Unit 4 Activity 3b.
Fact Checking

Fact Checking Links

- FactCheck.org

  A product of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, this site is useful for checking on political claims.

- Politifact

  The Pulitzer Prize-winning Politifact researches the claims of politicians and checks their accuracy.

- Snopes.com

  One of the oldest debunking sites on the Internet, Snopes.com focuses on urban legends, news stories and memes. They also cite their sources at the end of each debunking.

- Washington Post Fact Checker

  The purpose of this website is to 'truth squad' the statements of political figures regarding issues of great importance, be they national, international or local.

Browser Extensions

Chrome Fake News Detector Simple extension that shows an alert when you visit a site known for spreading fake news.

Chrome Know News Monitors for unreputable sites and displays a browser notification based on a reliability score (1-10)

What can I do to avoid fake news?

How to Fact-Check Like a Pro

Tired of seeing misinformation? Never know who or what to trust? Want better tools to sort truth from fiction? Here's a quick guide to sorting out facts, evaluating resources and becoming more knowledgeable about the resources you use to find information.

Check Credentials - Is the author specialized in the field that the article is concerned with? Does s/he currently work in that field? Check LinkedIn or do a quick Google search to see if the author can speak about the subject with authority and accuracy.

Read the "About Us" section. Does the resource have one? Reputable websites will have some type of About Us section and will provide a way for you to contact them.

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Look for Bias - Does the article seem to lean toward a particular point of view? Does it link to sites, files, or images that seem to skew to the left or the right? Biased articles may not be giving you the whole story.

Check the Dates - Like eggs and milk, information can have an expiration date. In most cases, use the most up-to-date information you can find.

Check out the Source - When an article cites sources, it's good to check them out. Sometimes, official-sounding associations are really biased think tanks or represent only a fringe view of a group of people. If you can't find sources, read as much about the topic as you can to get a feel for what's already out there and decide for your self if the article is accurate or not.

Examine URLs - We see quite a bit of domain manipulation these days. For example, what looks like an .edu domain, followed by .co or “lo” is likely a fake or deceptive site. If you are you seeing a slightly variant version of a well-known URL, do some investigating.

Suspect the sensational - When you see something posted that looks sensational, it is even more important to be skeptical. Exaggerated and provocative headlines with excessive use of capital letters or emotional language are serious red flags.

Judge Hard - If what you're reading seems too good to be true, or too weird, or too reactionary, it probably is.

Checking Videos



https://youtu.be/RVrANMAO7Sc

Other tips for fact checking and avoiding fake news

When you open up a news article in your browser, open a second, empty tab. Use that second window to look up claims, author credentials and organizations that you come across in the article.

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Check your own search attitude and biases: Is your search language biased in any way? Are you paying more attention to the information that confirms your own beliefs and ignoring evidence that does not?

Fake news spans across all kinds of media - printed and online articles, podcasts, YouTube videos, radio shows, even still images.

As Mad-Eye Moody said in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, "Constant Vigilance!" Always be ready to fact check.

Be suspicious of pictures: Not all photographs tell the truth or unfiltered truth. Images are normally edited or processed, but sometimes they are digitally manipulated. Some are born digital. A Google reverse image search can help discover the source of an image and its possible variations.

Even the best researchers will be fooled once in a while. If you find yourself fooled by a fake news story, use your experience as a learning tool.

News Literacy Project

The News Literacy Project - The News Literacy Project (NLP) is an innovative national educational program that mobilizes seasoned journalists to work with educators to teach middle school and high school students how to sort fact from fiction in the digital age.

"A Stanford University study published on Nov. 22, 2016 showed that more than 7,800 middle school, high school and college students in 12 states could not assess the credibility of the information that floods their smartphones, tablets, and computers — despite their aptitude for digital and social media." Working from this perspective the NLP teaches students how to differentiate between, on the one side, reporting that seeks to present information fairly, accurately and contextually and, on the other, opinion, rumor and disinformation. This is a great potential resource for students and educators.

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