

# The Seven Steps to Web Evaluation (A-G)

## STEP



### AUTHOR



In Other Words... Who Wrote The Article?

## A. Find More Out About The Author

Who wrote... Author

Sponsoring Organization... Group supporting site

Hosting Service... Where is website's home

Credential Of Author/Sponsor...

... check external sources by searching

... check internal by investigating web site



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The Seven Steps To  
Web Site Evaluation



Graphics from Microsoft Word 2007

# The Seven Steps to Web Site Evaluation – Step A

## A Is For Author

One of the most important findings in determining the usefulness of a web page is discovering:

1. **Who Wrote It** – Look for an author of the article. Remember the author is the one who wrote the article. It may not be the same person as the publisher of the web site. It may even be someone that is no longer living. It is important to determine if the article being researched has an author. In some cases there may not be an author listed. In this case one must investigate organization or sponsor. If there is an author listed one must still investigate the organization and sponsor.
2. **Who Is The Sponsor Of The Site** – Many times one may not find an author but should be able to find the sponsor for a written article. The sponsor usually has an interest in the information given. It may actually be the author, and in many cases used for written citations. The sponsor may be found anywhere on the page. Sometimes it is in the title, often times at the top, and still other times buried deep in contact information. Remember, every page should have a sponsor.
3. **What Host Has Provided The Space Where This Website Resides**– This refers to the host of the site. In many cases it could be a third party that is not related at all to the author or the sponsor. Do not confuse the host with being the author, backing the sponsor, or having any interest in the article being researched.

After the author, organization, and sponsor are determined, a researcher must next determine the following in regards to the author, organization, and sponsor.

1. **What Credentials Does The Author Possess** – Credentials refer to author background allowing them to be considered a possible expert. This may include degrees earned in the subject area, important biographical information, occupational status, past efforts and work, and collection of other writings and publications. This information can be found possibly at the site and should also be confirmed through research elsewhere on-line.
2. **What Is The Credibility Of The Sponsor** – The sponsor should also be a reliable source of information. This is especially true if the sponsor is the author, or no author is given. One may also want to reflect on the purpose and intent of the sponsor in supplying the information. When in question about a sponsor, further research should be performed on the internet.

Web verification is important when determining credentials and reliability of both author and sponsor. Realize when searching a name in a search engine such as Google that the first and last name should be entered in quotes. One example is “**Robert Lee**”, or in this case possibly “**Robert E Lee**”. Be aware that one must validate that this credential search may turn up names that are unrelated to the person being searched. Double check and optimize the search with other keyword such as “**Robert E Lee**” “**Civil War**” One must also be certain to search and validate the sponsor using this same manner.

Another form of credential verification can be found on the sponsor web site where article was hosted. It may include author biography and credentials. It may also include mission and purpose of the sponsor. Realize that any information found on the site in regards to author and sponsor should be verified using third party sources including web, databases, or hard copy reference.