

3. REAL OR FAKE?



OUTCOME:
Learn to spot misleading content and fake information.


MATERIALS:
Fake articles and pictures (See Tool below). Nice to have: digital device for the video.

WHAT HAPPENS:

'Fake news' is news that is made up, presented as real. It's not news that you disagree with. It often has the aim of damaging the reputation of a person or entity, or making money through advertising revenue.

Split into smaller teams and give each one or more of the fake articles and pictures. Have the groups take a look: can they tell if they are real or fake?

Ask them to keep track of everything that doesn't look right or that looks credible. If you have access to the internet they can try to investigate if it is real or fake, or they can find their own examples of suspicious articles or pictures.

 If possible watch the video '[Helping Students Identify Fake News with the Five C's of Critical Consuming](#)' to learn more ways to identify fake news, or see below in Search Results.



DISCUSS:

- Does it matter if we can't tell the real from the fake news?
- What are some signs that tell us if something we encounter online is fake or clickbait?
- How can we make sure?
- What can we do to stop it from spreading?

NOTE that although there are several ways to tell the difference between fake and real news, it's still possible to be tricked.

Fake news tries to tell you what to think. But you have the same ability as everyone to make up your own opinion as long as you are provided with the real facts. Real news can help make safe and good choices.

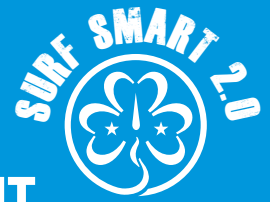
If you find out something is fake, there is one thing you can do to stop spreading it: Report it. Don't share, don't like, don't comment - even with an angry face. Any of those actions make the algorithm think that the news is important and will show it to more users.



SEARCH RESULTS

Misleading content is designed to trigger an emotional reaction, which is then easy to share on social networks. It can be in the form of:

- Satirical news
- The daily clickbait in our social media feeds
- News that shows a highly partisan bias
- Outright invented news



3. REAL OR FAKE? (CONTINUED)

Five signs for fake news/clickbait:

- **Low quality.** Extravagant titles, that include the words shock, terrible, awesome, incredible along with words in all caps, with grammatical errors, lots of exclamation points or outrageous content.
- **Author.** If the name of the author is not mentioned or if the 'About Us' section doesn't share information about who is behind the news website, then you have to wonder why they aren't being transparent. Look also for unusual URLs or site names, including those that end with '.co' -- these are not legitimate news sites.
- **Date of publication.** If it is not mentioned, while you see vague words such as yesterday, the day before yesterday, recently, then you might be looking at fake news.
- **Sources.** Does the story give facts? Or are the sources and evidence vague about who said what, when something happened, etc? These are all signs of made up news.
- **Clickbait signs.** They include excessive pop-ups, banner ads or requests to reproduce or buy products.
- **Intense emotions.** Clickbait and fake news aim for extreme reactions. If the news you're reading makes you angry or afraid, it could be a sign that it is constructed.

4 digital strategies to check if what you have read is true:

- **Find the original and verify the source.** A lot of stories are shared on social media. It's important to find the original source so you can decide how much you can trust it. Do an online search to see whether other people or groups think it can be trusted.
- **Check other sources.** Look for other credible, mainstream news outlets that are reporting the same news. If they're not, it doesn't mean it's not true, but it does mean you should dig deeper. Reliable news sources are an outlet that employs experienced journalists, makes an effort to verify information and is independent.
- **Check your biases.** Do your beliefs or concerns cloud your judgement?
- **Turn to places you trust:** Check with an expert, an authority in a certain topic, official sources, fact-checking websites like [Snopes.com](https://www.snopes.com) & [FactCheck.org](https://www.factcheck.org), reverse shocking images in engines such as [Google.com](https://www.google.com) and [TinEye.com](https://www.tineye.com) or just type the claim into a Google search and add the word 'hoax'.

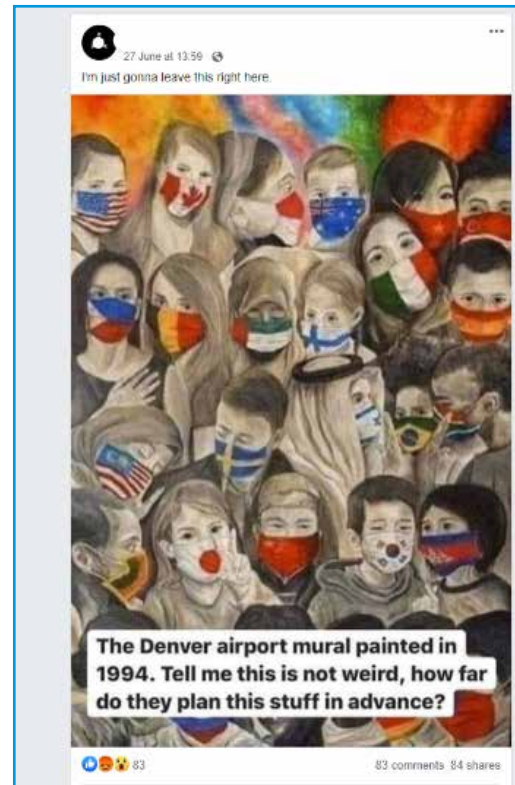
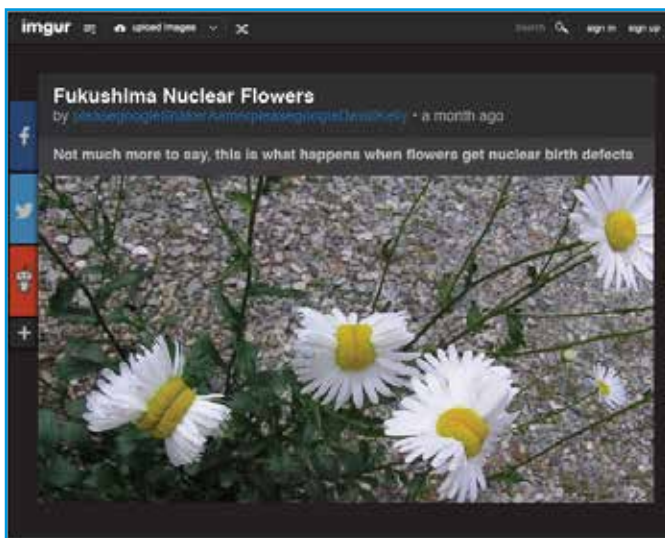
Is someone spreading misinformation? Here is what you can do:

1. **Speak respectfully.** Don't accuse them of spreading misinformation. Instead point out to them that the story or advice they shared doesn't look like it came from a trustworthy source OR that it is not the most accurate.
2. **Go private.** You may want to approach them privately first – in person or via direct message. They are more likely to be receptive if they don't feel publicly embarrassed.
3. **Give an alternative.** Point them to reliable and trustworthy sources.
4. **Use questions** to help others probe their own argument and see if it stands up.
5. **Realize that some people don't want to change, no matter the facts.**
6. **If the discussion becomes heated and you get angry simply stop.**

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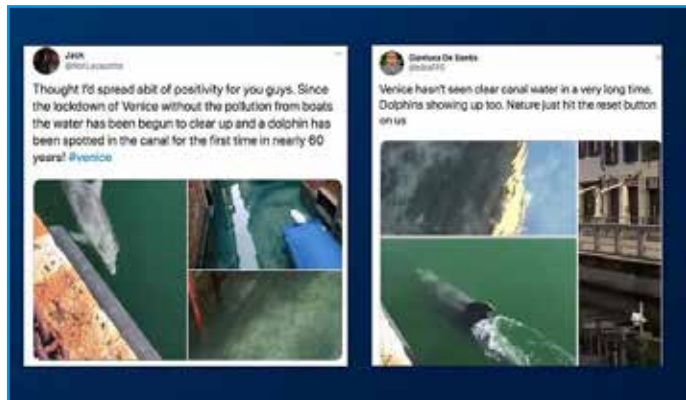
TOOL ★

You can use the examples provided here or find fake news in your native language by searching online 'Fake news examples' or 'Screenshots of fake news' and searching in Images. Use snipper to cut the photo.



3. REAL OR FAKE? (CONTINUED)

TOOL ★



TAKE IT FURTHER



Understand how information can spread between users, through the activity 'Super Spread' from Section Connect...Positively Online.