

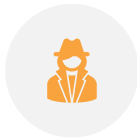
SOLVE THE MYSTERY: WHAT'S REAL & FAKE ON THE INTERNET?



CLUE #1: SIFT THE INFORMATION



STOP



INVESTIGATE



FIND



TRACE

STOP BEFORE YOU READ OR SHARE

- Notice your emotional reaction to headlines since they're designed to attract clicks
- Ask yourself if you know the website, author, or their reputation



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

INVESTIGATE THE SOURCE

- Verify the source's credibility before assessing their claim
- Search the source & review their social media (if applicable) to confirm legitimacy
- Question all suspicious information



Remember: A verified account on social media does not mean it's trustworthy. Even some traditional news outlets blur the line between facts and opinions.



Ask: Who are the creators? What are their values, interests, or potential biases? Are they experts in this field? Why should I believe it? Who benefits from it? What is the supporting evidence?



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

FIND BETTER OR OTHER COVERAGE

- Check for other coverage on the topic
- Choose reliable & credible sources
- Use fact-checkers
 - <https://www.snopes.com/>
 - <https://www.factcheck.org/>
 - <https://www.politifact.com/>
 - <https://www.propublica.org>



Remember: Fact-checkers examine claims to determine whether they're factual, biased, or unsupported, to improve public understanding.



Ask: What other coverage is available on the topic?



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

TRACE CLAIMS TO THE ORIGINAL CONTEXT

- Go to the original source when something cites an expert or study
- Check the references for primary sources
- Ensure the original context wasn't misrepresented



Remember: Sensational headlines and posts can change facts. Re-reporting can remove context or support bias.



Ask: Is information selectively used to support a bias or an agenda? Is information misrepresented by removing context?



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #2: LOOK FOR VISUAL CUES ON WEBSITES

- Does the website look fishy?
- Is the web address odd? (ABCNews.com.co imitates ABC News; the .co ending is often used by fake websites)
- Is the website authenticated & secure? (Authenticated & secure websites start with https:// instead of http://)
- Is it an old article being reposted? Is the information outdated?
- Are there exaggerated “facts”?
- Are there fake sources & references?
- Are there a lot of spelling & grammar mistakes?
- Is the text emotionless, formal, & robotic?
- Are there words or phrases that are overused?



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #3: CONSIDER MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

- Consider diverse perspectives
- Listen to & respect others' viewpoints
- Check opposing evidence & counterarguments
- Question your assumptions & sources
- Confront information that challenges your beliefs rather than only seeking confirmation

“We can disagree and still love each other unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist.” — Robert Jones Jr.



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #4: LOOK FOR VISUAL CUES TO SPOT DEEPFAKES & AI-GENERATED IMAGES & VIDEOS

- Are there extra/missing fingers?
- Is there a mismatch in the speech & mouth movements?
- Do their teeth shift around when they're speaking?
- Is the person blinking?
- Are there unrealistic textures for skin & fabric?
- Do the humans appear glossy or have unusual, smooth skin or clothing?
- Is the image smooth, crisp, with a heavily blurred background?
- Are there any incorrect shadows & lighting?
- Are the reflective surfaces accurate?
- Are there glitches or flickering in the footage?
- Are there missing or misplaced objects?
- Is there a credit for a photographer/videographer?
- What happens when you do a reverse image search?
- Is the audio unnatural & with a flat tone?
- Are there unexpected background noises?
- Are there choppy sentences?



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #5: UNDERSTAND & MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS



- Media often appeals to our feelings to influence our beliefs & actions
- Recognize your emotional triggers
- Notice when content is designed to provoke strong reactions
- Notice when emotional words are being used
- Embrace discomfort & explore what you've missed with openness & trust



Remember: Harmful content often spreads by triggering strong emotions, such as fear or anger. If you feel these, it may be misinformation or disinformation.



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #6: IDENTIFY MANIPULATIVE LANGUAGE

If you learn to identify manipulative or confusing language, you can resist manipulation and avoid being misled! You'll be resilient against bias and disinformation.

DOUBLESPEAK

- Uses euphemisms & vague or softened language to hide negative meaning
- Twists meanings to make them sound better. For example:
 - "Climate change" instead of "global warming"

EUPHEMISMS

- Replaces offensive or unpleasant words with neutral ones to push certain political or cultural views
- For example: coded "dog whistle" language

DOG WHISTLE LANGUAGE

- Subtly communicates messages to specific audiences
- For example: "Family values" to imply only traditional heterosexual families

JARGON

- Uses specialized terms (e.g., medical or legal language)
- Can be used to confuse you or hide meaning
- Information with lots of jargon is often repetitive & unclear



WRITE YOUR OWN EXAMPLES OF MANIPULATIVE LANGUAGE HERE:

CLUE #7: BURST THE BUBBLE

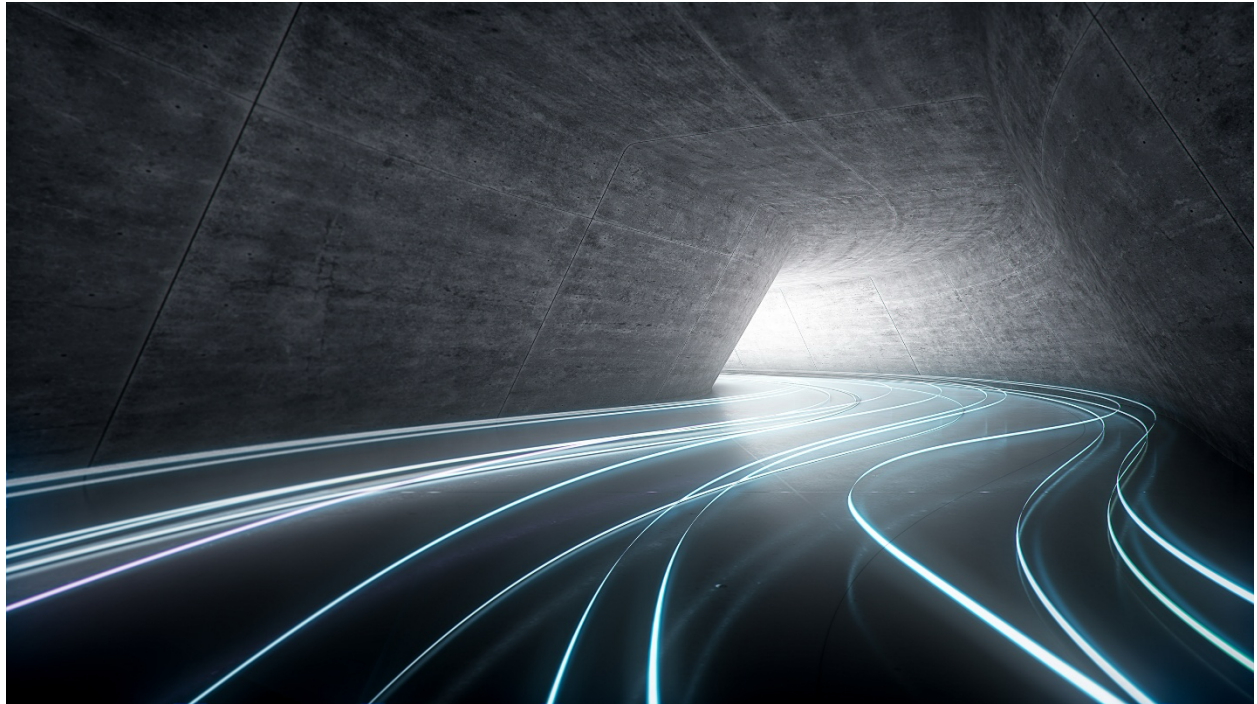


- Epistemic bubbles are relatively fragile
- Expose members to new information or arguments they haven't encountered to burst the bubble



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

CLUE #8: ESCAPE THE ECHO CHAMBER



TO LIMIT AN ECHO CHAMBER

- Verify information by checking multiple sources
- Consult sources that represent different political, cultural, or ideological viewpoints



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

TO ESCAPE AN ECHO CHAMBER

- Realize you are in a chamber
- Temporarily pause your beliefs & start fresh
- Consider other perspectives, even if you're unsure
- Reconsider sources with an open mind & without prior judgments
- Trust that things are as they seem



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

TO SUPPORT SOMEONE IN AN ECHO CHAMBER



Do:

- Build trust
- Offer a community to prevent isolation & abandonment for those reconsidering their beliefs
- Recognize that people are open to new ideas from trusted sources
- Use books to introduce new ideas for the individual to process at their own pace



Don't:

- Rely on presenting neutral facts because they don't change minds
- Expect someone to change their mind & leave them without support
- Force conversations or debates to change beliefs
- Attack bad ideas directly because they can strengthen opposition



WRITE YOUR OWN STRATEGIES HERE:

Solve the Mystery Sources

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