

MEDIA LITERACY

AUTHENTICATING INFORMATION

Media literacy is the ability to identify different types of media, and to understand what message they are sending.

Traditional media consists of television and film, radio, newspapers, magazines, and books. New media includes text messages, memes, viral videos, social media, video games, and advertising. Thanks to technology, anyone can create media. We are constantly being exposed to media these days, so it is important to understand how to determine the authenticity of the message they send, and why they are sending that message.

All media is created for a reason.

Ask yourself:

- Who created this media?
- Why did they make it?
- Who is the message for?
- What about it makes the message believable?
- What has been left out, and why?
- How did the message make you feel?

Misinformation and disinformation

Misinformation is simply incorrect information, that is often spread by accident (for example, mistaking the start time of a party and telling the incorrect time to a friend); disinformation is incorrect information that is spread on purpose, usually for political or financial gain.

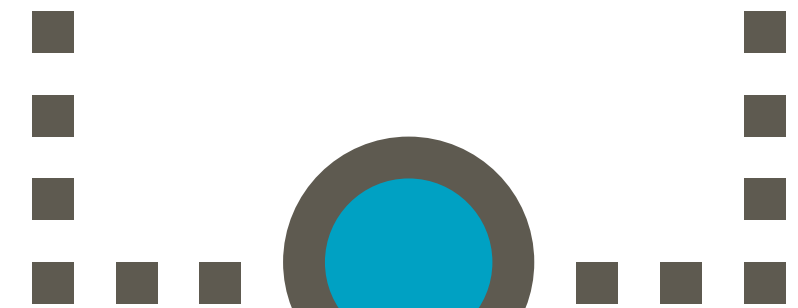
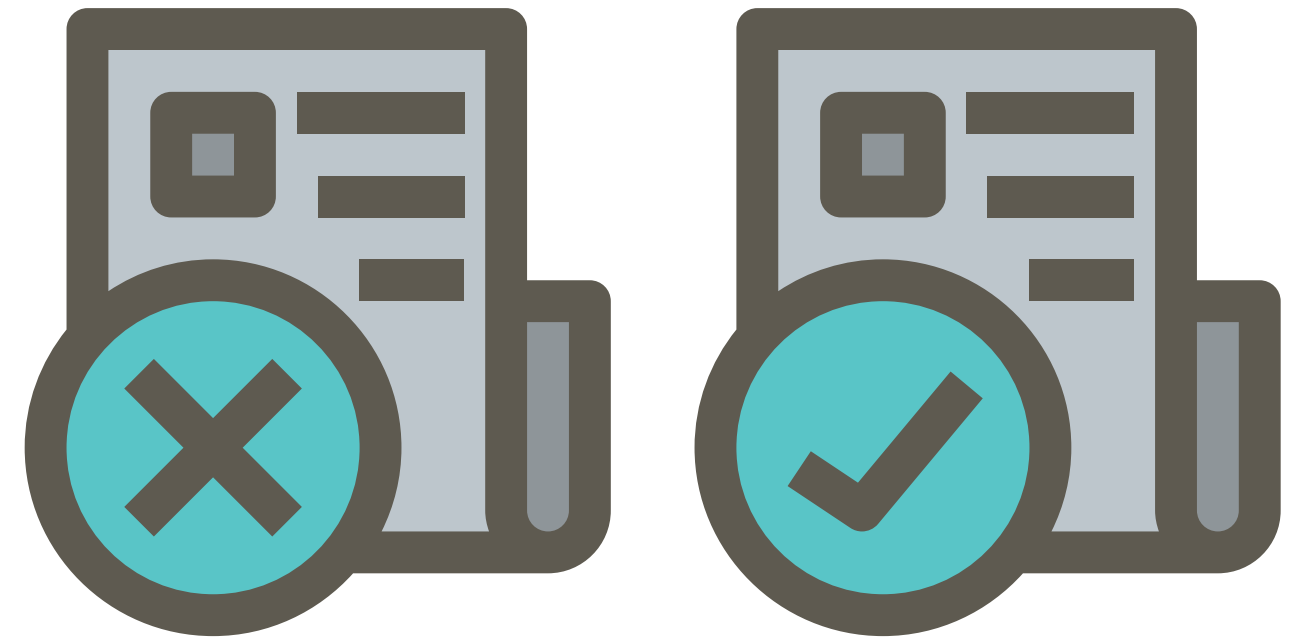
Disinformation is often called “fake news”.

Why do people believe “fake news”?

- There is growing distrust in mainstream media outlets
- It is easy to create and, thanks to the Internet, easy to spread
- It appeals to our emotions about issues
- Our biases

How to check information:

- Look at the source – where did you find the information?
- Read beyond the headline – what is written? What is the style like?
- Check the author – have they written anything else? What have they written?
- Check for supporting sources – does the author back up what they are saying?
- Check the date – when was the information first written? What about events it references?
- Check the site – what else is published on there?
- Check with an expert – use fact-checker websites like Snopes.com to double check
- Understand your own biases – how do you feel about issues?



**Remember – disagreeing
with something does
not make it fake!**

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