

SENIOR TRUTH SEEKER BADGE

Badge Purpose: When you've earned this badge, you'll be able to figure out what is true in the media, online, and what you hear in your daily life.

Activity	Materials Needed
All Sides Considered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a closer look at where you get your news and judge whether they're reliable sources. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer with internet access
Think Like a Fact Checker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the veracity of stories shared on your social media account. Then share your findings and teach others how to scrutinize the news. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer with internet access <input type="checkbox"/> "Fake News or Real News?" sheet
#Ad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to distinguish content from advertising. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access

Getting Started

- Make sure you've signed your Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge before you start working on this badge. And remember, never share personal information online.

Activity #1: All Sides Considered

Badge Connection: Step 1 – Evaluate your sources

Materials Needed: Computer with internet access

- When you see the news, do you think you're getting all sides of each story? Accusations of media bias have escalated recently—your take on a story may differ incredibly from another person's depending on where you both get your news. For this activity, investigate how different media sources report the news.
- Pick one issue that has been making the headlines lately (such as healthcare, the conflict in the Middle East, etc.). Then, choose two different news sources with different perspectives: one from the left (Huffington Post, Jezebel) and one from the right (Fox News, Breitbart).
- As you read stories about the issue, keep track of:
 - What is this story about? What are the facts (remember the Five W's, who, what, when, where, why and One H, how)?
 - How are the facts being reported? Is the story being reported impartially, or is there a positive or negative slant?
 - If there are two (or more) people or groups involved in the story, does the reporter get statements and opinions from both or all sides? If not, whose perspective is missing (and why might that be)?



Activity #2: Think Like a Fact Checker

Badge Connection: Step 2 – Investigate what the experts say; Step 4 – Find truth in your everyday life; and Step 5 – Become a citizen journalist

Materials Needed: Computer with internet access; “Fake News or Real News?” sheet (at the end of the activity plan)

1. For one week, keep track of the stories, memes, and links your friends and family members share and retweet on Facebook and Twitter (you can also just pick one social media site if keeping track of two is overwhelming). Are these real stories worth sharing, or are they clickbait?
2. Use the tips in the “Fake News or Real News?” sheet for ways to separate fact from fiction, and use sites like snopes.com and factcheck.org to verify stories and claims.
3. Then, write your own story about your experience this week. Did you notice a trend in the sources your friends and/or family members were getting their news from or sharing links from? Share the stats with your friends and family—show them which sites they’ve been sharing that aren’t necessarily reliable and then give them the tools to vet stories and sources before sharing them with others.

Activity #3: #Ad

Badge Connection: Step 3 – Be a wise consumer

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. It used to be easy to distinguish genuine posts from ads. But now, with branded and sponsored content, the lines between the two have blurred. When you see a celebrity or influencer pop up on your Instagram feed promoting a new product, is it because they honestly like it, or because they’ve been paid to promote it?
2. The Federal Trade Commission, the government agency created to protect consumer, has guidelines that says sponsored content must be obviously labeled. (You can read through the guides and FAQs here: bit.ly/FTCguidesFAQs)
3. Take a closer look at your Instagram feed—focus on the accounts of celebrities and influencers you follow—and see if you can spot the endorsed posts. Is it always obvious when someone has been paid to post something on their feed or site? What are some ways that people hide the fact that their posts are actually ads? (For example, do you read through all the of hashtags and “@” symbols to see if there are any disclosures?)



Fake News or Real News?

✂ CUT OUT AND TAPE NEAR YOUR COMPUTER OR TV

BREAKING NEWS CONSUMER'S HANDBOOK

FAKE NEWS EDITION

1. Big red flags for fake news: ALL CAPS, or obviously photoshopped pics.
2. A glut of pop-ups and banner ads? Good sign the story is pure clickbait.
3. Check the domain! Fake sites often add “.co” to trusted brands to steal their luster. (Think: “abcnews.com.co”)
4. If you land on an unknown site, check its “About” page. Then, Google it with the word “fake” and see what comes up.
5. If a story offers links, follow them. (Garbage leads to worse garbage.) No links, quotes, or references? Another telltale sign.
6. Verify an unlikely story by finding a reputable outlet reporting the same thing.
7. Check the date. Social media often resurrects outdated stories.
8. Read past headlines. Often they bear no resemblance to what lies beneath.
9. Photos may be misidentified and dated. Use a reverse image search engine like TinEye to see where an image *really* comes from.
10. Gut check. If a story makes you angry, it's probably designed that way.
11. Finally, if you're not sure it's true, don't share it! *Don't. Share. It.*

ON **THE MEDIA**

ONTHEMEDIA.ORG

Source: onthemedias.org

