NAME\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_CLASS\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DATE\_\_\_\_

Remember, your use of sources is a means of supporting the argument you make. This means that the sources you reference need to be credible and authoritative. How do you know that your sources are of value? Ask yourself the following questions**: [Please use all caps to distinguish your answers from the questions.]**

**Citation of the Source being evaluated: Format it in the documentation style of your paper as it would appear in a Bibliography, Works Cited or References list:**

**1. Where was the source published?**

* Is it in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal (i.e. an article that is evaluated by other experts in the field) or published by a university press, professional society, or scientific publisher (all of which also operate peer-review processes)? These texts will have scholarly credibility.
* Was the source published on-line? This is not necessarily bad, but it will depend on who published it, why it was published, and how you intend to use the material. For example, there are on-line journals that utilize peer-review thus providing greater credibility to the publication. But there are many articles published under the guise of scholarly work, by individuals claiming expertise but which are of highly questionable credibility. If you have doubts about an on-line source, you can discuss it with your instructor or TA and you can elect not to use it.

**2. Who wrote it?**

* You can undertake brief on-line research into the author. Is the author affiliated with a university or another institution? What else has the author written? Citation databases will also tell you the number of times this source has been cited by other academics, giving you further insight into its credibility.

**3. Is the piece timely and appropriate for its field?**

* In some disciplines, material can become outdated very swiftly. In others, texts can continue to be considered valuable for longer. You should search for additional texts on the topic to find related sources, sources in which this source is cited, and sources that cite this source in order to get a stronger picture of its intellectual relevance and value.

**4. For whom is the source written?**

* Is the intended audience a scholarly one? If so, it should have a clear bibliography that you will also be able to consult for further sources.

**5. Will you use the source as a primary or secondary text?**

* If the material does not measure up to expected standards of scholarly work, it may still be of use to you. But as a primary text – that is to say, a text that needs to be analyzed – rather than a secondary text – which is a text that might support your argument or provide a theoretical framework for your analysis, for example.