Worksheet 1: ‘FOR YOU TO DO’ – APPLICATION OF THE C.R.A.A.P. FRAMEWORK TO INFORMATION SOURCES

(Note: This is an abbreviated version of C.R.A.A.P.)

Scores here are indicative and a great deal depends on more detailed information than solely the nature of the source – e.g. a popular TV programme or popular magazine article will have more credibility if it features academic or objective experts than if it is simply a chat show or if it solely features politicians who have an agenda.

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|  | **Score for Currency** | **Score for Relevance** | **Score for Authority** | **Score for Accuracy** | **Score for Purpose** | **TOTAL** |
| **Wikipedia** | Wide-ranging, depending on number of sources given | Low, since anyone can adapt | Depends on the contributor, but often good | Low, as anyone can adapt and make changes. | Often high, since there is often no explicit reason to mislead |  |
| *5* | *3* | *7* | *3* | *8* | *26* |
| **Textbooks** | High – new editions mean currency | Peer-reviewed work, so high | Written by experts, so high | Peer reviewed work, so high | Often high, since there is often no reason to mislead |  |
| *8* | *9* | *10* | *10* | *9* | *46* |
| **Study guides (i.e. short booklets about the essentials you need to know, typically brief and with bullet points)** | Sometimes high – new editions mean currency | Peer-reviewed work, so high | Written by experts, but often containing insufficient depth to be of significant use | Peer-reviewed work, so high | Often high, since there is often no reason to mislead |  |
| *6* | *9* | *5* | *8* | *9* | *37* |
| **Discussions with tutors** | Tutors are usually well-informed and should have up to date expertise | Information tends to be opinion based on the evidence | If you are asking them something they know something about, then… | Reliant on tutors’ knowledge of the subject. | Often high, since there is often no reason to mislead |  |
| *9* | *7* | *8* | *8* | *9* | *41* |
| **Journal articles** | Very high: journals produce the most up to date research | Information is factual and based on evidence from the research | The article is written by the people who conducted the research and who are experts in what they did | Peer reviewed and information verified by experts. Language is academic with no errors. | The purpose is to inform others of what their research found – nothing more and nothing less |  |
| *10* | *9* | *10* | *10* | *10* | *49* |
| **TV – ‘factual’/documentary/news** | Often very up to date | TV documentaries and news can be reliable, but programmes are made according to editorial policy – which ***may*** not always reflect facts and may ignore opposing evidence | News programmes will have authority with those who follow them, but that may not be everyone | Often sources are not reviewed so the information isn’t verified. | Editorial policy on media programmes ***may not always*** be objective |  |
| *10* | *6* | *7* | *6* | *7* | *36* |
| **Rumours and opinions** | Often very up to date  Often impossible to say how current any evidence for a rumour is | Depends on the person spreading the rumour, but evidence is not normally presented | The perception of the individual plays a large role here: individuals present themselves as an authority on something but can be doing so for many reasons | Has the information come from a verified source? Often rumours are based on personal opinion. | Very low score: there is often a purpose behind spreading a rumour |  |
| *1* | *2* | *3* | *2* | *0* | *8* |
| **Lectures** | A good lecture includes some up-to-date research into a topic | The information will usually be factual, but some critical thinking may be applied by the lecturer | The lecturer will usually be an expert in their area | Information is verified. Supported by evidence. | The purpose will be to inform and teach, with no agenda |  |
| *8* | *8* | *9* | *8* | *1* | *43* |
| **Discussions with other students** | Comments may or may not be up to date | Opinions and facts may be blurred depending on the ‘quality’ of the thinking | Students will have some knowledge and may be able to share with others what they know, but would not be regarded as an authority on a topic unless there are specific reasons | Students will have their own opinions and may not have evidence to back this up. | As with rumours, it will be difficult to separate facts without any agenda from opinions where there is an agenda (e.g. coherence with personal values) | 24 |
| *6* | *7* | *5* | *5* | *6* | *29* |
| **Common sense** | May be current, but probably not because our values are resistant to change | Highly based on our values and experience, which is unlikely to be factual | Our common sense comes from what others have taught us and our values, so authority level of our common sense is likely to be low | Based on personal knowledge rather than information that has been reviewed. | The priority of our common sense is to maintain what we regard as common sense, so we often lack objectivity |  |
| *5* | *3* | *5* | *3* | *4* | *20* |
| **Popular magazines** | Good magazines will reflect current research and current issues, but a lot depends on the magazine | Popular magazines will not always give information that contradicts the opinions already held by the readership | They will be seen as having authority by a large proportion of those who buy the magazine, though some will buy for other purposes | Information might be biased towards the authors own ideas. Magazines are edited. | There will probably be no agenda or purpose in printing an article other than for their readership to enjoy, but it is not always easy to tell |  |
| *3* | *2* | *5* | *5* | *6* | *21* |
| **Discussions with business leaders** | Business leaders will usually know exactly what is affecting their business today | They will have opinions but those will be based on the facts and information they receive – which may or may not reflect what is happening in other businesses | Because of their position (which includes receiving up to date information), they will be seen as experts on issues affecting their own business, but not every business | Often the information will be personal knowledge.  Information will generally be supported by evidence. | There will sometimes be occasions where a speech or discussion is limited to convey a perspective, but generally business leaders will be seen as objective |  |
| *9* | *8* | *7* | *7* | *8* | *39* |
| **Blogs** | Usually, very current, reflecting individuals’ thoughts and ideas | Usually largely opinions. Factual information will be limited to their own views of what the blogger has experienced | Seen as authoritative about their own experiences, but rarely have authority on a wider body of knowledge or activity | Personal opinions and views. Often appear to be biased and contain a range of emotional ideas. | Depends on the blogger. Blogs (e.g. from environmental campaigners) can have a very high degree of subjectivity |  |
| *6* | *2* | *1* | *2* | *1* | *12* |
| **TV – ‘popular’ programmes** | Topics are usually very current, but the level of expertise reflected in comments is likely to be low | Generally reflect opinion, rather than a detailed examination of the facts | The programme may be more opinion based | Personal opinions and views of the writers and presenters. | The purpose of such a show would usually be entertainment so it may not take the time to examine evidence |  |
| *4* | *3* | *3* | *2* | *2* | *14* |
| **Comments from others on social media** | Often highly current, but rarely reflecting current expertise | Very rarely is there much discussion of the facts: people tend to learn faster from other people, increasing the amount of ‘common sense’ logic (see above) | Depending on the social media site, there is usually very little from individuals who have much authority | Personal opinions and views often with an emotional element. | Social media comments tend to be circulated around those who either strongly agree or who strongly disagree with another’s opinion, so there is often a very strong purpose – to reinforce the view of those reading the comments |  |
| *4* | *2* | *3* | *2* | *1* | *12* |