# Argumentative Research Projects/Papers, Grades 7-12 Science and Math (APA)

[There is a similar guide for the Informational Research Projects/Papers]

## Overview

### Timeframes for Preparing Cards and Completing Argumentative Papers / Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Approximate Timeframe for Cards Due</th>
<th>Approximate Timeframe for ELA to Do Paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Early January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Late February / Early March</td>
<td>Mid-March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>World History</td>
<td>Early January</td>
<td>Late January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Mid-April</td>
<td>Late April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Late October</td>
<td>Early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>TBA with ELA</td>
<td>TBA with ELA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Specs for the Argumentative Research Paper / Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Primary Sources</th>
<th>Secondary Sources</th>
<th>Indirect Quotes</th>
<th>Direct Quotes</th>
<th>Length of Paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 / page</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 – 3 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 / page</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 – 3 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 / page</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 / page</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 – 5 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 / page</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 / page</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-7 pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Standards Checklist for the Argumentative Paper - - Grade 7 ELA

**NOTE TO TEACHERS: “Student-Friendly” Rubrics Attached**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included In Pre-Write</th>
<th>editing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Content Teachers should handle WHST 7.8 (first 8 items)

### Gathering Information (WHST 7.8) (ELA W 7.1; W 7.8)

- Relevant information is collected (i.e., relates to the argumentative topic - both the position and the counter-position).
- Information is recorded appropriately (paraphrased and/or direct quotations; avoidance of plagiarism).
- Student shows command of the vocabulary used in the information collected by using it in the text. (RH 7.4)
- Information is taken from APPROVED sources, including ALL of the following -
  - ☐ digital
  - ☐ print
  - ☐ primary
  - ☐ secondary
- Search terms are used correctly.
- The sources used are credible, accurate, timely, and unbiased.
- Citations follow a standardized format. (L 7.3 a)

### The Pre-Write

- Information collected is organized into the major topics and ideas of the paper; i.e., a clear position with a rationale; the counter-position and why it is viable; the complete development of the position.
- The outline reflects a logical development of each idea (facts, details, examples, etc.).
- The direct and indirect quotations used are appropriate to the point and correctly documented.

### The Finished Product (WHST 7.1) (ELA W 7.1)

- The Introduction sets forth the precise claim (and basic rationale) and distinguishes it from counter-claims or positions (in a manner that acknowledges its viability) (ELA W 7.1 a; WHST 7.1 a)
- The position is developed with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate and credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (ELA W 7.1 b; WHST 7.1 b)
- Words, phrases, and clauses are used to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claims, reasons, and evidence. (ELA 7.1 c; WHST 7.1 c)
- The style is formal and consistently maintained. (ELA 7.1 d; WHST 7.1 d)
- The language is precise, mature (but developmentally appropriate) and domain-specific as needed (L 7.3)
- The conclusion follows from and supports the argument presented. (ELA W 7.1 e; WHST 7.1 e)
- Technology was used effectively and efficiently to produce and publish writing. (W 7.6)
- The physical presentation (headings, graphics, charts, tables) enhances the message of the paper and aids comprehension (W 7.4)

### Conventions

- Observed standard English grammar and usage (L 7.1)
- Used various types of phrases and clauses (L 7.1 a, b, c)
- Punctuation: commas to divide a series (L 7.2 a)
- Spelling (L 7.2b)
### Student-Friendly Rubric for Planning, Gathering Information, and Organizing

**SECTION 1: Planning the Paper and Gathering Information on Note-Cards (W 7.8)**

[Section 2: Writing the Paper - - See Page 11]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Not evident</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Attempted, but very weak</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Evident, but incomplete</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Evident, and fairly solid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chose a legitimate argument on which to take a position (one that had a viable counter-argument).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Developed a viable research question to reflect the position.</td>
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<td>3. Drafted an effective possible organization that set forth the position, provided for support, and acknowledged the viability of the counter-claim.</td>
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<td>4. Located relevant print and electronic information from approved* primary and secondary sources.</td>
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<td>[* = timely, unbiased, authoritative, accurate, developmentally appropriate]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>c. print</td>
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<td>d. electronic</td>
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<td>e. appropriate citation-bibliographic information</td>
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<td>5. Collected information from sources appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. paraphrased indirect quotes / references relevant to topic (at least 2 per page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. recorded effective direct quotations (at least 2)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**STUDENT RATING**

**PEER RATING**

**TEACHER RATING**
GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING, GATHERING INFORMATION, AND CREATING THE NOTE-CARDS

CONTENT TEACHERS

1. Decide on a general topic
   (e.g., Fracking)

2. Create a research question
   (e.g., What would be the plusses and minuses of stepping up Fracking efforts in the Mahoning Valley?)

3. Draft a possible organization [unless the needed material cannot be found].
   Remember, this possible “organization” may change, depending on the material found - - or not found.

Sample Organizational Outline to Guide the Research

Introduction (maybe 2 paragraphs; 3 or 4 sentences each)

1st Paragraph?
   Re-state the Research question
   e.g., What would be the plusses and minuses of stepping up Fracking efforts in the Mahoning Valley?

Rationale - - why this topic? What is its importance? What will a decision contribute?
   e.g., This Valley is dying; we need a major industry for economic recovery . . . to attract people to live here . . . put their children in our schools. A major industry like Fracking could put us back on our feet . . . But what if it’s not safe? What if it ruins the water and the air? Getting to the truth is important.

Your position - - at least as you begin the research
   e.g., If done carefully and within EPA guidelines, Fracking will bring Youngstown back to economic prosperity and restore our civic pride

2nd Paragraph?
   The counter-claim or alternate position
   e.g., The critics of Fracking are convinced it will be an environmental disaster . . . will ruin the water supply, polluter the air, put even more Valley people out of work (due to out-of-state contractors)

How do you plan to present the paper?
   e.g., Define Fracking . . . what’s the basic idea and how it works
   e.g., Describe the opposition to Fracking and cite reasons why . . . maybe include research
   e.g., Explain why that objection can be overcome . . . including research to support
   e.g., Develop 3 or 4 reasons Fracking would be good for the Valley . . . with support
   e.g., What guidelines / safeguards would need to be in place
   e.g., What additional information or research would be necessary

Body (maybe 6 paragraphs- - 1 for each of these headings?)
   e.g., Define Fracking . . . what’s the basic idea and how it works
   e.g., Describe the opposition to Fracking and cite reasons why . . . maybe include research
   e.g., Explain why that objection can be overcome . . . including research to support
   e.g., Develop 3 or 4 reasons Fracking would be good for the Valley . . . with support
   e.g., What guidelines / safeguards would need to be in place

Conclusion (maybe 3 or 4 sentences)
   e.g., Confirm your position
   e.g., Indicate what may still need to be done
4. **Locate relevant information from approved* primary and secondary sources**  
   [ * timely, unbiased, authoritative, accurate, developmentally appropriate language ]

   Suggest **3 each** for the paper; NOTE: students may need to examine several before finding those that ‘work.’

   **Primary** (e.g., letters, treaties, maps, eye witness accounts, transcripts of phone calls or testimony, untouched video of actual incident, untouched photos)

   **Secondary** (e.g., reference books, editorials, second-hand accounts, magazine articles and op-ed essays)

   Standards require students to access a blend of **print** and **electronic** sources

   **Print** (e.g., approved journals or periodicals; approved research books; approved collections of printed documents)

   **Electronic** (e.g., approved web-sites, YouTubes, Prezi’s, PowerPoints, etc.)

   Record **ACCURATE and APPROPRIATE citation information**  
   See attached sample **note-cards**; NOTE: these are MLA format; APA may be the format selected by Math or Science.

5. **Collect information from the approved, relevant sources**
   See attached sample **note-cards**

   (a) **Paraphrase** - - don’t plagiarize (INDIRECT quotes); use content-specific terms with awareness and practical knowledge.
   It is suggested that teachers demonstrate this and give students practice doing it.

   (b) **Use effective DIRECT quotations**
   It is suggested that teachers demonstrate this and give students practice doing it.

   See attached sample **bibliographic citations**; NOTE: these are MLA format; APA may be the format selected by Math or Science.

   (c) **It is suggested that students include at least 2 INDIRECT quotes per page and at least 2 DIRECT quotes in the 2 to 3-page paper.** See attached sample **text for paper that includes DIRECT quote**

**Source Cards and Note-Cards**

**SOURCE Cards**

BEFORE students begin their note cards, remind them to avoid plagiarism by NEVER recording a complete sentence. Instruct them to write the note-cards by topic so they can be sorted and then re-assembled as TOPIC piles.
## SECTION 2: Writing the Paper (W 7.1)

### [Section 1: Planning the Paper and Gathering Information on Note-Cards - - See Page 3]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Write</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Collected information was organized into a valid outline. (e.g., a clear position with a rationale; the counter-position and why it is viable; the complete development of the position.

| 7.       |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Outline reflects logical development and support of position and counter-position (facts, details, examples, etc.).

| 8.       |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Quotations used are appropriate to the content and are correctly structured.

### Finished Product

| 9.       |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Introduction clearly sets forth the precise claim and basic rationale, distinct from counter-claims (although its merits are acknowledged) and previews what is to follow.

| 10.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Position is developed with logical reasoning and relevant evidence using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating solid understanding of the topic.

| 11.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Words, phrases, and clauses are used to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claims, reasons, and evidence

| 12.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- The style is formal and consistently maintained.

| 13.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- The language is precise, mature (but developmentally appropriate), and domain-specific as needed.

| 14.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- The conclusion follows from and supports the argument presented.

| 15.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Technology was used effectively and efficiently to produce and publish writing.

| 16.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- The physical presentation (headings, graphics, charts, tables) enhances the message of the paper and aids comprehension

| 17.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Grammar and usage correct

| 18.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- A variety of phrases and clauses used

| 19.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Commas used to divide a series.

| 20.      |                |               |                            |                          |                             |

- Spelling was correct

### STUDENT RATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEER RATING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER RATING</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Typographical Guidelines

Typestyle
Use a standard, easily readable typeface (e.g., Times New Roman) with a 12-font size.

Margins
a. Except for page numbers (or a footer, if required), leave a one-inch margin around the text of your paper - left, right, top, bottom. DO NOT justify lines at the right margin.

b. Indent paragraphs ½ inch; set and use tab key.

c. Set-off quotations (those longer than four typed lines) should be indented one inch from the left margin.

Spacing
The entire research paper must be double-spaced, including set-off quotations and the list of works cited.

Heading and Title
a. Ask your teacher if the paper needs a title page. If so, ask to see a model. Then follow that format.

If a title page is not required, type in the upper left corner of page 1 - double spaced as shown:

```
1"
Your full name     (e.g., Jane Ellen Doe)
```

```
1"
Your instructor’s name (e.g., Mr. Smith)
```

```
The course name     (e.g., English 7)
```

```
The date       (e.g., Thursday, October 4, 2012)
```

b. After the above, double space once again, and center the title of the paper above the text. The title should NOT be underlined, and it should NOT be typed in all caps.
APA Citation Style

APA citation style refers to the rules and conventions established by the American Psychological Association for documenting sources used in a research paper. APA style requires both in-text citations and a reference list. For every in-text citation there should be a full citation in the reference list and vice versa.

The examples of APA styles and formats listed on this page include many of the most common types of sources used in academic research. For additional examples and more detailed information about APA citation style, refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association and the APA Style Guide to Electronic References.

Also, for automatic generation of citations in appropriate citation style, use a bibliographic citation management program such as Refworks or EndNote. You can find more information on this in our Citation Management page.

DIRECT or INDIRECT QUOTES, or Reference Citations in Text

In APA style, in-text citations are placed within sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear what information is being quoted or paraphrased and whose information is being cited.

1. Works by a single author

The last name of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at the appropriate point.

   . . . from theory on bounded rationality (Simon, 1945), we know . . . .

If the name of the author or the date appear as part of the narrative, cite only missing information in parentheses.

   . . . Simon (1945) posited that . . . .

2. Works by multiple authors

When a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. In parenthetical material join the names with an ampersand (&).

   . . . as has been shown (Leiter & Maslach, 1998), the findings . . . .

In the narrative text, join the names with the word "and."

   . . . as Leiter and Maslach (1998) demonstrated . . . .

When a work has three, four, or five authors, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs. Incidentally, Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler (1991) found that . . . .

In all subsequent citations per paragraph, include only the surname of the first author followed by "et al." (Latin for "and others") and the year of publication.

   Incidentally, Kahneman et al. (1991) found that . . . .
3. Works by associations, corporations, government agencies, etc.

The names of groups that serve as authors (corporate authors) are usually written out each time they appear in a text reference.

Smith’s work while with the National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH] (2007) . . . .

When appropriate, the names of some corporate authors are spelled out in the first reference and abbreviated in all subsequent citations. The general rule for abbreviating in this manner is to supply enough information in the text citation for a reader to locate its source in the Reference List without difficulty.

In that same report, (NIMH, 2007), Smith claimed . . . .

4. Works with no author

When a work has no author, use the first two or three words of the work’s title (omitting any initial articles) as your text reference, capitalizing each word. Place the title in quotation marks if it refers to an article, chapter of a book, or Web page. Italicize the title if it refers to a book, periodical, brochure, or report.

The first article on climate change (“Climate and Weather,” 1997) has indicated . . . .


Anonymous authors should be listed as such followed by a comma and the date.

One accusation about climate change (Anonymous, 2008) . . . .

5. Specific parts of a source

To cite a specific part of a source (always necessary for quotations), include the page, chapter, etc. (with appropriate abbreviations) in the in-text citation.

. . . as reported in the court transcript (Stigter & Das, 1981, p. 96).

De Waal (1996) overstated the case when he asserted that "we seem to be reaching ... from the hands of philosophers" (p. 218).

If page numbers are not included in electronic sources (such as Web-based journals), provide the paragraph number preceded by the abbreviation "para." or the heading and following paragraph.

(Mönnich & Spiering, 2008, para. 9)
References cited in the text of a research paper must appear in a Reference List or bibliography. This list provides the information necessary to identify and retrieve each source.

- **Order**: Entries should be arranged in alphabetical order by authors' last names. Sources without authors are arranged alphabetically by title within the same list.

- **Authors**: Write out the last name and initials for all authors of a particular work. Use an ampersand (&) instead of the word "and" when listing multiple authors of a single work. e.g., Smith, J. D., & Jones, M.

- **Titles**: Capitalize only the first word of a title or subtitle, and any proper names that are part of a title.

- **Pagination**: Use the abbreviation p. or pp. to designate page numbers of articles from periodicals that do not use volume numbers, especially newspapers. These abbreviations are also used to designate pages in encyclopedia articles and chapters from edited books.

- **Indentation**: The first line of the entry is flush with the left margin, and all subsequent lines are indented (5 to 7 spaces) to form a "hanging indent".

- **Underlining vs. Italic**: It is appropriate to use italics instead of underlining for titles of books and journals.

Two additional pieces of information should be included for works accessed online.

- **Internet Address**: A stable Internet address should be included and should direct the reader as close as possible to the actual work. If the work has a digital object identifier (DOI), use this. If there is no DOI or similar handle, use a stable URL. If the URL is not stable, as is often the case with online newspapers and some subscription-based databases, use the home page of the site you retrieved the work from.

- **Date**: If the work is a finalized version published and dated, as in the case of a journal article, the date within the main body of the citation is enough. However, if the work is not dated and/or is subject to change, as in the case of an online encyclopedia article, include the date that you retrieved the information.

1. **Articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers**

References to periodical articles must include the following elements: author(s), date of publication, article title, journal title, volume number, issue number (if applicable), and page numbers.

- **Journal article, one author, accessed online**


- **Journal article, two authors, accessed online**

c. **Journal article, more than two authors, accessed online**


d. **Article from an Internet-only journal**


e. **Journal article from a subscription database (no DOI)**


f. **Magazine article, in print**


g. **Newspaper article, no author, in print**


**Newspaper article, multiple authors, discontinuous pages, in print**


2. **Books**

References to an entire book must include the following elements: author(s) or editor(s), date of publication, title, place of publication, and the name of the publisher.

a. **No Author or editor, in print**


b. **One author, in print**

c. Two authors, in print

d. Corporate author, author as publisher, accessed online

$File/13016_2000.pdf

e. Edited book

3. Research reports and papers

References to a report must include the following elements: author(s), date of publication, title, place of publication, and name of publisher. If the issuing organization assigned a number (e.g., report number, contract number, or monograph number) to the report, give that number in parentheses immediately after the title. If it was accessed online, include the URL.

a. Government report, accessed online


b. Government reports, GPO publisher, accessed online


c. Technical and/or research reports, accessed online

4. **Audio-visual media**

References to audio-visual media must include the following elements: name and function of the primary contributors (e.g., producer, director), date, title, the medium in brackets, location or place of production, and name of the distributor. If the medium is indicated as part of the retrieval ID, brackets are not needed.

a. **Videocassette/DVD**


b. **Audio recording**


c. **Motion picture**


d. **Television broadcast**


e. **Television show from a series**


**Music recording**


5. **Undated Web site content, blogs, and data**
For content that does not easily fit into categories such as journal papers, books, and reports, keep in mind the goal of a citation is to give the reader a clear path to the source material. For electronic and online materials, include stable URL or database name. Include the author, title, and date published when available. For undated materials, include the date the resource was accessed.

a. **Blog entry**


b. **Professional Web site**


c. **Data set from a database**


6. **Entire Web site**

When citing an entire Web site (and not a specific document on that site), no Reference List entry is required if the address for the site is cited in the text of your paper.

Witchcraft In Europe and America is a site that presents the full text of many essential works in the literature of witchcraft and demonology (http://www.witchcraft.psmedia.com/).

For more detailed information on APA citation style such as information on articles in press, journal special issues and supplements, translations, et cetera, see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association and the APA Style Guide to Electronic References.

Other citation guides and useful Web sites:

American Psychological Association's [Web site](http://www.apa.org)
Purdue University Online Writing Lab's [APA Formatting and Style Guide](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)

[http://www.techcrunch.com](http://www.techcrunch.com)
Validity and reliability of information on the Internet:

Authority

- Is the author of the site easily identifiable?
- Is the site developed by an individual or a group (an institution, for example)?
- What are the author’s or group’s credentials (professional qualifications, background, credentials, or institutional affiliation, for example)?
  - Groups may have more long-term interest, in addition to financial backing, to give stability to the site. An email address to “info” or “webmaster” may indicate a group or committee.
  - Domain names, such as .edu (education) or .gov (government) can indicate authorship and the entity who published the content.
  - Is there evidence of possible bias, based on the organization’s affiliation?
  - A commercial site may be promoting products or business interests, even if only in a subtle way (such as the presence of a company name).

Timeliness

- Can you find the date of publication or latest update of the page or article?
- If a date is not clearly identifiable (at the beginning or end of the page) can it be located by other means?
  - In the View tab, look at “document info” for a possible date.
  - In the address bar, from right to left, delete characters in the URL up to the first slash mark. This will get you to the home page, which is usually dated.
- Are there indicators for new information?

Accuracy

- Is the information reliable and error free?
- Can the information presented on the website be verified? Information may be verified in the following ways:
  - Other Internet sites
  - Other sites linking to this site for content
  - Texts (textbooks, biographies, magazines, or non-fiction books, among other texts)
  - Personal experiences, background knowledge

[ cont’d ]
Content

- Can the content be found at several other reliable resources?
- Is the content consistent with what is already known on the topic?
- If the information presented is ground-breaking, is there any proof to the assertions? Or do they describe how they got to this information (for example, research methodology or consulting other sources)?

Bias

- Is the content free of bias?
- Is the website designed to sway opinion?
- Does the author or publisher have a particular viewpoint that they seek to endorse?
- Does the website present accurate descriptions of alternate viewpoints?
- Are there advertisements on the webpages?
- Who sponsors the website?
- Are political views posted on the webpages?

Sources

- Does the author/sponsor state where the information was obtained?
- Is a bibliography or list of sources included on the website?
- Are the sources verifiable and reliable?

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