

Appendix F

Election Misinformation

In 2016, Oxford Dictionaries declared “post-truth” the word of the year. Now fake news plays an important role in daily life as well as elections. The goal for this education resource is to find out what students really think about news, the spread of misinformation, and how teens deal with the spread of misinformation.

Can your students determine the difference between fake news and real news? A November 2016, [Stanford study](#) shows students at all grade levels cannot determine the difference.

When evaluating credibility, students should learn to ask themselves six “consumer questions” when reviewing an advertisement, product marketing or news story:

- Who made this?
- How was this made?
- Why was this made?
- When was this made?
- What is this missing?
- Where do I go from here?

Students might try the following to test their media literacy:

- Assign students to work in small groups to take the front page or lead stories of any traditional American newspaper or online news organization. With red markers, put an “X” over any article or image that they think would probably not be published in a country without a law guaranteeing freedom of the press. Have each group present their findings and reasons why to the class.
- In small groups, task students with coming up and researching the validity of a statement. For example, “One Vote” – elections decided by one vote or “Let them eat cake” – Marie Antoinette. Students can report their findings to the class.
- Assign students a social media account to identify as “verified”. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, provide verified accounts with a ribbon or indicia indicating the account has been verified. Students might also research other accounts and provide findings about accounts that are and are not verified.
- Invite students to review a political cartoon in any traditional American newspaper. As a class, have students discuss what the cartoon is saying. Have students discuss how the cartoon relates to discussions they have had so far.
- Have students look and find a rumor or new articles they’ve read and present the real facts to the class. Students should use fact checking websites such as FactCheck.org, Snopes.com, and PolitiFact.com.
- Ask students to check the accuracy of an image. Have students search for images with “reverse image search” to find related images around the web and determine the origin of the image. Use the Google online resource to reverse image search: <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/1325808?hl=en>