

# Fact-Checking

Fact-checking<sup>1</sup> is crucial for evaluating the credibility of information encountered online. In a digital landscape where misinformation and disinformation are rampant, fact-checking helps individuals discern truth from falsehood and make informed decisions.

## Applications

- Teach **lateral reading**.<sup>2</sup> This is a strategy for investigating who’s behind an unfamiliar online source by leaving the webpage, searching for the source in a new tab, and seeing what various reputable sources have to say about the unknown source. Provide students a mix of legitimate and illegitimate news sources to practice on, and discuss their reasons for deeming a website trustworthy or not.
- Introduce students to the **SIFT** method.<sup>3</sup> SIFT stands for Stop; Investigate the source; Find better coverage; and Trace claims, quotes, and media to the original context. This is a useful way to remember the key components of fact-checking.
- Luckily, we don’t need to do all the fact-checking ourselves, because there are many nonpartisan, professional fact-checking organizations out there; some of these include [FactCheck.org](#), [AP Fact Check](#), [Reuters Fact Check](#), and many more that are tracked by the [Duke Reporters' Lab](#).



Source: [UChicago Library](#)

## Notes

Fact-checking can often feel overwhelming, as it’s not realistic to fact-check every bit of new information we encounter. The ability to fact-check when needed, though, is now an essential life skill. Given that there will always be more information than we can critically fact-check, remind students to maintain a skeptical perspective when consuming news media, especially from sources that are untrustworthy or unfamiliar.

## Learn More

“[Don't be fooled... fact check!](#)” Fact-checking guide by Melanie Trecek-King of Thinking Is Power  
[RumorGuard's Five Factors](#), five factors to consider when evaluating the credibility of a claim

<sup>1</sup> for a more comprehensive guide to fact-checking see Thinking Is Power’s [Don't be fooled... fact check!](#)

<sup>2</sup> Civic Online Reasoning, [Sort Fact from Fiction Online with Lateral Reading](#)

<sup>3</sup> Research Guides at Clark College, [Evaluating Information: SIFT \(The Four Moves\)](#)