

Is It Real News?

Review a story or video (e.g., YouTube)
according to this checklist of questions

Story Reviewed _____

Does this news article come from a legitimate news source?

<i>Identify the reporter as professionally trained in journalism (not a propagandist working for a one-sided company, government, or partisan site).</i>		YES	NO
1	Is there a byline identified somewhere near or within the story with an identifiable first and last name?		
2	Does the journalist have a professional bio that you can determine is legitimate?		
3	Is there a list of articles the journalist has posted so you can assess the range of topics they cover?		
4	Does the story have a date?		
<i>Identify the news site as an outlet for professional journalism.</i>		YES	NO
5	Does the news outlet have a legitimate address and an email address? [This information may be located in an "About" or a "Contact Us" link].		
6	Can you locate the address on a Google map?		
7	Can you find information about the company's ownership and funding sources ?		
8	Can you locate an accessible code of ethics or a standards and procedures document connected to the news organization?		
<i>Identify a means to report errors or leave a public comment.</i>		YES	NO
9	Does the site provide a form or an email address to report corrections or errors ? If there is no option for dialogue, the news platform does not likely serve the public interest.		
10	Are the public comments meaningful and edited so the most well-argued positions rise to the top?		

Does the story hold up to professional journalism standards?

Identify the kinds of sources used in the article and how they are presented		YES	NO
1	Does the story demonstrate original reporting , with original sources? NOTE: Sometimes stories rely too heavily on secondary sources, which include social media posts or stories from other news outlets that may not be trustworthy.		
2	Are there multiple sources representing a variety of points of view?		
3	Do the sources come from beyond the media organization? NOTE: Sometimes stories rely solely on other stories from the same outlet.		
Identify the quality of quotes and data chosen in the reporting		YES	NO
4	Are the quotes and other data (e.g., statistics, polls, academic or scientific studies) credible and verifiable ? NOTE: Sometimes stories advance unsubstantiated or untruthful allegations or quotes from a source, accepting them at face value without questioning them.		
5	Is there recognition by other verifiable media outlets that the story is true? Journalists verify each other, and pass along good reporting, even though they didn't get the original scoop (a sort of peer verification). Can you locate the same information from another source? Do other reliable news organizations verify the reported information? In other words, how well does the story check out across other respected media platforms?		
Identify how well the story is told		YES	NO
6	Is there historical context in the story? In other words, is there adequate and responsible background explanation given to understand the overall story?		
7	Does the story avoid vitriol , personal attacks, or stereotypes in the headline or the story text?		
8	Does the story avoid " false balance "? That is, does it avoid giving equal weight to lies or unverified information in the name of "fairness"? False balance is not good journalism.		

Can you determine the purpose of the story?

If this story checks out as **authentic journalism**, it's there for the public good. But, if it's not authentic – that is, it's misinformation or disinformation – what do you think is its **purpose**? Is it a harmless satire, a money-generating hoax or conspiracy theory, advancing a false opinion or idea with the goal of other actors and media organizations widely spreading the fake news, propaganda for a particular view, or perhaps just information anarchy to sow social distrust?

PURPOSE: