KIDS VOTING USA®

EVALUATE A WEB SITE
(40-50 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students learn how to become critical consumers of information on the World Wide Web and evaluate a Web site.

MATERIALS

Evaluate A Web Site handout; access to the Internet

GET READY

✔ Prepare copies of the *Evaluate A Web Site* handout for your students.

✔ Arrange for your class to have access to the Internet. If possible, seat two students to each computer.

✔ Before the activity, talk to your students about various forms of media and information. (See "The Media and Politics" in the Appendix.)

INSTRUCTIONS

✔ Ask your students to think of characteristics of good decision-making (examples: decisions well thought out, decisions based on information from many sources, etc.).

✔ Say: *Good decisions are based on accurate information. One source of information is the World Wide Web. It is a great place for finding information regarding limitless subjects, including history, the presidency, voting, and so on.*

✔ Engage your class in a dialogue on credibility, discussing what makes some information valid and other information not (What is the source of the information? How current is it? etc.). Tell your students that they should have this critical approach to information they find on the Web as well.

✔ Ask the class to brainstorm elements of a good Web page. Capture these ideas on the board.

✔ Next, tell your class that there are some significant things to consider when evaluating a Web site and its information:

  ✔ Intent: Is the purpose of the site to provide information or to persuade?

  ✔ Source: Is the author of the site someone with the appropriate education, training, or experience to write with authority on the topic?

  ✔ Content: Does the content of the site seem biased? Is there a balanced point of view?

  ✔ Context: Are there other, better Web sites out there on the same subject?

  ✔ Timeliness: Is the information listed on the site current? Find out when it was added.

  ✔ Recognition: Has the Web site been recognized for excellence in some way?

✔ Instruct your students to evaluate a Web site in pairs based on the criteria above.

✔ Distribute the handout and ask your students to use it as their evaluation tool.

✔ Have your students visit the Kids Voting USA Web site. They should type www.kidsvotingusa.org into the address bar.

✔ Next, have your students click on the "Resources" icon on the left-hand side of the screen. A page will pop up with lots of interesting Web sites for kids and young adults. Have the pairs "surf" around, visiting some of the listed Web sites.

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EVALUATE A WEB SITE (continued)

✔ Give the pairs a couple of minutes to determine which Web site they want to evaluate.
✔ Give the pairs 20 to 30 minutes to evaluate their Web site using the *Evaluate A Web Site* handout.
✔ Have the pairs report on their Web evaluations. They should be prepared to reference how their site did or did not meet the criteria discussed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
★ *Was it difficult to evaluate your Web site? If so, what made it challenging?*
★ *Would you recommend your Web site to a friend? Why or why not?*
★ *Why is it important to gather information from many different sources?*
★ *Do you think the World Wide Web is a good source of information? Why or why not?*

MORE!
Three-hole punch the evaluations and keep them in a binder by the computer. Create a wall display with the "Top Ten Web Sites."

EVALUATE A WEB SITE

EVALUATE A WEB SITE

Evaluated by: _____

Address (URL): _____

Evaluate your Web site based on the following criteria:

Intent: _____

_____

Source: _____

_____

Content: _____

_____

Context: _____

_____

Timeliness: _____

_____

Recognition: _____

_____

Would you recommend this Web site to someone else? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____