Evaluating Information

Learn to read an article citation (this example is in MLA style)**:**

> **Oswald, Debra L., and Richard D. Harvey.** "Hostile Environments, Stereotype Threat, And Math Performance Among Undergraduate Women." *Current Psychology* 19.4 (2000): 338. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Feb. 2012.

Author(s)

Source
(publication)

Learn to evaluate information critically:

Authority **"Who wrote this?"**	Who is the author of the information? What are his/her credentials? Example: Debra Oswald and Richard Harvey
Source/Publication **"Who put this out there?"**	Where was this published? In what source? A magazine? Scholarly journal? Someone's personal blog? Online newspaper? Example: in an online journal called *Current Psychology*
Content & Purpose **"Why does this exist at all?"**	Why was this written? To inform you? Sell you something? Entertain? Persuade? Is there a bias? Example: This is an academic study done by scholars to educate people about how women's math performance in college can be undermined by stereotyping.
Accuracy **"Do they give me any proof?"**	Can the information be verified? Are the facts supported by evidence? (Hint: Look for citations!) Example: Yes – there is a list of cited references to back up what they are saying.
Currency/Timeliness **"Is this up to date?"**	When was it published, posted, or updated? For your topic, is it important to have current information? Example: 2000 -*fairly* recently. There might be more current studies that have followed up since this one was published.
Audience **"Who is interested?"**	Who is this information for? General public? Students? Scholars? Is it useful for a specific group of people? Example: This article is for students and other researchers. The general public would probably not read this research study.