

# Unit #2: Website Evaluation/Media Center Use

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**  
Course(s): **Research Writing 8**  
Time Period: **September**  
Length: **Approximately 2 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview:

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This lesson/unit reviews and introduces students to new databases and technology available through the media center and the school. Students will apply technology and resources for a variety of purposes. Students will extend their evaluation of websites by testing how AI tools summarize, misrepresent, or reinforce information. They will practice fact-checking AI outputs against credible databases and media sources.

## Essential Questions:

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- Why is it important for a students to use credible sources?
- Why is Wikipedia not a good source to use?
- What are some red flags to look out for when researching?
- What are some positive things to look out for when checking for credibility of a website?
- How does AI sometimes misrepresent or oversimplify website content?
- What red flags appear when comparing AI-generated summaries to the original site?
- How can AI be used responsibly to cross-check or analyze website credibility?

## Enduring Understandings:

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- Good researchers distinguish between essential and nonessential information.
- Researchers gather and critique information from different sources for specific sources.
- To understand what makes a website a credible one to use.
- Evaluating credibility now requires not only reviewing websites directly but also recognizing AI's limitations when interpreting or summarizing them.
- AI can be used to spot-check, organize, or compare information, but researchers must verify accuracy through credible databases.

## **Standards/Indicators/Student Learning Objectives (SLOs):**

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- To be able to use technology, including the internet, to produce or publish writing and present the relationship between information and ideas efficiently.
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (print, multimedia) to present a topic or idea.

LA.RI.8.1	Cite the textual evidence and make relevant connections that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
LA.RI.8.3	Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
LA.RI.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
LA.RI.8.7	Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.
LA.W.8.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
LA.W.8.1.A	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
LA.W.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
LA.W.8.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style.
LA.W.8.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
LA.W.8.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
LA.W.8.2.A	Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia).
LA.W.8.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
LA.W.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
LA.W.8.2.E	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
LA.W.8.2.F	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
LA.W.8.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
LA.W.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
LA.W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.SL.8.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly

	draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
LA.SL.8.2	Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
LA.SL.8.4	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
LA.SL.8.5	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
LA.SL.8.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
LA.L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

### **Lesson Titles:**

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Students will review all of the resources available in our Media Center.

Students will use technology and resources to research a variety of sources.

SWBAT use AI to generate a quick summary of a website and then fact-check it against the original source.

SWBAT identify examples of hallucination, bias, or omission in AI summaries.

SWBAT refine AI prompts to request more accurate evaluations of credibility.

SWBAT compare how an AI tool and a database handle the same research question.

### **Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills:**

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- Media Literacy
- Grouping
- Critical thinking
- Collaboration

CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
PFL.9.1.8.B.6	Evaluate the relationship of cultural traditions and historical influences on financial practice.
CAEP.9.2.8.B.3	Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
CAEP.9.2.8.B.4	Evaluate how traditional and nontraditional careers have evolved regionally, nationally,

	and globally.
TECH.9.4.8.CI.1	Assess data gathered on varying perspectives on causes of climate change (e.g., cross-cultural, gender-specific, generational), and determine how the data can best be used to design multiple potential solutions (e.g., RI.7.9, 6.SP.B.5, 7.1.NH.IPERS.6, 8.2.8.ETW.4).
TECH.9.4.8.GCA	Global and Cultural Awareness
TECH.9.4.8.GCA.1	Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
TECH.9.4.8.IML.14	Analyze the role of media in delivering cultural, political, and other societal messages.  Gathering and evaluating knowledge and information from a variety of sources, including global perspectives, fosters creativity and innovative thinking.  Awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences is critical to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction.  There is a need to produce and publish media that has information supported with quality evidence and is intended for authentic audiences.

## Inter-Disciplinary Connections:

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### History

### Sociology

LA.RH.6-8.10	By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
LA.W.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
LA.WHST.6-8.2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
LA.WHST.6-8.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
LA.WHST.6-8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
LA.WHST.6-8.9	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.8.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
LA.W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
SOC.5-8.1.1	Chronological Thinking
SOC.5-8.1.3	Critical Thinking
SOC.5-8.1.3.2	Assess the credibility of sources by identifying bias and prejudice in documents, media, and computer-generated information.
SOC.5-8.1.4	Presentational Skills

## **Equity Considerations**

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## **Amistad Mandate**

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## **Holocaust Mandate**

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## **Climate Change Mandate**

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Topic: Evaluating Climate Change Information in Databases

Discuss bias and misinformation; Highlight credible climate change database; Evaluate databases for climate change research

Topic: Researching Specific Climate Change Issues

Climate data and trends; climate change impacts and solutions

Addresses the Following Component of the Mandate: The political, economic, and social contributions of impact of climate change, as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Materials used and resources:

NJ Climate Change Data and Tools: <https://dep.nj.gov/climatechange/> - This website provides access to real-time and historical climate data for New Jersey, including temperature, precipitation, sea level rise, and greenhouse gas emissions.

NASA Climate Change: <https://climate.nasa.gov/> - NASA's website offers a comprehensive overview of climate change, including its causes, impacts, and potential solutions. It provides educational resources, simulations, and interactive tools suitable for students of all ages.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate.gov: <https://www.noaa.gov/> - NOAA's Climate.gov website provides reliable and up-to-date information on climate change, including climate indicators, scientific reports, and educational resources.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): <https://unfccc.int/> - The UNFCCC website provides information on the international response to climate change, including climate

agreements, conferences, and resources for educators.

## **LGBTQ & Disabilities Mandate**

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Topic: Inclusivity and Representation in Databases and Websites

Explore how some databases may underrepresent or omit information about LGBTQ+ individuals and individuals with disabilities. Encourage students to consider the inclusivity and diversity of the information presented in a database.

Introduce students to specialized databases like the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) Documentation Project, the American Institute for Research (AIR) Disability Statistics Database, or the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) Resource Library.

Challenge students to analyze databases using criteria like accessibility, representation of diverse identities and perspectives, and inclusion of accurate and up-to-date information on LGBTQ+ and disability issues.

Addresses the Following Component of the Mandate: The political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Materials Used and Resources:

Government Databases -

USA.gov: <https://www.usa.gov/> - Provides access to various government databases with information on LGBTQ+ and disability issues, including legislation, healthcare resources, and statistics.

National Institutes of Health (NIH): <https://www.nih.gov/> - Offers databases on health topics relevant to both communities, including HIV/AIDS research, mental health,

LGBTQ+ Specific Resources -

The Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) Documentation Project: <https://www.mtsu.edu/gorecenter/digital-collections.php> - Houses a vast collection of primary source materials and scholarly research on LGBTQ+ history and culture.

The Trevor Project: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/> - Provides a searchable database of resources and statistics on LGBTQ+ youth health and well-being.

Human Rights Campaign: <https://www.hrc.org/> - Offers a searchable database of state-by-state LGBTQ+ equality laws and policies.

## Disability Specific Resources -

American Institute for Research (AIR) Disability Statistics

Database: <https://www.air.org/news/announcement/american-institutes-research-among-top-ranking-disability-inclusion-benchmark> - Provides comprehensive data on disability prevalence, employment, education, and health outcomes.

National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) Resource Library: <https://www.ndrn.org/> - Offers a searchable database of resources on disability rights, policy, and advocacy.

World Health Organization (WHO) Disability and Rehabilitation: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health> - Provides global data, reports, and resources on disability, including access to healthcare and social services.

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## Asian American Pacific Islander Mandate

Topic: Inclusivity and Representation in Databases

Explore how some databases may underrepresent or omit information about AAPI communities, including specific ethnicities or historical events. Encourage students to consider the inclusivity and diversity of the information presented.

Introduce students to specialized databases like the Asian American Studies Network Information Center (AASNIC), the Library of Congress Asian/Pacific Islander Resources, or the National Consortium for Asian Pacific Islander Healthcare.

Challenge students to analyze databases using criteria like language availability, representation of diverse AAPI sub-communities, and inclusion of accurate and up-to-date information on AAPI history, culture, and contemporary issues.

Addresses the Following Component of the Mandate: The political, economic, and social contributions of Asian American Pacific Islander people, as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Materials Used and Resources:

Asian American Studies Association (AASA): <https://www.aasa.org/>: <https://www.aasa.org/>

National Council for Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA): <https://ncapa.org/>: <https://ncapa.org/>

National Asian Pacific Islander American Bar Association  
(NAPABA): <https://www.napaba.org/>: <https://www.napaba.org/>

## **Instructional Strategies, Learning Activities, and Levels of Blooms/DOK:**

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- Practice webbing and outlining assignments using articles from the Internet. (Understanding)
- Review different databases available to the students. (Understanding)
- Review Easybib and Noodle Tools as a bibliography generator (Understanding)
- **Invalid Website Activity Upgrade:** Students input the “Tree Octopus” hoax site into AI. Compare AI’s initial interpretation with student-led credibility checks (author, domain, citations, bias). Discuss what AI got right/wrong.
- **AI vs. Human Evaluation:** Provide students with 2–3 websites (credible and non-credible). Have AI summarize/evaluate them, then students critique whether AI missed key credibility signals.
- **Prompt Experiment:** Students give AI vague vs. specific prompts about a questionable website. Reflect on how prompt design changes the quality of the evaluation.
- **Database Cross-Check:** Students ask AI about a research question, then confirm/disprove its claims using Newsela, CNN10, or World Book.

## **Modifications**

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### **ELL Modifications:**

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- Group students
- Use visuals
- Use graphic organizers
- Use real life objects when possible
- Repeat, reword, clarify
- Tap prior knowledge
- Focus on key words
- Short breaks between learning instruction

### **IEP & 504 Modifications:**

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Testing modifications:

- higher level reasoning questions would have less weight than other questions or provided as extra

credit questions to provide exposure to these questions but not something that will be a detriment to the student's ability to share knowledge of content

- rewording questions so that there are not higher level vocabulary within the question (you are testing for understanding of the content not the ability to understand the question)
- less questions per page (so not visually overwhelming)
- less none of the above, all of the above, which of the following apply, or which do not apply type questions (again it is testing for understanding of the question not the content)
- if not directly testing directly for reading comprehension offering paraphrasing of quotes, etc... if the student is expected to be testing on understanding that paragraph or quote to answer future questions
- word banks, multiple choice, matching questions help when possible
- less questions overall if the student takes so much extra time that they are going into future days (then missing instruction) to take the test
- allowing student to correct mistakes or answer wrong questions correctly for additional credit if failed the first test (another way to re-teach material)

#### Instructional modifications/accommodations:

- teaching the main ideas/concepts (limiting not needed details) to be taught and repeating them in several different ways over several different days
- providing students with content vocabulary prior to teaching a lesson including that vocabulary (pre-teaching)
- providing study guides that don't lead the student to study too much extraneous information (less unnecessary details)/scaffolded study guides
- scaffolded notes
- allowing student to take notes in class for reinforcement but also providing a copy of completed/correct notes to study from
- modeling and showing lots of examples
- if not in a co-teaching setting allowing time in the schedule for a special education teacher to consult with general education teachers on what specifically can be modified or how to paraphrase things in a different way specific to that lesson
- direct teaching and/or assistance for organization, social skills/peer interactions
- providing paraphrased or modified reading materials at the student's reading level

#### **G&T Modifications:**

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- Encourage students to explore concepts in depth and encourage independent studies or investigations.
- Determine where students' interests lie and capitalize on their inquisitiveness.
- Invite students to explore different points of view on a topic of study and compare the two.
- Refrain from having them complete more work in the same manner.
- Employ differentiated curriculum to keep interest high.
- Avoid drill and practice activities.
- Ask students' higher level questions that require students to look into causes, experiences, and facts to draw a conclusion or make connections to other areas of learning.
- Encourage students to make transformations- use a common task or item in a different way.
- Different test items.

- Effective questioning techniques (focus on what's important, provide processing time, require higher order thinking)
- ELA - Self-evaluation of writing with teacher or student-generated rubrics. Evaluation sheets or color coding can work well for this
- ELA - Creation of technology-based assessments to address the higher levels of Bloom's
- ELA - Cross-curricular connections, especially to historical events and people

### **At Risk Modifications**

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- Large print textbooks
- Textbooks for at-home use
- Additional time for assignments
- A locker with adapted lock
- Review of directions
- Review sessions
- Use of mnemonics
- Have student restate information
- Provision of notes or outlines
- Concrete examples

### **Formative Assessment:**

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#### Warm Up:

- Vocabulary review of domain specific terms
- Answer questions related to media center specialist presentation
- Entrance ticket

#### Anticipatory Set

- What is a QR code?
- Has anyone ever seen one before?
- Students will load the app on their phones.

#### Closure:

- Exit Ticket

- Performance task with white boards
- Exit Ticket: “*What credibility issue did AI miss that you caught?*”
- Quick Compare: Students highlight one claim from AI about a website and confirm or correct it with a database.

### **Summative Assessment:**

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Require students to submit a Credibility Evaluation Portfolio that includes:

1. An AI-generated summary of one valid and one invalid site.
2. A student-created evaluation checklist showing what the AI caught vs. what it missed.
3. A reflection on when AI was helpful in evaluating credibility and when it was misleading.

### **Benchmarks**

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Skill Based Assessment

Writing Prompt

Reading Response

Lab Practical

### **Alternate Assessments**

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Performance tasks

Project-based assignments

Problem-based assignments

Presentations

Reflective pieces

Concept maps

Case-based scenarios

Portfolios

## Resources & Materials:

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- Resources will include using magazine articles, books, and laptops.
- YouTube clips
- Use of Promethean Board showing examples of databases
- World Book Encyclopedia
- Newsela
- CNN

## Technology:

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- Workbook: [worldbookonline.com](http://worldbookonline.com)
- Invalid website: <https://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus>
- Valid website: [cnn.com/cnn10](http://cnn.com/cnn10)
- Article: Newsela: [newsela.com](http://newsela.com)
- MagicSchool AI, ChatGPT (or similar).
- Canva Magic Write for AI summaries.
- Common Sense Media digital citizenship/AI literacy lessons.

TECH.8.1.12.A

Technology Operations and Concepts: Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations.

TECH.8.1.12.A.CS1

Understand and use technology systems.

TECH.8.1.12.B.CS1

Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.