Evaluating Sources

Whether to use a source
How best to use a source
Evaluating sources:

• **Who is the author?**
  – What do you know about that person or group? Credentials, reputation, agenda.

• **What do you know about the publisher or periodical?**
Evaluating sources:

• **How old is the source?**
  – Does that matter for your topic?
Evaluating sources:

• What is the intended **audience** for the source?
  – Use professional sources as much as possible
  – Beware of “preaching to the choir”
Evaluating sources:

• What is the **purpose** of the source?
  – Distinguish between persuasive and informative

• If an argument, how **good**?
  – Have the best **quality** arguments you can, to support your views and to represent opponents.
Evaluating sources:

- Primary or secondary?
  - How far are you from the starting point? Get as close to there as possible!