Building a Collection of Web Sources

Your job is to build a collection of web sources about a controversial topic we are studying in class. Use the checklist below to guide your decisions while building your collection. Remember that it is unlikely that every source will meet every criterion in the checklist—but the best sources and collections will definitely meet multiple criteria and the worst sources will only meet one or two criteria.

A Good Source Will	A Good Collection Will
Use statistics, star statements, and stories to support the author's point of view; strong opinions are those that are supported with convincing evidence. **Include links to other reliable websites** that discuss the issue in greater detail. **Avoid overly emotional words and phrases** even when the author is clearly taking a position in favor of or opposed to the controversial topic. **Highlight actual solutions to the controversial issue;** sources without solutions just aren't useful to readers. **Align with your common sense;** sites that seem too extreme or that just plain don't make sense don't belong in your collection. **Use proper grammar and spelling;** authors who can be trusted almost always take the time to proofread what they are writing. **Be written in age-appropriate language;** links that are impossible for your peers to understand aren't worth including in your collection.	**Include no fewer than eight and no more than ten sources;** too few resources means you haven't heard from enough voices, and too many sources can clutter your collection and overwhelm your audience. **Contain news sources that don't take any position on the topic** but instead share general information about the entire topic. **Spotlight sources that share a variety of perspectives** on the controversial topic—including people who are clearly in favor of and clearly opposed to the solutions being proposed. **Include a variety of sources**, including picture collections and videos. ***Share the thinking of people***—individuals, companies, businesses, or colleges—that we have heard of before and we know we can trust. **Include current sources** as well as sources that show how the controversy has developed over time.

When you have found a useful source, be sure to write a three- to five-sentence description of why you have chosen to include it in our collection. Here's an example of what that might look like:

This source is useful because it explains several reasons why people should be opposed to the New York City soda ban without being overly emotional. The article comes from a health and fitness website, which surprised me because I thought they would be automatically in favor of the soda ban. The fact that they are opposed to it is convincing. I also like how the article includes a bunch of star statements from experts in health and fitness. That also makes it a convincing article.

After you are done building your collection, answer the following reflection questions.

1. Which links in your collection do you think are the *most reliable*? Which do you think are the *least reliable*? Why?

2. Which links in your collection do you think will be the *most useful* to other people who are studying this controversial issue? Which do you think will be the *least useful*? Why?

3. Which links in your collection *reinforced, challenged,* or *completely changed* your initial thoughts about the controversial issue we are studying?