

Name: _____

Date: _____

Evaluating Scientific Credibility

Within scientific communities, people constantly debate explanations for events in nature. While most scientists believe that the earth is warming due to increased greenhouse gases, there is not universal consensus on this subject. As you navigate websites on global warming, you will encounter many diverse perspectives. How can you tell whose ideas are most credible?

The Great Debate	
Humans cause global warming by increasing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.	Even though the earth is becoming warmer, this climate change is not primarily caused by human activity.
Websites that support this point of view: The Greenhouse Effect http://epa.gov/climatechange/kids/greenhouse.html Joint science academies' statement http://www.nationalacademies.org/onpi/06072005.pdf Global Warming Fast Facts http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/12/1206_041206_global_warming.html Some Basic Global Warming Facts http://www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=3767	Websites that support this point of view: U.S. Senate Report http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.SenateReport Heartland Institute: Computer Models Fail to Predict Climate http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=22604 A Mini-Interview With Dennis Avery http://www.rightwingnews.com/mt331/2007/02/a_miniinterview_with_dennis_av.php Top 10 Climate Myth-Busters for 2007 http://www.junkscience.com/ByTheJunkman/20071227.html
1. Please choose one of the websites on the list above and answer the following question: According to this source, what specifically causes global warming?	1. Please choose one of the websites on the list above and answer the following question: According to this source, what specifically causes global warming?
2. According to this website, what (if any) are the effects of global warming?	2. According to this website, what (if any) are the effects of global warming?

continued

Evaluating Scientific Credibility (continued)

The Great Debate

Humans cause global warming by increasing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Even though the earth is becoming warmer, this climate change is not primarily caused by human activity.

3. According to this website, can people do anything about global warming? If so, what can they do?

3. According to this website, can people do anything about global warming? Please explain.

4. Is this source credible to you? Please explain your answer using the indicators of credibility we generated as a class.

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Please find a partner (preferably someone who did not choose the same websites as you) and share your answers to the questions above.

As you may have noticed when exploring these websites, advertisements often form a frame around the information provided in online sources. Please discuss the following questions with your partner and write the highlights from your discussion on the back of this sheet:

- What did you notice about the advertisements in the websites you visited?
- Why do you think those companies chose this particular website to place their ad?
- Do you think the advertisements influence the credibility of the websites?
- Why or why not?

When you and your partner have discussed your answers to all the previous questions, please write your answer to the following questions on the back of this sheet:

- Overall, based on the sources that you and your partner found, which side of the debate on global warming do you find the most convincing? Why does that position seem credible to you?