## Purpose

Practice what you learned about evaluating authority before conducting online research. Putting your claim-testing skills to work will help you more accurately evaluate the information sources you see online.

Note: If you haven’t already done the activity [Claim Testing—Evaluating Authority](https://www.oerproject.com/OER-Materials/OER-Media/PDFs/Climate/Unit-1/Claim-Testing-Evaluating-Authority), we recommend you complete that intro lesson first before practicing those skills in this activity.

## Process

Review the three important aspects of evaluating authority:

* **Expertise**:What is the author’s (or organization’s) recognized knowledge or professional and educational background in a field?
* **Source citation:** Does the author reference the sources they used to gather, analyze, or interpret information?
* **Perspective**: What is the claim-maker’s point of view, or what are the factors that may have influenced the author, such as religion, nationality, gender, political affiliation?

In the next research activity, you’ll visit a website called *Climate Change Indicators* at [www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/view-indicators](http://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/view-indicators). Before you complete that activity, use the steps below to evaluate the authority of the source.

1. Go to the website *Climate Change Indicators* at [www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/view-indicators](http://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/view-indicators).

What are your first impressions of this site? Note some of what you see when you first open the page.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

At first glance, do you think it’s a reliable authority on climate change? Why or why not?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Unless otherwise noted, this work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Credit: “Claim Testing—Practicing Authority”, OER Project, <https://www.oerproject.com/>

1. Examine the **expertise** of the organization behind the site. What can you determine about the organization’s knowledge and background in the field? Hint: To find out more about the organization, you may need to leave the site and search for information in a new tab.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you rank the expertise of the site? Check one.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **High** | **Medium** | **Low** | **Explain your answer** |
|  |  |  |  |

1. Now, look at the **source citation** the website provides. How well does the organization reference the sources they used to gather, analyze, or interpret information?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you rank the expertise of the site? Check one.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **High** | **Medium** | **Low** | **Explain your answer** |
|  |  |  |  |

1. Consider the perspective of the organization. What is the organization’s point of view, or what are the factors that may have influenced it, such as religion, nationality, gender, political affiliation?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

1. Do you think this source is a reliable authority on the impacts of climate change? Why or why not?

|  |
| --- |
|  |