Rating of Sources

You can use books, journals or the Internet to find information on these questions. These sources are variable in their reliability. This means that it is important for us to know how reliable you think your source of information is. We are going to use a letter identification system as follows:

**A for Authoritative.** These are peer-reviewed journals, textbooks and dictionaries or “official” web sites. For example: The website of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association or the Stuttering Foundation of America website would be rated “A.”

**S for Sponsored.** These are not peer-reviewed sites but have qualified individuals (who are identified on the site or publication) that are providing the information. Often these sites are sponsored by organizations such as CBS news or some other reliable organization. WEBMD, the Stuttering Homepage or some articles written for the general public would be examples of an “S.”

**P for Promotional.** These are sites or printed material that provide information but the individuals providing the information are marketing or promoting something for you to buy. The information may be valid but they may also have given a slat to the information that favors their product.

**E for Experiential.** These sites have postings by individuals who have personal experience with the issue begin presented. This information can be some of the best for getting a feel for the issue. You do have to be careful that you do not take the experience of one person and think that it is typical of all.

**U for Unauthenticated.** These sources do not identify who has provided the information. The most frequently used source that is in the category is Wikipedia. This is an on-line encyclopedia where anyone can post information. Some readers have found a number of things on Wikipedia in the area of Speech-Language Pathology that were untrue or so incomplete that the reader was misinformed. However, some information is accurate and helpful. When using this source, you have to know that it may nor may not be accurate. If you don’t know the qualifications of the person who provided the information, rate it a “U.”

**PC for Personal Comments.** If what you are posting is a question or comment that is your own, not based on some source your read, it should be identified as “PC.”

**Posting example:** Question 1 – Source E + PC. I read about a mother whose child’s only speech was echolalic. The relatives were so glad that the child was “talking” but they didn’t seem to realize how little the child was understanding and that she was just echoing what she heard, not really using speech to get what she needed. The mom was glad for the speech but also sad and frustrated that the speech was not “useful” to her child. Did anyone find that echolalic speech could be used usefully?