

# Critical Reading - Information Literacy

## Academic Reading – Critical Reading



“Information literate people [. . .] know how knowledge is organised, how to find information, and how to use information [. . .] They are people prepared for life long learning, because they can always find the information needed [. . .] To be information literate, a person must be able to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.” (American Library Association, 1989 quoted in Northedge, 2005, 223)

### Task 1

Students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century make use of a vast range of sources of information. This can be challenging.

Read the comments below made by university students on the problems they have faced in locating and using resources.

Discuss in pairs, small groups, or with your ASK Tutor any strategies that could help to overcome these problems.

**Mizan**

I don't want to waste all my print credit printing articles I won't read, but I don't know how to tell if they are useful or not.

**Zeinab**

The library is so overwhelming – I don't know where to start!

There's lots of information on the Internet, but I am not sure if I can trust it.

Alan

My course has a huge reading list. Am I expected to read everything?

Yukiko

**Task 2**

Check with your partner (or ASK Tutor) that you know the meaning of these terms and understand why they are important when evaluating sources at university.

<b>Objectivity</b>	<b>Accuracy</b>	<b>Usability</b>	<b>Authority</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Bias</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Audience</b>

**Task 3**

There are many important databases that you are likely to use as part of your studies.

*Why are academic databases preferable to the Internet?*

Below is a table which contrasts library databases

Complete the table with the missing words from the box below.

Library Databases	The Internet
Paid for by the library so that you can have free access to _____ information.	Some resources are free, but others require you to pay for them.
Content is evaluated for _____ and accuracy.	Information is not evaluated for accuracy and may be incorrect, _____, or biased.
Information is _____.	Websites come and _____.
Through <u>Subject Pages</u> it is easy to find databases that _____ specifically to your topic	The internet is a vast _____ of information with no organization.

(and get connected to an expert if you need guidance).	
Library databases offer options to quickly _____ or expand your search to find the articles you need.	A search engine (like Google) often returns an _____ number of results with no quick way to _____ them down or ensure they relate to your topic.

<b>Go</b>	<b>Overwhelming</b>	<b>Stable</b>
<b>Relate</b>	<b>Narrow</b>	<b>Misleading</b>
<b>Scholarly</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Limit</b>

### Task 5

#### Evaluating web-based material

“The internet holds unimaginable quantities of information and is continually growing and changing. It is largely unregulated however. ‘Bad’ information can be posted as easily as ‘good’ , so how can you judge the reliability of the information you find?” (Northedge, 2005, 237)

The Open University has devised the PROMPT checklist to evaluate web-based materials. It might be useful for you!

<b>P</b>	<b>Presentation</b>
<b>R</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
<b>O</b>	<b>Objectivity</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>Method</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>Provenance</b>



T	Timeliness
---	------------