LABO POL COMM TECH LAB

A GUIDE TO FINDING & EVALUATING YOUTUBE VIDEOS FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CLASSES

In 2020-2021's virtual learning environment, video hosting platforms like YouTube serve as a valuable pedagogical tool. Integrating videos into course material can add clarity to abstract concepts and make the learning experience more engaging for students. But how do we evaluate how useful, credible, and engaging YouTube videos are? Here are some things to consider:

1 HOW YOU FOUND THE VIDEO

- Shared by a professor, university library, or some other trusted academic source? Good, but still think critically about the content.
- Shared by a non-academic source? Don't ignore the content but be extra critical.

Tips:

- Search for videos made by creators who were introduced to you by trusted academic sources.
- Be cautious of YouTube search or "Up next" recommendations. The algorithms prioritizes things that are clicked on and watched a lot. The most popular video may not be best suited to your needs.

2 WHO MADE THE VIDEO

- Do you know who made the video?
- In the creator backed up by someone or an organization you trust?
- Does the creator have some authority or credibility on the topic at hand?
- Is there any information on funding? This could introduce bias.

Tips:

- Check the "About" section of the YouTube channel for a bio and/or reference links.
- Use search and follow links to try to verify that the creator is who they claim to be, and to see if they have done any other related work.

3 CONTENTS OF THE VIDEO

- Do claims match your existing knowledge? A miss-match might mean one of you is wrong or coming from a different perspective.
- Does the description of the video explain why it was made, who made it, or provide links to other resources/citations? These are crucial for assessing credibility.
- Is the content organized and presented in a way that supports learning, is it easy to follow? E.g. bullet points, repetition of key point, use of examples.
- Is the video visually pleasing? Effort matters both as an indicator that someone took time, and in terms of what people actually enjoy watching.
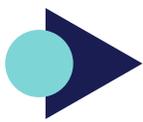
4 WIDER CONTEXT

- How does this video fit into wider contexts?

Tips:

- Check when the video was made to ensure the content is recent and relevant.
- Check the comments section. If there are critiques or disagreements, mentally flag this and dig deeper into the purported issues.
- Use search to find out if there are other relevant critiques or disagreements about the specific video.
- Use academic resources and search to see whether there are more broad critiques or concerns about the ideas or the creator that you should consider.

Bacteria on Mars, weird alien fish in the oceans of Europa,

0:08 / 9:35

Why Alien Life Would be our Doom - The ... lter

19,272,876 views • 1 Feb 2018

479K   17K   SHARE   SAVE   ....

Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell ✓
14M subscribers

The first 688 people to use this link will get 20% off their annual membership:
http://brilliant.org/nutshell

SHOW MORE

Video source: https://youtu.be/UjtOGPJ0URM

CLUES FOR IDENTIFYING USEFUL VIDEOS:
(listed in no particular order)

a The video uses high-quality graphics, making the video more engaging and indicating that time and energy were invested in its creation.

b The video is not too long; it will be easily digestible by students.

c Closed captioning and transcript options are available, which makes the video more accessible.

d Research on this channel suggests that the creators are credible and that the channel focuses on educational content. As well, the creator has addressed the channel's reliability in their video, "Can You Trust Kurzgesagt Videos?"

e More information on other content by this channel, other social media used by the creator, and who sponsors the channel are available under 'Show More'.

By reviewing this video and others by the same author, it is clear that:
- Academic research and expert consultations are a clear priority.
- Sources and show notes are provided and easily accessible.
- Opinions and uncertain comments are clearly stated, and multiple perspectives are noted for the audience.

This channel also features a video explicitly highlighting their approach to creating content and all the measures they take to ensure their material is reliable and trustworthy.

EXAMPLE 2: CrashCourse

But all that changed when Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable type printing press in 1452.

▶ ⏭ 🔊 2:35 / 9:50 ⚙ ⬛ ⬜ ⛶

History of Media Literacy, Part 1: Crash Course Media Literacy #2

216K views   👍 4.3K   👎 68   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   ...

CrashCourse ✓
11.9M subscribers

In order to understand the history of media literacy we have to go all the way back to straight up literacy. In the first half of our look at the history of media literacy, Jay takes us all the way back to Ancient Greece and
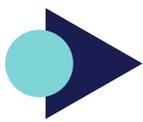
SHOW MORE

Video source: https://youtu.be/oXf0F4GYzWQ

CLUES FOR IDENTIFYING USEFUL VIDEOS:
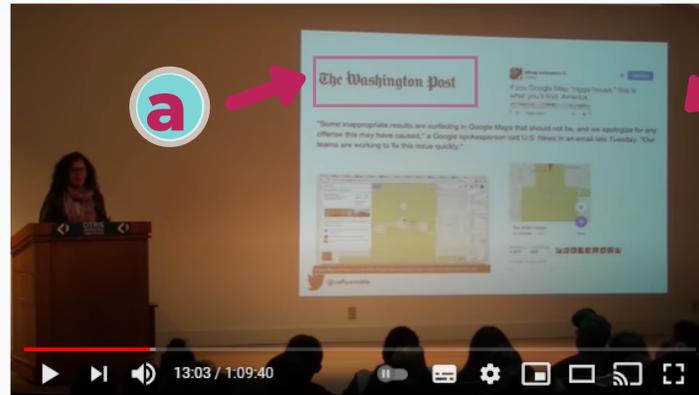### (listed in no particular order)

In addition to the displaying the same clues noted in the example above, this CrashCourse video also displays the following indications that is is appropriate for use in an academic context:

a The clip is narrated by a human and includes video of the person's face (in this case, radio host Jay Smooth- he introduces himself in an earlier video). This is important because:
- Our eyes are drawn to other people's faces.
- Non-verbal clues can aid in communicating information.
- A public figure trusts the content enough to associate their face with it.

b The video is clearly associated with a trusted organization.

c Content within the video is drawn from well-documented sources and is presented in a way that encourages recall.

d Complex issues are broken down into smaller segments.

e Links to the video's resources and references are included in the 'Show More' section.

CrashCourse produces high quality videos on a wide range of topics and has become a staple for students and educators. The channel relies on scientific papers, consults with experts and scientists, considers multiple perspectives in their explanations, makes brief videos that are digestible without oversimplifying, and clearly indicates what is opinion versus fact.

HTNM Lecture — Safiya Umoja Noble's "Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism"

550 views • 25 Apr 2019   👍 9   👎 0   ↗ SHARE   ≡₊ SAVE   ...

Berkeley Center for New Media
319 subscribers

with Safiya Umoja Noble
University of California, Los Angeles
Co-sponsored by the CITRIS Policy Lab

SHOW MORE

Video source: https://youtu.be/murg3Roch64

CLUES FOR IDENTIFYING USEFUL VIDEOS:
(listed in no particular order)

a The sources and references that Dr. Noble uses as evidence are clearly shown in the video.

b The ideas are organized slide by slide and presented in a way that is clear and easy to follow.

c The lecture was presented by Dr. Safiya Umoja Noble who is affiliated with the University of California, Los Angeles. The event was co-sponsored by the Berkeley Center for New Media and the CITRIS Policy Lab, which are trusted organizations.

d Dr. Noble's bio and more information about the History and Theory of New Media Lecture Series are provided in the 'Show More' section, which establishes credibility.

By reviewing this video and others by the same channel, it is clear that:
- Academic research is a priority.
- The credibility of the source is established by the information provided in the "Show More" section.

This channel produces academic videos with high-quality content and relies on experts in the field to establish credibility, reliable and trustworthiness. That said, like many recorded lectures, sound quality and lighting could be better and the video is long. These should be considered when deciding how to use videos like this in teaching.