

More than your grade depends on you being able to detect Fake News

adapted from Joyce Valenza / blogs.slj.com

Check About and About me pages: Clicking on or investigate authors names to consider their credentials in context should be a regular part of the research journey.

Interrogate urls: We see quite a bit of domain manipulation these days. For instance, 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 a little investigating.

Suspect the sensational: When we 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.

Go back to the source: When an article mentions a study, if you can, go directly to the source and check its *bona fides* as well.

Go back to the story again (and again): Breaking news will continue to break. Early reports are built from limited information so you’ll want to watch a story grow into a fuller picture.

Triangulate: Try to verify the information in multiple sources, including traditional media and library databases. You can begin to rule out the hoaxes and by checking out sites like the nonprofit, nonpartisan [FactCheck.org](https://www.factcheck.org), or popular sites like [Snopes](https://www.snopes.com) or [Hoax-Slayer](https://www.hoax-slayer.com).

What exactly are you reading?: Even when you find yourself in a traditional news site, identify what type of writing you are reading. Is it news reporting, or a feature story, or an editorial, or work by a guest blogger, or a review, or an op-ed or a disguised ad, or a comment?

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?

Use a little energy: Have you simply *satisfied* or have you done your due diligence in seeking and validating the best possible sources across media sources?

Stop before you forward (or use): When you see a widely shared or forwarded link, be suspicious of a hoax or a fake Can you verify the information outside of the social media platform on which you discovered it?

Be suspicious of pictures!: Not all photographs tell truth or unfiltered truth. Images are normally edited or process, 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.