# Misunderstood: The CRAP Test

## How does Currency affect the credibility of a resource?

Students struggle to understand how the currency of a resource really affects credibility. Typically, students will indicate the date of publication of a resource, and nothing more in this part of the CRAP test, despite prompting questions, examples given in the lesson(s) and exemplar CRAP test samples that fully explain how currency affects credibility.

## Analogy: Best Before Dates on Food

Currency in the CRAP test affects the credibility of a resource in a way very similar to how best before dates indicate whether a specific food is still good or safe to eat. For some types of a food a best before or expiry date on a food item indicates that the food may be a little stale, or it’s texture, taste and quality may deteriorate after the date stamped on the item. However, in many cases, those food items are still safe to eat. However, best before dates on other types of food can indicate a deterioration in food quality OR safety.

Dry pasta in your pantry is probably safe to eat well past it’s best before date. Meat, dairy items and other perishables may actually become unsafe to eat beyond their best before or expiry date. Just as you assess whether or not slightly-past-best-before-date food is safe to eat – you should investigate whether the sources you find are *still good* or *not credible*.

When assessing the credibility of a resource, we need to look at the publication, review or update date to determine if the information is current. However, we also need to review our topic itself. How current does the information need to be? Topics like technology, stem cell research and cancer treatments evolve very rapidly. Information published about these topics may not be useful or credible a short period of time after being published, just like meat with a best before date of last week may actually have developed bacteria that you don’t want to eat.

Older resources on topics like the effect of exercise on mental health may be completely valid, because while the science/medication might change rapidly, the actual effect of exercising on mental health likely stays stable over time. These topics align with non-perishable goods that might be past their best before date, but are still fine for eating.

For some historical topics, or topics that look at the development of something over time might actually require older resources – like a fine wine, sometimes using original source texts or those published at the time of a historical event will actually be more credible than something published last week!



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