What is valid?

How to judge the validity of a research source.
Gotta be careful when you research!

Here’s what you can do to identify and avoid misleading or non-factual information.

- **Know the enemy.** Know their motivation and techniques.
  - Motivation
  - Clickbait
  - Boomerang Effect
  - Silo Thinking
  - Confirmation Bias

- **Confirm authenticity.** What do you look for on a webpage to validate info? Where do you go online to confirm validity?

- **Know the best sources.** Where can you go to get the most reliable info?
Why do some people create misleading info?

What are the factors that motivate a person, government, or company to lie or mislead?

1. Money
   a. To make millions while sitting in a room overseas pumping out fake news.
   b. To thank lobbyists and campaign funders
2. Support a political cause or belief
3. Amass power
4. Blackmail
5. Satire
**Clickbait**

**What it is:** Sensationalized, exclusive, or shocking headlines that tempt readers to click on link. Clicks are tracked and some links even carry malware.

**How to avoid it:**

- Become an educated reader!
- Read factual information from respected journalists or local publications like The Talon!
- Now you’ll know what a real story is vs clickbait!
Clickbait examples:

The Onion makes deliberate clickbait articles to poke fun at real ones.

Youtube is filled with clickbait videos.
History of Clickbait

- Clickbait is an evolution of Yellow Journalism.
- Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst brought newspapers to their highest popularity by writing false articles.
- These articles incited a war against Spain in 1898.
- Nowadays clickbait is influencing elections, wars, and more.
Boomerang Effect

**What it is:** A message that is so strong or offensive that it prompts readers to go against the message. Very similar to reverse psychology.

**How to avoid it:** Think. Be in control of your reaction to what you see. Don’t let others take over your mind!
Boomerang effect examples:

When companies, in this case Samsung, run malicious ads against other corporations it can backfire.

Politicians use the boomerang effect all the time in legislative statements.
Silo Thinking

What it is: Group thought. Social media, websites, or news providers that are highly partisan promote a narrow point of view and belief system.

How to avoid it: Diversify your sources for information. Don’t be a follower--be informed!
Silo thinking examples:
Confirmation Bias

What it is: Information that confirms your own opinions or existing beliefs.

How to avoid it: Think about what you are reading and watching. Does it confirm a long-held belief of yours? Are you saying to yourself, “Yes! I knew it all along. So true!” Stop and look for supporting sources. Search known valid online sites for facts. Check Snopes, Politifact, or factcheck.org.
Confirmation bias examples:

- We seek **only** information that supports this relationship
- Tend to overlook info that contradicts what you already believe
- Only watch for behaviors that confirm
- Makes stereotypical thinking hard to change
- *Ex: Sushi restaurant?*
- *Asians eating KFC?*
How to authenticate information:

Check for C-R-A-P

- Currency
- Reliability
- Authority
- Point of View

CRAP TEST

C = Currency
R = Reliability, Relevance
A = Authority, Audience
P = Purpose, Point of View
Currency

- How recent is this information?
- Is it recent enough to use for your research?
- When was the website last updated?
Reliability

What kind of information are you seeing?

- **Fact?** Then it needs sources for data or quotations. It needs references or links from trustworthy sources.
- **Opinion?** Then it needs to be clearly stated as such with support of valid, authoritative, fact-based references. It’s best if it is balanced with the complete argument presented.
Authority

- Who is the **author** of the information on the website? Is the author:
  - Reputable?
  - Published?
  - Expert?
  - Entertainer?
  - Business? (!)
  - Sponsored? (!)
  - Allowing advertisements? (!)
  - Clearly biased? (!)
Purpose/Point of View

- Can you find bias?
- Is the website trying to sell something?
- Is the info on the website fact or opinion?
The BEST sources for research!

Digital Arizona Library

Google Docs

Explore
Citations/Credits