



Web Wise by Who Is-ing!

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Overview

Topic: Technology, Staff Development. Among the influences that shape students' thinking skills, the Internet and the World Wide Web are some of the most influential. The majority of students rely on the Web to research topics for school projects; however, they may be weak at determining the quality of a website's content. They may value information-gathering over deliberation, breadth over depth, and other people's arguments over their own. Students should be skeptical about information on a website; they must determine who is the author, the author's credentials, and the author's agenda. This Web resource evaluation session provides information literacy training for instructional personnel and students who will identify what content they expect to find on the MartinLutherKing.org website, conduct a review of the website's content and a check to determine the registrant of the MartinLutherKing.org site.

Time Allotment

One 1-hour session

Media Components

Computers with Internet access; one to three instructional personnel or students per computer
Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer browser

Projection Device (optional)

Display Device (optional)

Websites for: Evaluation, Performing Registrant

Checks, and Title Field Searching & Link Checking

Anti-Dr. Martin Luther King Propaganda Websites

www.martinlutherking.org. A biased site, maintained by the racist organization Stormfront.org, that alleges that Dr. King was as agent of communism, a disruptive force in American history, and accuses him of numerous acts of plagiarism.
www.stormfront.org. An extremist site promoting a message of "White Pride World Wide." The www.martinlutherking.org site is registered and maintained by Stormfront.org.

Caution for Instructional Personnel

There is profanity on the homepage of the www.martinlutherking.org Web site.

When conducting the session, www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html will be used as the homepage for the site.

Pro Dr. Martin Luther King Website

www.mlkonline.com. The official website of the estate of Martin Luther King, Jr. The site that provides copyrighted writings, documents, and recordings of Martin Luther king, Jr.

How to Recognize an Advocacy Page

[www2.widener.edu/Wolfram-Memorial-](http://www2.widener.edu/Wolfram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm)

[Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm](http://www2.widener.edu/Wolfram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm). The Widener Library site provides a checklist to evaluate an advocacy Web page. An advocacy page is usually a .org site maintained by an organization attempting to influence public opinion.

Website Registration Check Sites

www.easywhois.com and www.netsol.com/

[cgi-bin/whois/whois](http://www.netsol.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois). These Web search tools can check a website's registration, administrative and technical contacts, and when the site was updated.



GE Fund



All the Web, AltaVista, and Google Search Engines

www.alltheweb.com, www.altavista.com, and www.google.com. The search engines support title field searching and link checking.

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to:

- evaluate website content for reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, and point of view and bias. Specifically they will evaluate a website resource for its:
 1. Content – Recognize that the www.martinlutherking.org site is biased and attempts to deceive and to manipulate the reader with the site's biased content.
 2. Source – Determine by performing a “Who Is” check that the instructional personnel or students will determine that the developers of the extremist website Stormfront.org are the source of the content on the www.martinlutherking.org site.
 3. Quality — Demonstrate an understanding that the content of the www.martinlutherking.org site presents a one-sided view and expresses opinions rather than facts.

Instructional personnel and students will be able to:

- use the World Wide Web search engines as tools to aid in research. Specifically, instructional personnel and students will be able to conduct: Title searches and Link searches

(This lesson addresses Va. SOL Computer/Technology 12.2, 12.3, 12.4; and English Research 9.8, 10.10, 11.9, 12.8)

Materials

Handouts:

- One copy of the “Bring the Dream to Life” flyer available at: www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html
- One copy of the “Widener University Wolfgram Memorial Library Advocacy Web Page” evaluation criteria available at: www2.widener.edu/Wolfgram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm

Teacher Preparations

- Ensure all computers are connected to the Internet and that either the Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer browser is open
- Preview, bookmark, and print copies of the:
 - a. Widener University Wolfgram Memorial Library Advocacy Web Page evaluation criteria published at www2.widener.edu/Wolfgram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm
 - b. The Martin Luther King Jr. flyer published at www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html
- Preview the content categories on www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html; develop a detailed familiarity with the content of the following link *Truth About King: What He Fought and Fought For*
- Practice the following searches:
 - a. Title searches using the advanced search options in AlltheWeb, AltaVista, and Google's basic search option. (see attached)
 - b. Link check using AltaVista's advanced search option. (see attached)
 - c. Practice a “Who Is” Check of www.martinlutherking.org using either www.easywhois.com or www.netsol.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois noting who registered the site and that is kept updated. (see attached)

Introductory Activity

1. Handout the “Bring the Dream to Life” flyer to the instructional personnel or students.
2. Ask the instructional personnel or students:
 - a. Since the website has Martin Luther King in the address and the site is an organization (.org) website: Do you think that www.martinlutherking.org is the official website of the Martin Luther King organization?
 - b. Would they expect that the site seeks to promote the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?
3. Assign three or four-person teams of instructional personnel or students to collaboratively brainstorm and develop a list of subject areas they would expect to find on the website.

4. Direct the teams to discuss the content lists that they developed.

Focus For Media Interaction

Focus the instructional personnel's and students' attention to the necessity of evaluating website content. Explain that, unlike the traditional "gatekeeper" filtering of editors and peer reviewing, there is no "gatekeeper" on the Web—anyone can publish a Web page! Explain to the instructional personnel or students that they will compare their content lists with the subject categories on the www.martinlutherking.org website and that they will evaluate the website's content by using the evaluation criteria of: authority, accuracy, objectivity, currency and coverage.

Learning Activities

1. Direct the instructional personnel or students to connect to the Web page www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html
2. Compare the list of subject areas developed by the instructional personnel or students with the subject areas on www.martinlutherking.org/flyer.html.
3. Ask the instructional personnel or students:
 - a. Are the subject areas on the Web page what you expected to find on a website dealing with Dr. Martin Luther King?
 - b. Is there any reason to expect that, after reviewing the section titles, the content would not be favorable toward Dr. Martin Luther King and his ideals?
4. Direct the instructional personnel or students to connect to the link titled: Truth About King: What He Fought and Fought For.
5. Ask the instructional personnel or students:
 - a. What is the title of the article?
 - b. Are you surprised with the article's title?
6. Direct the instructional personnel or students to read the first paragraph beginning with, "WHEN

THE COMMUNISTS TOOK OVER a country..." and the first paragraph of the section titled, "Communists Beliefs and Connections."

7. Ask the instructional personnel or students:
 - a. Is the information biased?
 - b. How would they characterize the website?
8. Ask the instructional personnel or students:
 - a. How many results do they normally review when searching the Web?
 - b. Do they think that the website would be located in the first ten results by a search engine?
9. Illustrate and guide the instructional personnel or students as they perform the title field searches in AlltheWeb, AltaVista and Google and note which number of the result the www.martinlutherking.org website is in each search engine; for example, result 6 of 100.
10. Have the instructional personnel review the description of returns from the three search engines.
 - a. Ask the students: Would you look at the returns from AlltheWeb and Google if those search engines described the site as, "Attacking Dr. King as a corrupt communist, under the control of a Marxist Jewish conspiracy?"
 - b. Focus the instructional personnel's or student's attention on the value of the Who Is in determining
11. Illustrate and guide the instructional personnel or students as they perform a "Who Is" check of the www.martinlutherking.org using either www.easywhois.com or www.netsol.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois.
12. Ask them: What organization is responsible for the www.martinlutherking.org website by finding, "Name Server: ISERVER.STORMFRONT.ORG" in the search results.
13. Direct the instructional personnel or students to connect to and to review the content of and to determine the orientation of www.stormfront.org.
14. Direct the instructional personnel or students to connect to the "Kids Page" link. Ask them:
 - a. Can you find the hyperlink to www.martinlutherking.org on the "Kids Page" link?

15. Ask the instructional personnel or students to summarize the process of Web resource evaluation and “Who Is” checking and how the two websites, www.martinlutherking.org and www.stormfront.org are related.

Culminating Activities

Have instructional personnel or students demonstrate their information literacy proficiency by:

1. Evaluating the content on the official website of the estate of Martin Luther King, Jr., www.mlkonline.com, that provides copyrighted writings, documents, and recordings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

2. Comparing and contrasting the quality of the information on the www.martinlutherking.org and the www.mlkonline.com sites.

3. Selecting the site that provides an unbiased or unprejudiced appraisal of the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Assessment

Inform the instructional personnel or students that they are researching photographic evidence of the Holocaust. Evaluate their ability to critically evaluate the content of the website, www.air-photo.com, using the criteria and answering the questions below.

Authority:

- What organization created the page?
- Does the quality of the photos influence your evaluation of the site?

Accuracy:

- Does the title of the page match their expectation of the site’s content?
- Is the purpose of the page indicated on the home page?
- Does the information contradict something you found somewhere else?

Objectivity:

- Is the information true?
- Does the information appear biased?
- Is the information useful for your research project?

Currency:

- Are there dates on the page to indicate when the page was last revised?
- Does that matter?

Coverage:

- Does the website clearly address the topics that you expected?
- Is the point of view of the organization clearly presented with supporting arguments?

Community Connections

Have instructional personnel or students perform a link check to www.martinlutherking.org using the AltaVista advanced search option. Determine if there are K-12 websites that are linked to the site. Determine whether the school is using the site for Web resource evaluation or failed to review the content on the site. If the K-12 sites are not using the site for Web resource evaluation, have the students e-mail the site’s Webmaster, recommend that the content www.martinlutherking.org be evaluated and the link removed from the school’s website.

Cross-Curricular Extensions

Technology: Have students evaluate the quality and accuracy of the information on the following websites using the evaluation criteria described in the “Checklist for an Advocacy Web Page.”

www2.widener.edu/Wolfgram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/advoc.htm

a. GENOCHOICE - Create Your Own Genetically Healthy Child Online! www.genochoice.com/

b. DreamTech International. www.d-b.net/dti/

c. Welcome to the Raelian Revolution. www.rael.org/

Research: Have instructional personnel or students conduct research on Kevin Alfred Strom and David Duke, the author of two sections of the www.martinlutherking.org website, to determine their beliefs on civil rights.

About the Author

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Paul Barron is the Technology Director for the Rockbridge County Schools in Lexington, Virginia. After retiring from the Marine Corps he earned a Masters Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Texas at Austin. He has provided staff development training on the use of the Web for research at workshops for school systems in the Shenandoah Valley and the New River Valley and at conferences sponsored by the Shenandoah Valley Technology Consortium, the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Electronic Media Association, the Virginia Library Association, and the Virginia Society for Technology Educators. He is also an adjunct faculty member at the Virginia Military Institute and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College.

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PRACTICE TITLE FIELD SEARCHES
AlltheWeb Title Search (Use the Advanced Search Option)

Word Filters Add words to include / exclude from results. One phrase / word per entry. Filters:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Must include | "Martin Luther King" | in the title |
| Must not include | | in the text |
| Should include | | in the text |

AltaVista Title Search (Use the Advanced Search Option)

Advanced Web Search
Search with...
this boolean expression

sorted by

[Basic Search](#)

Use **terms** such as AND, OR, AND NOT, NEAR

Pages with these words will be ranked highest.

Google Title Search (Use the Basic Search Option)

Web Images Groups Directory News-New!

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)
[Language Tools](#)

PRACTICE LINK CHECKS

AltaVista Link Check for K-12 Web Sites (Use the Advanced Search Option)

Advanced Web Search
Search with...
this boolean expression


sorted by

[Basic Search](#)

Use **terms** such as AND, OR, AND NOT, NEAR

Pages with these words will be ranked highest.

Practice a "Who Is" Check of www.martinlutherking.org using either www.easywhois.com or www.netsol.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois noting who registered the site and that is kept updated.



Easily look up the whois record for any domain ... **.COM**, **.NET**, and **.ORG** domains, and most country-level Top Level Domains.

look up a domain

Domain name:

