



Accessing Information - Nutrition

THIS IS A: ✓ Student Assignment Classroom Activity

SYNOPSIS:

Students will learn how to identify and analyze valid and reliable web resources. Students will also write a letter of recommendation to a friend about a website.

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL: 6TH, 7TH, 8TH

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to identify a valid resource
- Students will be able to identify a reliable resource

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS MET:

- 3.8.1: Analyze the validity of health information, products and services
- 3.8.2: Access valid health information from home, school, and community
- 3.8.5: Locate valid and reliable health products and services
- 8.8.4: Identify ways in which health messages and communication can be altered for different audiences

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- **Accessing Information: Resource Evaluation** worksheet
- Computer/tablet with internet access

IN-CLASS TIME: 30 minutes (Can also assign this as homework)

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS:

Accessing valid information, products and services is important in the prevention, detection, and treatment of health problems. This skill is often the foundation of many decisions students will make. When using this skill, students will be evaluating the validity and reliability of information they have accessed on the Internet, from other printed sources, the media, and other people. Mastery of this skill will empower students to either accept or reject the information they have found in order to achieve better health.

TEACHING STEPS:

1. Ask students to identify a question they would like answered. The question should be related to gathering more information about a particular topic. For example, what are some of the possible consequences of drinking energy drinks? Students can just think of the question in their mind for this discussion piece of the lesson. OPTIONAL: Have them choose a question related to nutrition – diets, nutrients, calories, consequences of too much sugar, etc.
2. After they have come up with a question, inform students that the next step is that they need to brainstorm all of the possible resources to access in order to answer their question. Have students answer out loud. Some answers might be: Internet, newspaper, social media, books, doctor, or family.

3. Tell students that one of the National Health Education Standards is to learn the skill of analyzing resources for validity and reliability. Before they start their research, discuss valid sources of information. Knowing how to access valid information is a basic skill. Remind students that anyone can post anything on the Internet, so the ability to access information and evaluate sources is critical. The URL, or address, of a website provides some information about the host of the site.
 - a. Professional organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and the Partners Against Hate are trusted sources of information. These organizations usually have URLs that end in “.org.”
 - b. Government and educational agencies are also trusted sources. URLs for government agencies end in “.gov” while educational agencies end in “.edu.”
 - c. Commercial organizations have URLs that end in “.com.” Commercial sites usually are trying to sell a product and therefore may or may not be reliable. For instance, a site hosted by a tobacco company is unlikely to provide the real truth about tobacco.
4. When analyzing for validity, students are checking to see if the source is honest and truthful. This means that the information is true based on facts. Students should ask if the same information is found in multiple resources and if the information is current.
5. Inform students that when analyzing for reliability, they should check to see if the source is trustworthy and dependable. Besides evaluating the resources, other factors to use to determine reliability are the author’s purpose behind the information, who wrote the source (PhD. M.D., etc.) and who, if anyone, is sponsoring the information. Remind students that it is important to find the author of a printed source as well as the author of an Internet source.
6. Tell students they now have to figure out the best answer to their question. They are expected to be able to justify their reasons for their decision of a source based on its validity and reliability.
7. After the class discussion, distribute the **Accessing Information: Resource Evaluation** worksheet and have students complete it either in-class, as homework, or a combination of both.

Extension:

Write a Letter of Recommendation to a Friend -

Tell a friend about the website you chose. Please be sure to include the specific reasons why you chose to back-up it’s validity and reliability, as well as some reasons why it would appeal to a typical middle-schooler. Also, make sure to share in your letter at least 2 non-website sources/places they could get valid, reliable information about their health. Your letter should have at least 5 sentences.



Resource Evaluation

Write a typical question that a middle-school student might look up online.

Now enter the question into your favorite search engine and find three websites that claim to have the answers and choose the one you think is the most valid and reliable.

Name of website: _____ URL: _____

VALIDITY CHECKLIST: Is the resource honest & truthful?

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|-----|
| 1. Is the information current up to one year? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 2. Is the same information found in more than one resource? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 3. Is there enough information about the topic? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 4. Are the facts in the article cited or referenced? | Yes | No | N/A |

RELIABILITY CHECKLIST: Is the resource trustworthy and dependable?

- | | | | |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| 1. Is the purpose of the resource stated clearly? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 2. Does the resource appear to be an advertisement? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 3. Is the resource a .gov, .edu, or .org? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 4. Is the author's name listed? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 5. Is the author's background trustworthy and dependable? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 6. Does an institution or organization sponsor the resource? | Yes | No | N/A |

Now, look at the answers you circled, count how many of the questions were answered yes. Look at the chart below to determine the validity and reliability of the resource.

9 – 10 = Excellent resource, 7-8 = Okay to use, 0-6 = Not a valid or reliable resource

What were the reasons why this was the most valid and reliable?

Why did I think the source was **valid**? (Give 2 reasons)

Why did I think the source was **reliable**? (Give 2 reasons)

Was there a resource you chose not to use because it was not valid or reliable? Explain.