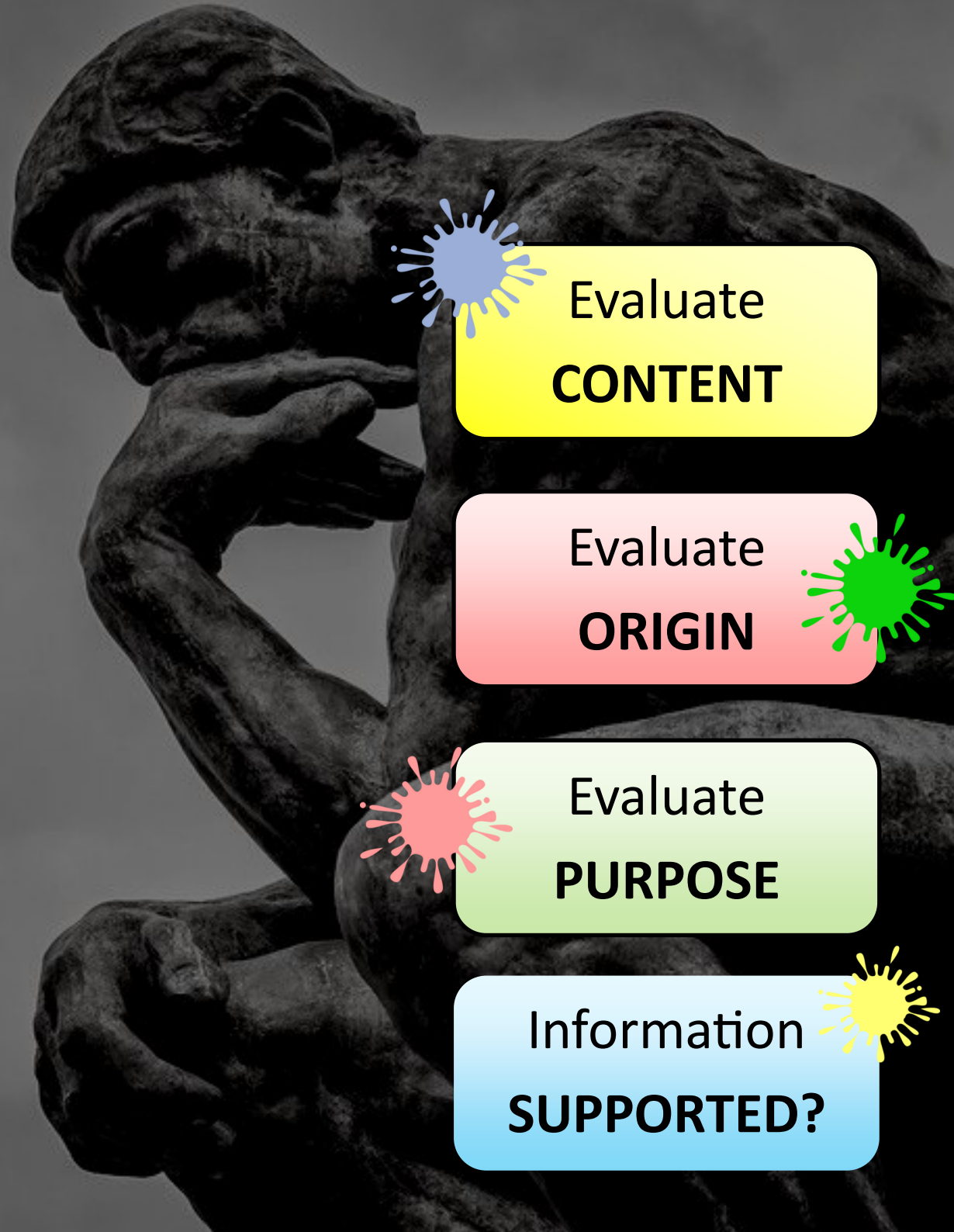


HOW TO SPOT BIAS USING THE COPS METHOD



Evaluate
CONTENT

Evaluate
ORIGIN

Evaluate
PURPOSE

Information
SUPPORTED?

Source Evaluation = COPS

C

CONTENT

Study **WHAT** the source tells you.
Consider, language used + tone.

O

ORIGIN

Consider **WHO** created the source.
Also the **WHERE** + **WHEN**.

P

PURPOSE

Think about the **WHY** or motive.
The intended 'audience'?

S

SUPPORTED

Check if the information
is **CORROBORATED** by other
sources and /or own knowledge.

Evaluating the **CONTENT** of a source.

The content is what is said (e.g. speech) or written (e.g. diary) - there are indicators that can help us decide if information contains bias .

Bias indicators

Uses strong language

Exaggerates

One sided

(all positive OR negative)

Boasts

Emotional / confused

Attacks others / blames

Uses CAPITALS

Relies on opinions

S. GROSS
New York, N.Y. 10128
3/24/86

Dear Mr. Sanjacon,

I'm sorry I couldn't answer you sooner but I put all my correspondence on 'hold' for the last 9 weeks so I could make a book deadline. The deadline has been made. The book is entitled 'Love Me, Love My Teddy Bear' and it's all out in May.

As for the drawings you sent me, I think they have to be developed a little further. They should be spicier than the subject matter which is pretty good to begin with. You're not adding much to it.

As for surviving in cartooning, the only way to do that is to make a serious commitment to it. This means to work at it full time but not to do it foolishly. The first thing you must do is sit down and figure how much it would cost you to live for one year and then assume that if you made the commitment you wouldn't sell anything for that year. The next thing you do is save up that amount of money and then give it a shot. At the end of the year you'll either know that you can make a go of it or else you'll have cartooning out of your system. Either way you'll be ahead.

I hope I have been of some help to you.

Sincerely,
S. GROSS

Reliable indicators

Uses softer language

Understates

Balanced

(gives positive + negative)

Modest

Calm and clear

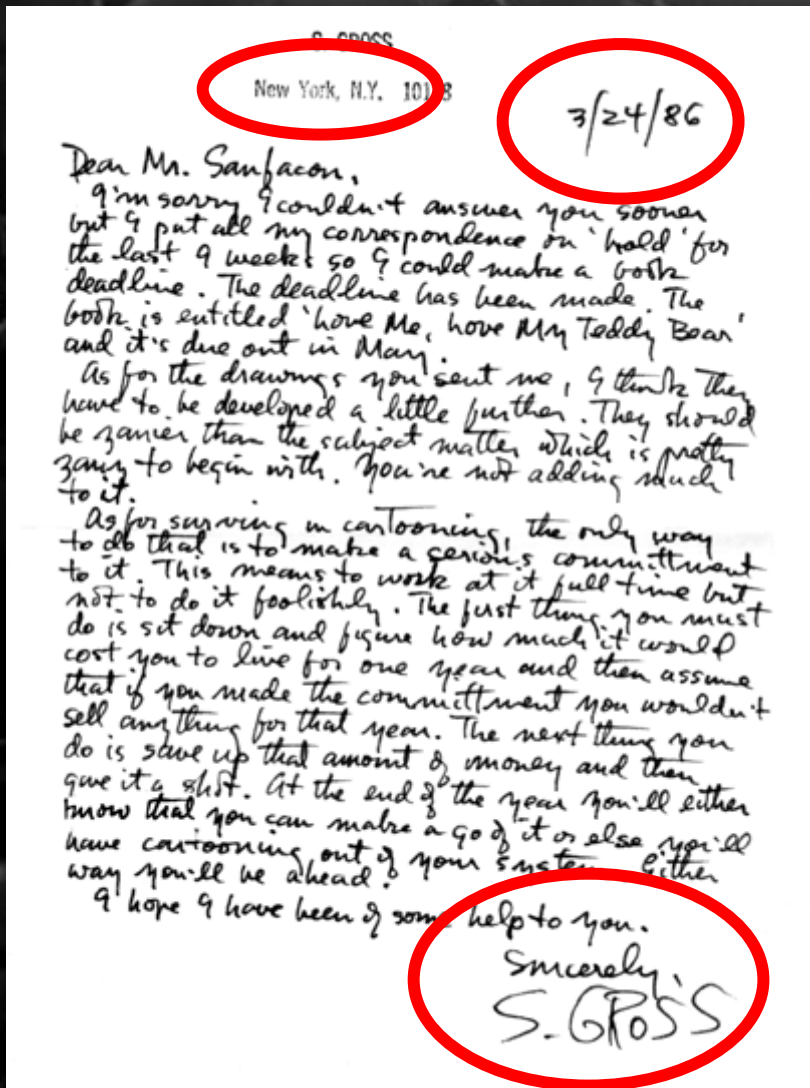
Accepts responsibility

Thoughtfully written

Uses facts / evidence

Evaluating the **ORIGIN** of a source.

The origins are the who, when and where of a source. Before studying the content, it is good practise to check who said or wrote it. Also consider the date and context.



Consider the 'author' of the source. Do you know anything about this person already? Does he / she have a good reputation OR known for being deceitful and manipulative?

Could the date impact the reliability of the information? To judge this think about the context - do you know anything more about the time it was recorded? Is it a primary or secondary source? (Primary sources are NOT automatically more reliable than secondary sources)

What about the nationality, location gender of the author - could this influence the source reliability?

Is the author in a position to offer special insights?

Evaluating the **PURPOSE** of a source.

The purpose is the reason or motive behind a source of information. Again consider context here but also think about the 'audience'. Who is the source aimed at?

S. GROSS

New York, N.Y. 10128

Dear Mr. Sanfacion,

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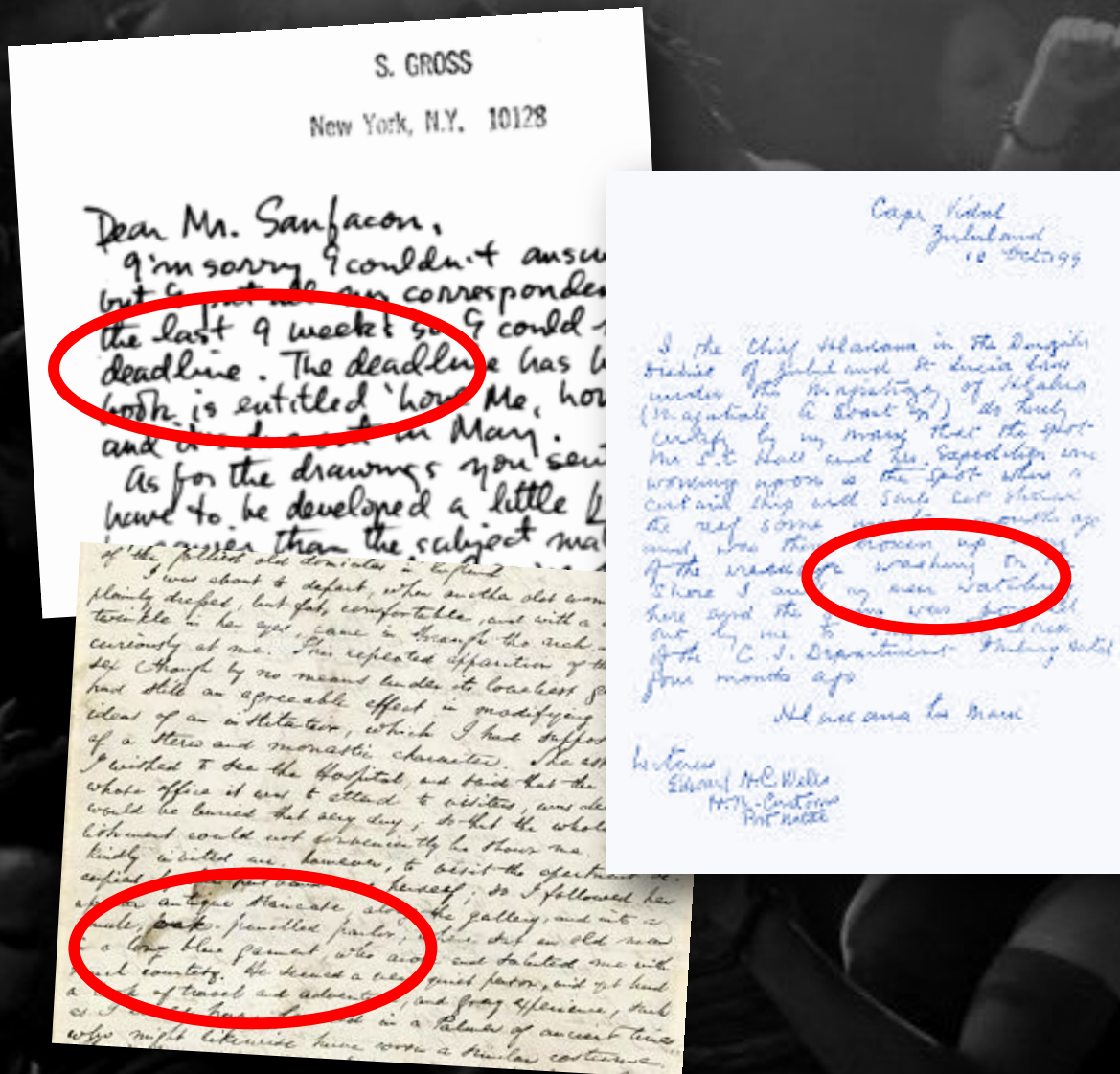
Almost all sources of information are created with some kind of purpose or motive. And many historical sources are examples of propaganda.

Propaganda contains extreme bias and is designed to manipulate the way people think. This is also called brainwashing or indoctrination.

Be on the lookout for sources of propaganda in history classes, exams and real life. Adverts are a commercial propaganda.

Information **SUPPORTED** / corroborated?

Finally, when checking the reliability of information - it is very helpful to cross reference or triangulate the source. Is the information backed up anywhere else?



Information that is supported or corroborated is more likely to be reliable. Check information against other sources of information.

Note - in 'real life' social media algorithms, send back the same types of information we have seen already. This is called an 'echo chamber.' This can create a dangerous information bubble where the same (but wrong) information is given to you. This explains why some people believe in conspiracy theories - e.g. the earth is flat or that Bill Gates has put microchips in vaccines!

What Were Conditions Like For Children in Factories?



Skill - to evaluate - judge the truth of - source A using the COPS method.

A

"I have visited many factories, both in Manchester and the surrounding districts, during a period of several months and I never saw a single instance of corporal (physical) punishment inflicted on a child. The children seemed to be always cheerful and alert, taking pleasure in using their muscles. The work of these lively elves seemed to resemble a sport. Conscious of their skill, they were delighted to show it off to any stranger. At the end of the day's work they showed no sign of being exhausted."

An extract from the book titled 'The Philosophy of Manufacturers.' The book was published in 1835 by Andrew Ure. He was a wealthy Scottish businessmen.

- **Content** *What the source says*
- **Origin** *Who, when, where*
- **Purpose** *Why, motive, reason*
- **Supported** *Corroborated?*



C

B

For hundreds of year's children had worked. But with the increased demand for work during the Victorian era and industrial revolution came more and more demanding roles for children to fulfil. Many were used as cheap labour. Working long hours, children were often treated badly. Children started work as young as four or five years old. A young child could not earn much, but even a few pence would be enough to buy food.

www.tameside.gov.uk

1. Is the CONTENT reliable? (What the source says)

Content is is not reliable ...

"Evidence" from the source?

Strong / exaggerated OR Soft language?
One sided view OR more balanced?
Boasts OR more modest?

More emotional, opinion OR calm, facts?
Attacks, blames OR takes responsibility?

2. Source ORIGIN reliable? (Who, When, Where)

Origin is is not reliable ...

A good reason to trust the 'author' ?
A reason not to trust the 'author' ?
Is when created (context) important?

Could national / regional bias be a factor?
Gender, race, political belief be a factor?

3. Source PURPOSE reliable? (Reason for = motive)

Purpose is is not reliable ...

Any special reason to lie?
Any reason to be truthful?
Consider intended recipients / audience

Context important ?
Possible propaganda?

4. Source A SUPPORTED by B ? (Corroborated)

Is isn't corroborated ...

Compare "evidence" from A + B





Recap the content of source A.
Is it corroborated by source B?
Does your knowledge corroborate A?

Corroboration is a sign of reliability!

Source A Reliability 1 = Very Unreliable **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10** 10 = Very Reliable

Skills Option - Evaluation

Mission: to evaluate (judge) the reliability of source A using 'COPS'.

-  **Content** = what the source says, language, tone.
-  **Origin** = the who, when, where behind the source.
-  **Purpose** = the reasons, why or motive for the source.
-  **Supported** = is the source corroborated or 'backed up'?

C		2	10
O		2	
P		2	
S		2	
Ev		2	



Content of source A - is what the source says reliable? C

Point = the source content may may not be reliable.

Explain = _____

Evidence from the source “ _____ ”

Unreliable (bias) = strong words - one sided - exaggeration - emotion - opinionated - boastful - subjective.

Reliable = factual - balanced - softer words - clear - respectful - understated - objective. ●

Corroborating source A with B, C and D. S

Point = the source is corroborated is not corroborated.

Explain = _____

Tip = find a strong example from one of the other sources. Explain why this supports OR challenges something written in source A. Add a short “quote” as evidence if you can. ●

Origins of source A - choose one of who, where, when. O

Point = the source origins may may not be reliable

Explain _____

Think - Can we trust this person? Can we trust the time in which it was created? Could where they are from or their beliefs corrupt what is said? Are they likely to hold bias?

What about the 'audience' - could this help or hurt the reliability of the information? ●

Purpose of source A - the reason or motive. P

Point = the source purpose may may not be reliable.

Explain _____

Think - Does this person have a special reason (motive) to lie, be biased OR to be truthful? Could this be propaganda or trying to persuade their audience? ●