

Evaluating Resources Short

Learning Outcome: You can evaluate resource quality and relevance in order to ensure the use of the most appropriate and sophisticated information. Your class read the WSU Common Reading book, *Being Wrong*, and you are working on a research paper related to an issue in the book. You've decided to investigate the issue of political candidates changing their minds, or "flip flopping," on policy positions (a common theme of negative campaign commercials): your research question is: Is issue flip-flopping a negative indicator for U.S. political candidates and elected officials? Your professor wants your paper to be written in academic style, and to include peer-reviewed articles as well as academic books and other sources.

What is your section number?

1

2

... additional choices hidden ...

What is your name?

First

Last

1. Four publications are listed below. Based on the citation and the abstract/snippet provided, match the publication to its resource type and briefly note how you might use two of the sources.

A. Seifert, E. (2012). The politics of authenticity in presidential campaigns, 1976-2008. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. "Ideas of "authenticity" became central to presidential campaigns in the late 20th century. Beginning in 1976, Americans elected six presidents who represented evolving standards of authenticity. Interacting with the media and their publics, these successful presidential candidates structured their campaigns and images around the projection of authenticity and connecting with voters as "one of us." [Abstract]

B. Safire, W. (2008). Flip-flop. In *Safire's Political Dictionary*. (pp. 253-254). Oxford: Oxford University Press. "A dramatic reversal of position; a charge that a political figure, with a finger to the winds of change, has completely changed his mind. Both noun and verb have become common in

political attacks. In supporting a tax increase, President Reagan was asked whether he had “flip-flopped on the tax issue”; he replied...” [Snippet]

C. Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51: 151–165. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2007.00243.x“This article investigates the electoral effect of party policy shifts. I argue that whether party policy shifts are damaging or rewarding depends on whether the shift occurs in the pragmatic or principled issue domain. On pragmatic issues, voters value “getting things done.” Policy shifts in this domain signal responsiveness to the changing environment and are likely to be rewarded. Principled issues, however, concern core beliefs and values. Any policy shift in this domain is a sign of inconsistency and lack of credibility, which is likely to lead to voter withdrawal. These arguments are supported by evidence from 23 advanced democracies over a period of 40 years.” [Abstract]

D. Kirschten, D. (1993, January). Anatomy of a flip-flop. *National Journal* 25(5), 313“The author contrasts statements Bill Clinton made during the presidential election campaign regarding Haitian refugees and the actual policy he has adopted since assuming the presidency.” [Abstract]

1. Resource Types for the Four Sources (Matching)

Reference Work

- A
- B
- C
- D

Book

- A
- B
- C
- D

Scholarly Article

- A
- B
- C
- D

Popular/Trade/Professional Article

- A
- B
- C

○ D

1B. Resources such as these are used for different purposes in a research and writing process. Pick two of the above sources (A-D) and briefly explain how each type of resource could be used.

- A. Seifert, E. (2012)
- B. Safire, W. (2008)
- C. Tavits, M. (2007)
- D. Kirschten, D. (1993, January)

2. Based on the citations and snippets provided, and after reviewing the information evaluation criteria outlined in the CRAAP Test, which sources below do you think will give you the most useful information based on?

Currency – which source(s) (A-G) is (are) the most up to date? Why?

Relevance – which source(s) (A-G) will give you most useful overview of the topic? Why?

Authority – which source(s) (A-G) is (are) the most authoritative? Why?

Accuracy – which source(s) (A-G) will help you build your arguments with relevant and specific theories and data? Why?

Purpose/Objectivity – which source(s) (A-G) will give a particular perspective (for example, written from a particular partisan (or cultural, or social) standpoint) Why?

A. Reske, H. (2008, October 27). Measuring the Candidates' Flip-Flops. U.S. News & World Report 145(9). "From core issues to the ephemeral, both presidential candidates have managed to engineer their share of flip-flops. While many have cropped up in attack ads, several are more glaring than others. Here's a guide to some of this year's most high-profile reversals, rated on a scale from 1 (a little waffling) to 5 (a complete 180)." [Snippet]

B. Buell, E. H., & Sigelman, L. (2009). Attack politics: Negativity in presidential campaigns since 1960. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. "This highly regarded study of negativity in presidential campaigns since 1960 now includes a substantial new chapter on the 2008 contest between Barack Obama and John McCain. It offers the best overview yet of modern presidential races and remains must reading for anyone interested in the vagaries of those campaigns." [Description]

C. Kaid, L. L. & Johnston, A. (1991). Negative versus positive television advertising in U.S. presidential campaigns, 1960–1988. *Journal of Communication*, 41(3), 53–064. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.1991.tb02323.x "Analysis of 830 television spots from eight presidential campaigns showed that the 'negativism' charged to the 1988 campaign is actually at the same level as the two previous ones and that what tends to differentiate negative from positive ads is not party or incumbency but a more frequent appeal to voters' fears." [Abstract]

D. Seifert, E. (2012) The politics of authenticity in presidential campaigns, 1976-2008. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. "Ideas of 'authenticity' became central to presidential campaigns in the late 20th century. Beginning in 1976, Americans elected six presidents who represented evolving standards of authenticity. Interacting with the media and their publics, these successful presidential candidates structured their campaigns and images around the projection of authenticity and connecting with voters as 'one of us.'" [Abstract]

E. Windsurfing (2004 Bush vs Kerry) [Political advertisement]. The Living Room Candidate: Presidential Campaign Commercials 1952-2012. Retrieved from <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/2004/windsurfing> "Kerry voted for the Iraq war, opposed it, supported it, and now opposes it again. He bragged about voting for the \$87 billion to support our troops before he voted against it. He voted for education reform and now opposes it. He claims he's against increasing Medicare premiums but voted five times to do so..." [Snippet]

F. Rep. Doug Collins flip flops, willing to say anything to get elected. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://marthaforcongress.com/rep-doug-collins-flip-flops-willing-to-say-anything-to-get-elected/> "We don't need any more flip floppers in Washington like Doug Collins who say one thing on the Campaign Trail and do another when they think no one is looking," said Mahoney. "We need real conservative leaders like Martha Zoller who won't cave in to party leadership or special interests, and will always put the conservative values of Georgia's 9th Congressional District

first.' 'Martha Zoller will bring consistent conservative leadership that you can trust. Doug Collins will flip flop on command.'" [Snippet]

G. PolitiFact.com <http://www.politifact.com/about/>"PolitiFact is a project of the Tampa Bay Times and its partners to help you find the truth in politics. Every day, reporters and researchers from PolitiFact and its partner news organization examine statements by members of Congress, state legislators, governors, mayors, the president, cabinet secretaries, lobbyists, people who testify before Congress and anyone else who speaks up in American politics. We research their statements and then rate the accuracy on our Truth-O-Meter – True, Mostly True, Half True, Mostly False and False. The most ridiculous falsehoods get our lowest rating, Pants on Fire. We rate the consistency of public officials on our Flip-O-Meter using three ratings: No Flip, Half Flip and Full Flop." [Snippet]

3. What questions do you still have about your research? Record any questions or comments below. Include your email address for a response!