**The Importance of Reliable Sources**

**Activity 1: Self-Assessment**

Before we begin today’s session, have a look at the learning outcomes and assess your confidence in them. Tick the box that applies to you.

1. **To understand and be able to explain the concepts of ‘fake news’, ‘unreliable sources’ and ‘reliable sources’.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I don’t know what this means. | I know what this means, but I can’t do it. | I think I can do this a little bit. | I can do this very well. |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **To be able to use strategies to identify if a news story is fake, unreliable, or reliable.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I don’t know what this means. | I know what this means, but I can’t do it. | I think I can do this a little bit. | I can do this very well. |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **To understand the importance of using and sharing reliable sources.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I don’t know what this means. | I know what this means, but I can’t do it. | I think I can do this a little bit. | I can do this very well. |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **To understand how to conduct an online search.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I don’t know what this means. | I know what this means, but I can’t do it. | I think I can do this a little bit. | I can do this very well. |
|  |  |  |  |

**Activity 2 – What do you know about ‘Fake News’?**

In your groups, discuss the following questions.

1. What is fake news?
2. When did fake news begin and why has it become more significant in recent history?
3. Can you think of some examples of ‘fake news’?
4. How do you know if a news article is trustworthy?

# Activity 3 - What is fake news and how can you identify it?

1. What is the best way to know if a news site is trustworthy?

2. Why is it important to look for neutral headlines?

3. What is the problem with anonymous news stories?

4. What is wrong with the phrase “scientists say”?

5. How can you check the veracity of images in a news article?

# Activity 4 – The consequences of misinformation

# Below are several news headlines that are examples of ‘fake news’. None of them are true. However, for this activity, imagine that an average person read these headlines and believed that they were true.

# With your group, discuss the following questions for each headline:

# How would the person feel after reading this headline?

# What might the person do after reading this headline?

# Why might this headline be dangerous?

# SKY SPORTS SAYS NO MORE MALE FOOTBALL PUNDITS ALLOWED IN BID FOR GENDER EQUALITY

# PARACETAMOL SUPPLIES WILL RUN OUT IN 24 HOURS

# DRINKING SMALL QUANTITIES OF BLEACH PROVEN TO BEAT CANCER

# Activity 5 – Fake or real?

# Your teacher will share a quiz with the class. You need to decide if you think the news is real or fake. Your teacher will ask you to vote.

# Activity 6 – Spotting unreliable sources

# Listen to the teacher’s lecture and make some notes on the following questions:

# What are two ways you could check if a news story is real or fake?

# What does it mean if a news article is biased?

# What sort of language might we find in a biased news article?

# What are some examples of reputable, reliable news websites?

# What are some examples of non-reliable news websites?

# What three rules should you follow to ensure you have an informed opinion?

# 

# Activity 7: Online Search

A student has been tasked with writing about Covid vaccine reticence\*. (\*Reticence = unwillingness to do something)

# Look at the results of an online search and decide which sources are reliable and which ones are not.

# You may not need to answer all the question to detect the unreliable sources.

# Source 1

## [**COVID**-19, Vaccination and Vaccination Hesitancy in Africa ...](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/global-events/202106/covid-19-vaccination-and-vaccination-hesitancy-in-africa)

https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/global-events/202106/covid-19...

2 days ago · This blog was co-authored with Prof Ashraf Kagee, a member of the Western Cape **COVID**-19 **Vaccine** Expert Advisory Committee, South Africa. **COVID**-19 was first detected in …

# What can you tell from the URL?

# Named sources (Who wrote the source?)

# Non-biased sources (Is this a tabloid newspaper or an organisation who wants me to think in a certain way?)

# Current sources (Is the source up to date?)

# Source 2

## [**COVID**-19 **Vaccines** and Pregnancy - **COVID**-19 - Johns Hopkins ...](https://www.jhsph.edu/covid-19/articles/covid-19-vaccines-and-pregnancy.html)

https://www.jhsph.edu/covid-19/articles/covid-19-vaccines-and-pregnancy.html

29/03/2021 · This article originally appeared on the Johns Hopkins University **Coronavirus** Resource Center. Globally, over 200 million people are pregnant each year. Whether they should be offered the new

# What can you tell from the URL?

# Named sources (Who wrote the source?)

# Non-biased sources (Is this a tabloid newspaper or an organisation who wants me to think in a certain way?)

# Current sources (Is the source up to date?)

# Source 3

## [NHS workers join anti-vax Facebook group that claims ...](https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13208307/nhs-workers-anti-covid-vaccine-facebook-group/)

https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13208307/nhs-workers-anti-covid-vaccine...

16/11/2020 · HUNDREDS of NHS workers have joined an**anti-vax** Facebook group claiming the**coronavirus vaccine** is a "poison" set to be "unleashed" on the …

# What can you tell from the URL?

# Named sources (Who wrote the source?)

# Non-biased sources (Is this a tabloid newspaper or an organisation who wants me to think in a certain way?)

# Current source?

# Activity 8 – Into Action

# You have been asked to write an essay about the gender pay gap.

# Do an online search and find 2 reliable sources.

# Bookmark your sources.

# Share your ideas with your group tell then why you think your source is reliable.

# Activity 9 - Reflecting on learning outcomes

# Go back to the learning outcomes in activity 1.

# Reassess your confidence in them.

# Self – Assessment Follow up

# If you have ticked ‘I don’t know what this means’ or ‘I know what this means, but I can’t do it’, you must take action:

# Review the class materials.

# Make sure you have answered all of the questions on the class handout – check your answers against the lecturers’ version.

# Be sure to take the quiz.

# Do the suggested reading.

# If you are having IT issues or cannot log on to the library, contact Online Support on the VLE.

# Please be aware that these skills will be practised throughout the course, so if you are not 100% confident, don’t worry, you will have plenty of chances to practise. If you do feel confident, that’s great – by the end of the course you will be an expert!

# Quiz Text – Why is fake news dangerous?

# 'They’re building a massive lasagne': man behind WhatsApp virus spoof revealed

It started off as an ad-libbed joke for some friends in a football banter group and ended up being heard by vast numbers of Britons within hours.

But the man responsible for a joke [WhatsApp](about:blank) audio clip that claimed the Ministry of Defence was about to requisition Wembley Stadium to cook the world’s biggest lasagne has said his viral success also shows the risks of believing everything that gets sent to you on the messaging service.

Billy McLean, a 29-year-old Londoner who works in software sales, came forward to the Guardian to identify himself as the creator of the much-shared clip mocking the coronavirus misinformation and rumours that have spread over WhatsApp in recent days.

Parodying the widespread viral posts claiming to be from friends-of-friends who are supposedly government officials with the inside track on No 10’s pandemic plans, McLean ad-libbed an audio recording in a matter-of-fact voice: “My sister, her boyfriend’s brother works for the Ministry of Defence and one of the things that they’re doing to prepare … is building a massive lasagne. At the moment, as we speak, they’re building the massive lasagne sheets.”

He added: “They’re putting the underground heating at Wembley on, that’s going to bake the lasagne, and then they’re putting the roof across and that’s going to recreate the oven, and then what they’re going to do is lift it up with drones and cut off little portions and drop it off to people’s houses.”

He sent the clip, at 1pm on Thursday, to a group of 30 friends he plays football with. Some of them then forwarded it to friends and relatives in other groups. Hours later, it was being sent back to McLean by friends who had no idea it was his voice, having travelled around the world in the intervening hours.

McLean said: “It was just a one take. I sent it to the football group, my mum and the girl that I’m trying to date.

“It went around the football group. Then I got people that I know forwarding it to me, not knowing it was me, or forwarding it to me asking if I’d heard it. Ex-girlfriends were coming out too.”

By Friday morning, the Football Association was able to confirm that, yes, it was indeed aware of the clip but, no, it had no plans to turn the English national football stadium into a giant lasagne dish.

The spread of the clip shows both the enormous [power of WhatsApp to spread unsourced information at speed](about:blank) and Britons’ need for something to laugh at in a grim period.

WhatsApp’s lack of an ability to track or factcheck material means that the clip was arriving in people’s messaging service as an unlabelled audio clip. Although there is no way to measure its audience, it is likely to have been listened to by millions of people within hours. Many more have since heard it after it was uploaded to other services.

McLean suggested that people needed to resist the urge to share unsourced information about the coronavirus, especially those claiming to be from insiders.

“The intentions are good but the outcome most of the time is pretty bad, it makes people panic more,” he said. “There’s no validation for what’s being said in the messages.”

He said people needed to have their wits about them when it comes to seeking out trustworthy news in the crisis: “If someone sitting at home in their boxers selling software can save a one-minute clip and make it go viral, you’ve got be aware that anyone can put anything out and it might not be valid.”