
INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION LITERACY

Information Literacy is defined as the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to *identify, locate, evaluate* and effectively *use* that information for the issue or problem at hand.

Evaluating Sources:

There are five basic criteria to consider.

- Authority
- Reliability
- Currency
- Completeness
- Relevancy

Authority:

Where did the information come from? Did it come from an authority in the field? Does the author have specific credentials or degrees in the subject area? What is the author's training, education, experience in the field? Are there other works by this author in this field?

Is the publisher well known in the field? Or is the publisher a known publishing houses, university press, or professional organization?

Pediatrics, March 2003 v111 i3 p687(3)

Aspiration of fruit gel snacks. (Experience And Reason-- Briefly Recorded). *Sonea Qureshi; Richard Mink.*

Author's Abstract: COPYRIGHT 2003 *American Academy of Pediatrics*

Aspiration of a foreign body is common in children and can cause upper airway obstruction, leading to significant morbidity or mortality. We report 3 cases of aspiration of a popular fruit-flavored gel snack that led to cardiopulmonary arrest and death in 1 case and respiratory failure in 2 other cases. There is increasing concern about the safety of this gel snack and its risk of aspiration, even in older children. Pediatricians should advise parents and children about the dangers of eating this candy during their health

maintenance visits. *Pediatrics* 2003;111:687-689; foreign body, aspiration pneumonia, bronchoscopy, resuscitation, pulmonary edema. ...

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Books & Culture, Nov-Dec 2002 v8 i6 p25(1)

**The windup world of the nervous tick: looking hard with
Elvis Costello.** *David Dark.*

Whatever the genre that best serves to pigeonhole his latest musical preoccupation, the defining trait of his songwriting is a determination to look hard at human beings, most notably himself. "I'm an idiot," he's quick to point out. "We all are, we're all beautiful and we're all ugly." His willingness to examine the seamier side of modern man (perhaps most effectively in his chronicles of man's inhumanity to woman) can leave the fastidious listener a little cold. But this is the peculiar authenticity that marks the best of what we perhaps do well to call "folk music." It reflects confusion as well as harmony, the beautiful and the ugly. As Bob Dylan remarked in a 1965 interview, "It's weird, full of legend, myth, Bible and ghosts ... chaos, watermelons, clocks, everything." As a lyricist, Costello stands in this tradition with people like Dylan and Tom Waits. Neither sap nor sentimentality will have the last word. His subject is all things ineffably human.

David Dark is the author of *Everyday Apocalypse: The Sacred Revealed in Radiohead, The Simpsons, and Other Pop Culture Icons*, published in December by Bruzos Press.

Reliability/Accuracy:

How reliable is this information source? Can you trust and believe it? Reliability in this context relates to the accuracy

and treatment of the information. Reliability is directly related to Authority, but is a separate criteria. Is the information correct, as far as you can tell? Do the authors cite their sources? Is there a complete bibliography? Were primary or secondary sources used? Does it appear to be well edited? Evaluating web pages: do you see poor grammar, nonstandard language or misspelled words?

Check for bias: Is the information covered fact, opinion, or propaganda? It is not always easy to separate fact from opinion. Facts can usually be verified; opinions, though they may be based on factual information, evolve from the interpretation of facts. Skilled writers can make you think their interpretations are facts. Does the information appear to be valid and well-researched, or is it questionable and unsupported by evidence? Assumptions should be reasonable. Note errors or omissions. Are the ideas and arguments advanced more or less in line with other works you have read on the same topic? The more radically an author departs from the views of others in the same field, the more carefully and critically you should scrutinize his or her ideas. Is the author's point of view objective and impartial? Is the language free of emotion-arousing words and bias?

Pediatrics, March 2003 v111 i3 p653(7)

Addressing parents' concerns: do vaccines cause allergic or autoimmune diseases? *Paul A. Offit; Charles J. Hackett.*

Author's Abstract: COPYRIGHT 2003 American Academy of *Pediatrics*

Anecdotal case reports and uncontrolled observational studies in the medical literature claim that vaccines cause chronic diseases such as asthma, multiple sclerosis, chronic arthritis, and diabetes. Several biological mechanisms have been proposed to explain how vaccines might cause allergic or autoimmune diseases. For example, allergic diseases might be caused by prevention of early childhood infections (the "hygiene hypothesis"), causing a prolongation of immunoglobulin E-promoting T-helper cell type 2-type responses. However, vaccines do not prevent most common childhood infections, and large well-controlled epidemiologic studies do not support the hypothesis that vaccines

cause allergies. Autoimmune diseases might occur after immunization because proteins on microbial pathogens are similar to human proteins ("molecular mimicry") and could induce immune responses that damage human cells. However, wild-type viruses and bacteria are much better adapted to growth in humans than vaccines and much more likely to stimulate potentially damaging self-reactive lymphocytes. Consistent with critical differences between natural infection and immunization, well-controlled epidemiologic studies do not support the hypothesis that vaccines cause autoimmunity.

Flaws in proposed biological mechanisms that explain how vaccines might cause chronic diseases are consistent with the findings of many well-controlled large epidemiologic studies that fail to show a causal relationship. *Pediatrics* 2003;111:653-659; vaccines, vaccine safety, asthma, allergies, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, chronic arthritis.

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- (3.) Hurwitz EL, Morgenstern H. Effects of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis or tetanus vaccination on allergies and allergy-related respiratory symptoms among children and adolescents in the United States. *J Manipulative Physiol Ther*. 2000;23:81-90
- (4.) Downes KA, Domen RE, McCarron KF, et al. Acute autoimmune hemolytic anemia following DTP vaccination: fatal case and review of the literature. *Clin Pediatr*. 2001;40:355-358

Currency:

How old is this information? Is there newer information available? When was the information published? If it is not dated, you should be cautious of the information source. Is the information up-to-date? Have new discoveries been made, or have events taken place since the information was published? Is your topic one that is changing quickly, such as medical research or technology, or one that is fairly stable and requires more background information such as history or

literature? If your information source is a web site, the date of publication and/or last updated date are usually found at the bottom of the page.

Time, Feb 9, 2004 v163 i6 p42

So Much For The WMD: America's top weapons sleuth says the intelligence on Iraq's arms was all wrong. TIME reports on how the CIA blew it. (World)(**weapons of mass destruction** in Iraq) *Michael Duffy*.

Full Text: COPYRIGHT 2004 Time, Inc.

Byline: Michael Duffy/Washington Reported by Timothy J. Burger, Massimo Calabresi, Matthew Cooper, Mark Thompson and Adam Zagorin/Washington

Studies in the Novel, Winter 1994 v26 n4 p337(13)

Of woman borne: male experience and feminine truth in Jane Austen's novels. *Sarah R. Morrison*.

Abstract: **Jane Austen's** critics have interpreted her works almost solely in a patriarchal context even when they have disagreed about whether she endorses or subverts the context. Austen was a female writer who sought to view the world from a strictly feminine perspective. Her male characters, who have been criticized as being flat and unconvincing, may have been drawn that way because they are secondary in Austen's perspective. Austen's primary interest was in the ability of characters to interconnect and the love story, which people assume is the primary interest of women writers, was only a part of her effort to portray the complexity of human relationships.

Completeness

Is the information the most complete available? Is it comprehensive? Is the information complete, or is it a summary of other work? Is that other work cited, so that you are able to consult the original sources? Is the subject covered completely?

RN, Feb 2003 v66 i2 p20(1)

Researchers find no link between MMR vaccine and autism.
(Clinical Highlights). (measles, mumps, and rubella) *Jeff*
Bauer.

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Despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary, the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine does not increase a child's risk of developing autism or a related autistic disorder.

Researchers looked at MMR vaccination rates and diagnoses of autism among 537,303 children born in Denmark from 1991 to 1993. They found that 82% had received the MMR vaccine at an average age of 17 months. Overall, 316 children were diagnosed with autism and 422 with other autistic-spectrum (autistic-related) disorders. These diagnoses were based on criteria very similar to those used in the United States, and the MMR vaccine used was identical.

Overall, researchers found that compared to unvaccinated children, there was no increased risk of autism or autistic-spectrum disorders among children who had been vaccinated. When looking at specific variables that might have tied the MMR vaccine to an increased risk, researchers found no association between the vaccine and autism based on age at vaccination, time since vaccination, or date of vaccination.

Madsen, K M., Hviid, A., et al. (2002). A population-based study of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination and autism. *N Engl J Med*, 347(19), 1474.

Relevancy:

After all is said and done, does the information source answer your questions? Does it "fill your information need?" You must know what information you need, what type of information source you need it to come from, and what you

will be using that information for (a final term paper, a short composition, your personal knowledge or information, etc.).