

IF I APPLY Practice Exercise

In order to better understand how to use the IF I APPLY method a practice assessment will be provided in order to show students how to apply this method in their own research.

Instructions

Out of the 2 sources provided here please choose which source you would consider credible and which you would consider to be unreliable/fake news. Please describe why you thought which source was credible using the steps and questions provided in the IF I APPLY method. Go through each step of the IF I APPLY method for both sources and then compare results in order to determine which is the more credible source of information.

Source one

Dizikes, P. (2018, March 8). *Study: On Twitter, false news travels faster than true stories*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Retrieved from <https://news.mit.edu/2018/study-twitter-false-news-travels-faster-true-stories-0308>

Source two

The Onion. (2022, October 18). *Twitter to promote healthier discussion by letting one user tweet at a time*. The Onion. Retrieved from <https://www.theonion.com/twitter-to-promote-healthier-discussion-by-letting-one-1849659469>

Reflection questions for after completing IF I APPLY exercise

- How easy/difficult was it to determine the difference between fake news and more traditional sources?
 - Which elements do fake news borrow to establish credibility? Why?
 - In the sources analysed, is there a continuum of “fakeness”?
 - What are some tentative conclusions you can draw about how each format may present its information? Are there similarities? Are there any major differences?
- (Benjes et al)

IF I APPLY Methodology

Each letter represents a critical evaluation question you should ask about your information source. The first three steps (IF I) aim to understand your own biases better, while the APPLY steps encourage you to evaluate the credibility of the source of information.

- Yellow highlighted steps are personal questions
- Blue highlighted steps are

IF I APPLY STEP	Critical thinking questions and steps
I dentify emotions attached to the topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your honest opinions regarding the topic?• Have you addressed your internal biases?• Make an all-inclusive list of counter-opinions or counterarguments
F ind unbiased reference sources that will provide a proper and informative overview of the topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct a general knowledge overview• Search for information in encyclopaedias, wikis, dictionaries, etc
I ntellectual courage is needed to seek authoritative voices on the topic that may fall outside your comfort zone or thesis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify credible materials for all of the viewpoints—yours and the additional materials you identified.• Reject unsound arguments. Have the courage to accept that not all viewpoints are valid
A uthority established	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is the author(may be an individual or organisation), publisher, and/or other experts?• Who has the author interviewed, referenced, included, etc.?• What are the credentials and affiliation or sponsorship of any named individuals or organisations?• How objective, reliable, and authoritative are they?• Have they written other articles or books?• Is/Are the author(s) listed with contact information (street address, e-mail)?• Do they specialise in publishing certain topics or fields?
P urpose/point of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can be said about the content, context, style, structure, completeness, and accuracy of the information provided by the source?• Are any conclusions offered? If so, based on what evidence and supported by what primary and secondary documentation?• What is implied by the content?• Are diverse perspectives represented?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the information provided by the source in its original form or has it been revised? If so, why (e.g. changes in knowledge, summarising for consumer consumption, cherry picking of information, etc.)?
P ublisher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who published the material and does the publisher have an agenda? Has the publisher published other works? Is the publisher scholarly (university press, scholarly associations)? Commercial? Government agency? Self (“vanity”) press?
L ist of sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where else can the information provided by the source be found? Is this information authentic? Is this information unique or has it been copied? Not all sources will have an official bibliography. Can you create a list of external sources?
Y ear of publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When was this published? How does the year of publication impact your needs? Is this information current? Can you find more current or relevant information? If older, why is it useful? If brand new, is there a chance that this information will change or update frequently or infrequently? Is the cited information current? Make sure work is not based on outdated research, statistics, data, etc. Is the information routinely updated?

PRO TIP: Not every single question may apply to your source of information you are evaluating, these questions are guidelines, so use which questions make the most sense for your situation.

Blank IF I APPLY table for work

IF I APPLY STEP	Student Answers
I dentify emotions attached to the topic.	
F ind unbiased reference sources that will provide a proper and informative overview of the topic	
I ntellectual courage is needed to seek authoritative voices on the topic that may fall outside your comfort zone or thesis.	
A uthority established	
P urpose/point of view	
P ublisher	
L ist of sources	
Y ear of publication	