



Critical thinkers will question ideas and assumptions rather than accept them at face value.

We all know that social media is awash with fake stories, some funny, most probably harmless, but what about those designed to manipulate you.

“Fake News” seems to be the catch all term for this genre but can you spot content designed to mislead, or manipulate you into believing lies or propaganda? What sources do you trust?

DID YOU KNOW

In a recent OFCOM survey regards news consumption in the UK;

43% of 12-15 year olds surveyed had seen a news story online or on social media that was "fake news".

The most popular news source across all platforms (for 12-15 year olds) is BBC1&2, followed by Facebook, then ITV and Youtube, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and WhatsApp.

Just 16% of 12-15 year olds find it easy to tell whether a news story on social media is true.

For adults, social media is the most popular type of online news, used by 44% of UK adults.

Those surveyed gave social media some of the lower scores for accuracy and trustworthiness, with 39% of respondents rating these areas highly (against 63% for newspapers and 70% for TV).

MORE INFORMATION

www.bbc.com/teach has links to a range of resources, articles and news stories on fake news, for learners and for trainers to facilitate discussion.

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

Can you recognise fact from fiction? Fake news may look and sound real but always be prepared to look behind the headlines.

Can you really transplant a brain? If it ever happens it will be big news, but clearly not something possible at the moment.

What if the object of the sender is to be more sinister; to manipulate stories or create false content to manipulate you.

What if stories try to get you to believe

a particular sector of your community is involved in crime, or that particular people or companies are dishonest. Would you recognise the influence of extremism behind what might appear mainstream content?

Part of the reinforcement of fundamental British Values is that people should value their individual liberty to form their own opinions, but they should form those opinions on fact not fiction. Learn to recognise fake news.

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS AND WEBSITES

Look at the URL or address of the web page. Fakers may copy a well known web page and graphics, but the address might just be a little different. See how this fictional URL address is subtly different from the real one, would you spot it?

www.bbc.com.uk/news

Consider the aim of the content. Consider if a story is seeking to inform, educate or entertain, or is it designed to sway your opinion.

Consider whether a posting is a hoax or joke. If something sounds too fantastical to be true then it probably is fake.

Check whether any other news sites are running the story. Major stories will run across all the main websites, news channels and papers.

Check the author of the news, are they a credible writer or reporter? Check for quotes and whether they can be cross referenced to other sources. Who are the quotes from? Are they credible?

Check for grammatical errors, poor spelling or poor layouts. Using lots of capital letters or dramatic punctuation are indications of fake content.

Check whether an old story is being recycled out of context with current events.

Check whether a site is clear about its inclusion of advertising. Is a sensational headline simply designed to lure you through to advertisements?

Remember to get a balanced view. Some media outlets pride themselves on their Independence but others might have a leaning one way or the other. Reading from a few different sources will give you a balanced view.

To check the credibility of content there are various fact checking websites on the internet. Better still check your understanding with someone you trust.

Don't share content if you don't want to add to its credibility. Liking or sharing something that is blatant lies or malicious content adds weight to that story.