

## PHIL 347 Critical Reasoning

### Week 6 Guided Learning Activity: Evaluating Expertise and Source Reliability

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**Section 1: Evaluating Expertise** The truth is that we cannot research everything for ourselves and we don't have time to critical think our way through every problem. We are in large part dependent on what experts say about things. While we can't research the details of every subject, we can get a feel for who is an expert and when they are speaking to their area of expertise. That will help to wade through information and misinformation. Read pages 354-359.

#### Passage 1: Assessing Professional Expertise

[A] A new study on environmental sustainability is published by a leading researcher with a PhD in Environmental Science. [B] The researcher has authored multiple peer-reviewed articles and serves on the advisory board for a global climate organization. [C] Some critics argue that industry professionals with hands-on experience may have more practical knowledge than academic researchers. [D] The study's findings receive widespread media attention and influence public policy discussions. [E] Despite this, some policymakers express skepticism about the researcher's recommendations.

**Question 1: Which line describes the expert's formal qualifications?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D
- e. E

**Question 2: Which line presents an argument that challenges the researcher's authority?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D
- e. E

**Question 3: Which line describes the impact of the expert's work?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C

- d. D
- e. E

**Question 4: Which line presents skepticism toward the expert's conclusions?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D
- e. E

**Question 5: Which line provides supporting evidence for the researcher's credibility?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D
- e. E

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**Section 2: Finding Reliable Sources.** Again, since we cannot research everything for ourselves, we need to be able to find sources that we trust to give us good information most of the time. That doesn't mean sources that we agree with all the time. In fact, if we do agree with our sources all the time, it might be a bad sign. Discerning reliability is a great way to ensure you have good information at your disposal. Read pages 350-54

### **Passage 2: Source Evaluation in Journalism**

[A]An online news article reports on a groundbreaking medical discovery. [B] The article is written by a journalist with no scientific background and does not include citations from peer-reviewed studies. [C] Some experts criticize the article for misrepresenting the research findings. [D] The journalist claims to have interviewed multiple scientists, but direct quotes from researchers are missing. [E] Readers question the article's reliability and look for alternative sources with stronger credibility.

**Question 6: Which line describes a weakness in the article's credibility?**

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D