A short checklist for critical evaluation of sources

WHAT does the material contain? (Accuracy & coverage)

- **Reliability:** To which extent is the information credible and accurate? To evaluate the reliability, your own experience and knowledge as well as the source's reputation plays an important role. Does the source have fact checkers or editors?
- **Relevance:** How relevant and/or useful is the material for your needs? Which topics are covered, and to what depth?
- **References:** Which other sources has been cited in the work/material?
- **Scholarly:** Is it a scholarly text or popular science?
- **Target audience:** Who is the intended audience (scholars, school children, general public, et cetera)?

WHO is communicating the information? (Authority)

- **Author:** Is the author well known in their field of research? Does the author have academic legitimacy? Has the author been published before? Is there any way to contact the author? In short - what are the author's qualifications for writing on the subject?
- **Publisher:** Who is responsible for the information - a company, an agency, an organization or an individual? Any contact information? Serious publishers often clearly express who they are and what they do. How reputable is the publisher?

WHY was the material published? (Objectivity)

- **Purpose:** What is the purpose of material or document? Inform, present research, disseminate views, entertain, and sway the opinion of the audience...? Is the information presented with a minimum of bias?

WHEN was the material produced or written? (Currency)

- **Up to date:** When was the text written? Is the material enough for you topically? Is the publication or web page dated? Updated? If the date