

How to Spot #FakeNews

Identifying Facts vs. Opinions or Manipulation



Today, most of us get our news online, which has led to a rapid change in the media landscape. Unfortunately, it has also put reputable news sources alongside celebrities, regular people, conspiracy theorists, and even unfriendly foreign powers. It is critical to develop the ability to distinguish between facts, opinions, or even manipulation.

Instructions

With a partner, look through the article your teacher has provided and discern if it is real or #FakeNews by following the steps below.



GO BEYOND THE HEADLINE

When you encounter a headline in your news feed, click the link and investigate the source. Does the article contain typos? Does it make claims without citing supporting sources? What about the site it's posted on? Does it look legitimate? Does the organization's mission and contact info seem reliable? Write down your findings.



CHECK THE DATE

When was the article posted? Was it within the last year? If not, things may have changed.

Date:

3

CHECK CITED SOURCES

Credible articles usually cite their sources at the bottom of the piece. Check to see if a list of references is mentioned. If so, do some investigating! Do these sources present information that genuinely supports the story? Are they, too, credible? If not, you may have some #FakeNews on your hands.

Yes No

Is the article cited?

Yes No

Are the sources credible?

4

CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick Google search on the author of the piece. Are they real? Are they credited? What else have they written?

5

IS IT A JOKE?

Some sites like The Onion or The Daily Mail specialize in satirical pieces. It may be a joke if the piece seems too sarcastic or good to be true.

Yes No

Is the article satire?

6

CHECK THE COMPETITION

Most credible news outlets try to be the first to release a story. Is this piece of news being covered by other news outlets? If so, then it is probably legitimate.

7

REFRAME YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could potentially affect your judgment. Write them down and acknowledge them!

8

CONSULT A 2ND OPINION

Finally, if you've done all of the above and are still on the fence, compare your findings with another group and ask them to weigh in! After you're confident with your answer, circle your conclusion below.

CONCLUSION:

Real

#FakeNews

Reflections & Actions

Were you right in your conclusion? What did you learn?

Remember:

Your social media world is powered by algorithms that react to and predict what you want to consume. This creates an echo chamber where you're mainly fed news you're likely to want to read, so always be aware of how your own biases drive what you see.