Authority is Constructed and Contextual

Information resources reflect their creators’ expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.

http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework#authority
Knowledge Practices [strategies]

- define different types of authority, such as subject expertise (e.g., scholarship), societal position (e.g., public office or title), or special experience (e.g., participating in a historic event);
- use research tools and indicators of authority to determine the credibility of sources, understanding the elements that might temper this credibility;
- understand that many disciplines have acknowledged authorities in the sense of well-known scholars and publications that are widely considered “standard,” and yet, even in those situations, some scholars would challenge the authority of those sources;
- recognize that authoritative content may be packaged formally or informally and may include sources of all media types;
- acknowledge they are developing their own authoritative voices in a particular area and recognize the responsibilities this entails, including seeking accuracy and reliability, respecting intellectual property, and participating in communities of practice;
- understand the increasingly social nature of the information ecosystem where authorities actively connect with one another and sources develop over time.
Dispositions [mindset]

● develop and maintain an open mind when encountering varied and sometimes conflicting perspectives;

● motivate themselves to find authoritative sources, recognizing that authority may be conferred or manifested in unexpected ways;

● develop awareness of the importance of assessing content with a skeptical stance and with a self-awareness of their own biases and worldview;

● question traditional notions of granting authority and recognize the value of diverse ideas and worldviews;

● are conscious that maintaining these attitudes and actions requires frequent self-evaluation.