaluating Resources handout
Access to various resources such as internet sites, newspapers, books, etc.

Learner Prior Knowledge

Activities

Step 1   Ask students what makes a person's argument or point of view believable? (They may suggest personal experiences or things witnessed firsthand, having facts that support the ideas, etc.) Link these ideas to the ways writers strengthen their arguments or make their writing more convincing. Distribute the "Evaluating Resources" handout.

Step 2   Examine and discuss the criteria for evaluating resources that may be used with any type of resource (book, newspaper article, website, encyclopedias, etc.).

Step 3   Students choose a topic they would like to know more about. It may be a political issue such as a levy

that is on the local ballot, a broad topic such as cancer, a historical event, and employment opportunities in a given field. Then, they will search available resources for information about that topic.

Step 4   Students will identify two resources that contain information about their chosen topics and evaluate each based upon the criteria using the chart on the "Evaluating Resources" handout. Special note: If using the internet, Wikipedia is likely to be a common resource. It is important for students to know that, while Wikipedia can provide a lot of useful information, *anyone* can author or contribute to articles on Wikipedia. It is not always reliable.

Step 5   Students may share their findings --- which resource seemed most accurate and appropriate to their research?

Assessment/Evidence
Completed charts and assessment of resources. This should be saved in the students' portfolio as documentation of benchmarks if they are working toward a Basic (Level 4) Stackable Certificate.

Adaptations for Beginning Students
Students may need to work one-on-one with a teacher. Sometimes, determining author and evaluating bias are quite challenging.

Adaptations for Advanced Students
A more detailed list of criteria for evaluating internet resources may be found at:
http://lib.colostate.edu/howto/evalweb2.html

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

This lesson was created by Middletown ABLE.

Evaluating Resources

When writing to inform or persuade, it strengthens your argument to have facts that support your thesis (statement of belief or statement about what you believe should happen).

In today's world, you are no longer limited to resources in your local library such as books, newspapers, or magazines. The Internet provides millions of sources of information on almost any topic imaginable.

Whether you are collecting supporting evidence from books, newspapers, the Internet, or any other resource, you can use the following criteria to determine if the information accurate and appropriate:

Author/Source:
- Is the source a primary source or a secondary source? A primary source is usually a person, business, or organization directly involved in the topic or with the subject. A secondary source is presenting information that it collected from other resources. Primary sources are usually more trustworthy.
- Is the author an expert on the subject?

Timeliness:
- Is the resource current? Typically, you will want to use the most recent information (including statistics and facts). For example, if you are writing an essay about immigration, it is much more effective to include population data from within the past year than to include information from the 1980 U.S. Census.

Completeness:
- Is the information complete? Does it tell the whole story?

Objectivity vs. Bias:
- Does the resource present information on both sides of the issue? If the information is balanced, it is objective. News articles are supposed to be objective.
- If the information presented is one-sided, the resource is biased toward a certain point of view. By leaving out the other side, the source is limited and may not be accurate.

The most accurate resources will be primary resources that are complete, recent, objective, and written by an expert in the field.

Choose a topic that you would like to know more about _____

Next, find two resources about this topic.

Criteria	Resource 1:	Resource 2:
Primary or secondary source?		
Is the author an expert? How do you know?		
What is the source's date? Is the information current?		
Is the information complete?		
Objective or biased?		

After reading and evaluating each resource, which resource do you believe is more accurate and appropriate?

Explain your reasoning.