# Website Evaluation Checklist

[Adapted from http://www.lib.umd.edu/guides/webcheck.html](http://www.lib.umd.edu/guides/webcheck.html)

## Overview

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) should critically evaluate information available on the internet related to assessment and treatment of communication disorders. The questions below are intended to guide SLPs as they review internet search results and when determining the value of information obtained through internet searches.

URL Address of Website:

Title of Web site

## **Authority:**

Anyone can create and load a Web site. It is important to find out *who is* the author and what are the author's *qualifications* or *expertise,* in order to determine the credibility and reliability of the information.

### **Who is the** author **of the Web site**?

* I couldn't tell.
* The author is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### What part of the URL (Web address) gave you clues about authorship?

*Check all that apply:*

* a company [(.com)](http://www.amazon.com)
* academic institution [(.edu)](http://www.umd.edu)
* U.S. Government agency [(.gov)](http://www.nih.gov)
* U.S. military site [(.mil)](http://www.defenselink.mil/)
* network of computers [(.net)](http://www.academicinfo.net)
* non-profit organization [(.org)](http://www.habitat.org/)
* country sponsored site [(.uk)](http://www.bl.uk/)
* a personal Web page [(www.jamieoliver.com)](http://www.jamieoliver.com/)
* other? Please describe:

### What are the qualifications of the author or group that created the site?

* I couldn't tell.
* The author's qualifications are: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Purpose and Content:

Determine the purpose of the Web site by looking closely at the content of the information. Some sites provide links to information *about our organization* or a *Mission Statement*, detailing the purpose in creating the Web site, while the purpose of others might not be obvious at first. Take the time to thoroughly explore a Web site to determine if the information is subjective *(biased or opinionated)* or objective *(factual)*, or mixed.

### **What is the purpose of the Web page or site?**

*Check all that apply:*

* a personal Web page
* a company or organization Web site
* a forum for scholarly/research information
* a forum for educational/public service information
* an advertisement or electronic commerce
* a forum for ideas, opinions or points of view
* other—explain:

### Describe the *purpose* of the Web site.

### **What type of information does the Web site provide?**

*Check one:*

* Balanced, objective or factual information. Are the arguments well supported?
* Biased, subjective or opinionated statements. Are the arguments well supported?
* Both objective and subjective information.
* I couldn't tell.

### Does the Web site provide any contact information or means of communicating with the author or Webmaster?

* No
* Yes, the site provides:

## **Current or Dated Information:**

The currency or regularity of updating information is vital for some types of Web sites, and not so important for others. For example, Web sites that provide historical information, such as the history of training for SLPs, do not have to be updated as often as sites that provide news stories or research information.

### **When was the Web site last revised, modified or updated?**

* I couldn't tell
* It was updated on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Is currency important to the type of information available on this Web site?

* Yes.
* No. Note any factors that you considered in your decision making

### Is the site well-maintained?

* I couldn't tell
* Yes
* No

## **Design, Organization & Ease of Use:**

Design, organization and ease of use are important considerations. Web sites can provide useful sources of information. However, if Web sites are slow to load or difficult to navigate, search and read, then their contribution and usefulness may be lost.

### **In your opinion, how does the Web site appear overall?**

*Check all that apply:*

* Well designed and organized.
* Easy to read and navigate.
* HELP screens are available.
* A search feature/site map is available.
* Poorly designed / disorganized.
* Difficult to read and navigate.
* HELP screens are unavailable.
* A search feature/site map is unavailable.

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