

“EVALUATING RESOURCES”

Brown University Library Video Transcript

ANDY is sitting at a computer in the Rock. BRITTANY approaches.

BRITTANY: Hi. Need any help using library resources?

ANDY: No. I don't need your precious library resources, whatever your name is. I have a veritable goldmine of information at my fingertips otherwise known as the World Wide Web. With it under my control, I'll be the smartest man alive.

BRITTANY: Oh yeah? What does veritable mean?

ANDY: Shut up.

BRITTANY: Don't get too excited; you can't always trust information you find on the internet, or in printed materials, for that matter. You need to know how to separate the scholarly and the objective from the bogus and the biased.

ANDY: Nah.

BRITTANY: Here are some questions you can ask yourself to determine if your source is useful. Look at the author. What are the author's credentials or expertise? Has the author been cited in other works? Is the author associated with a reputable institution or organization?

ANDY: According to this, his work is being “hosted” by some company called Geocities. Sounds classy.

BRITTANY: Look at the date. When was it published? It is important that your source is current?

BRITTANY glances at ANDY who is now playing a computer game.

BRITTANY: Look at the Publisher. Is it published by a university press? If so, it's likely to be more scholarly.

BRITTANY looks toward ANDY. He is still playing.

BRITTANY: Look at the type of publication. Is it a journal or a magazine? Is it scholarly or popular in nature? Journals offer more serious academic material, while magazines such as Time and Newsweek usually offer less substantive and more opinion oriented material.

ANDY continues playing.

BRITTANY: Finally, is the source objective or biased? Is it fact-based or emotional? While both types of sources can be useful, it is important to know which is which. Now you can research with confidence.

ANDY: (suddenly noticing BRITTANY) Are you still here? I thought you left.