

MEDIA LITERACY COUNCIL PRESENTS

GET SMART WITH SHERLOCK

HOW DO I SPOT FAKE NEWS?



PART

05

In our last cases, we looked at:

- **TYPES OF FAKE NEWS**
- **CAUSES OF FAKE NEWS**
- **REASONS PEOPLE FALL FOR FAKE NEWS**
- **CONSEQUENCES OF FAKE NEWS**

But, there is one more question to consider:

## HOW DO I SPOT FAKE NEWS?

**HI, I'M SHERLOCK**, your friendly neighbourhood detective. This is our last case together, so let's find a solution to the problem of fake news: what can we do to spot and stop the spread of fake news?



Here are my key tips:

**1. CHECK THE SOURCE**

**2. DON'T STOP AT THE HEADLINE**

**3. LOOK AT THE LANGUAGE**

**4. CHECK THE NUMBERS**

**5. FIND THE MOTIVE**

**6. LOOK AT OTHER SOURCES**

**7. CONFIRM WITH FACT-CHECKERS**

# 7 SIMPLE STEPS TO CHECK FOR FAKE NEWS

Whenever you come across information that you are unsure of - be it a WhatsApp message or website link - remember these steps to check if it's true:

## 1. CHECK THE SOURCE

First, make sure the source of the article - the person who wrote it or website that published it - can be trusted. You can do this by checking if the author has written other credible articles, and looking at the 'About Us' or 'Contact Us' pages of the website.

Also check the URL (the website's address) to make that it is not a fake site.



## 2. DON'T STOP AT THE HEADLINE

Always read the entire story before forming conclusions about an article.

Often, headlines use exaggerated words like 'Amazing' or 'Unbelievable' to grab people's attention instead of giving helpful information about the article. Before you repost or share an article, read the entire thing.



DO THE TITLES BAIT YOU TO CLICK ON THEM WITHOUT GIVING YOU ANY REAL INFORMATION ?



## 3. LOOK AT THE LANGUAGE

Another give away sign that a story is fake its poor spelling and grammar.

If no one is checking an article for the language it uses, it probably does not have checks in place for the accuracy of the information either! Fake news trying to stir discord also tends to use dramatic language to make people react emotionally instead of logically, blowing a situation out of proportion.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION **ANOUNCE** NEW PRIMARY **SKOOL** STRUCTURE THAT IS **COMPRESS** TO 5 YEARS

YESTERDAY, THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, NG CHEE MENG SHARED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE **TAT** THE CURRENT 6-YEARS SYSTEM OF PRIMARY EDUCATION WILL BE COMPRESSED TO FIVE YEARS...

IS THE ARTICLE RIDDLED WITH SPELLING AND GRAMMAR ERRORS?



## 4. CHECK THE NUMBERS

Do not blindly trust numbers on the screen, as they may not represent the situation accurately.

Articles often quote studies or surveys to sound more credible. Check to make sure the survey has a good sample size that reflects the population being tested, and that the different parts of society are also represented. Pay attention to the method behind the numbers to find out if the numbers are biased.

### S'POREAN PARENTS CALLING FOR EDUCATION

.... 9/10 parents surveyed indicated they want to remove Mother Tongue from the syllabus.....

DOES THE ARTICLE REVEAL THE SURVEY METHODS AND SAMPLE SIZE?

DOES IT ACKNOWLEDGE THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY?

## 5. FIND THE MOTIVE

Thinking about who benefits or loses out because of a story will help you find out what motivates the author.

Remember, all authors have a motive - and all news stories have an impact on the real world, no matter how big or small. You just need to decide if you agree with these motives.



AH MUD

New durian imports cause bird flu. Only buy from Ah Mud durian  
[www.ahmuddurians.com.sg](http://www.ahmuddurians.com.sg)

DOES THE NEWS ARTICLE HAVE A SELFISH GOAL, SUCH AS TO DRIVE SALES TO A CERTAIN BUSINESS?

## 6. LOOK AT OTHER SOURCES

Check the story against a few reliable sources.

Just because a story is trending on social media does not make it real. Find a few news channels that you trust and check if the same story appears on all of them.



## 7. CONFIRM WITH FACT-CHECKERS

There are fact-checking sites that can do all the hard work for you too!

Run your story through Factly for Singapore-related news, or FactCheck or Snopes for international news. These aren't news sites, but sites that exist solely to check whether a story is real or fake.



For more help finding credible sources, you can email the National Library Board Reference Point at [ref@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:ref@nlb.gov.sg).

# PUTTING AN END TO FAKE NEWS

Once you have confirmed that a story is fake, here are three simple steps to take:

- **DO NOT SHARE OR FORWARD IT.**
- **TELL THE FRIEND WHO SENT IT TO YOU OR MESSAGE THE USER WHO POSTED THE STORY.**
- **IF THE FAKE NEWS IS CLEARLY MEANT TO HURT SOMEONE OR CAUSE HARM, REPORT IT TO THE POLICE! THEY CAN INVESTIGATE THE MATTER AND CLEAR IT UP FOR YOU.**

## CASE CLOSED

With this, we have successfully completed our last case together! However, fake news will definitely pop up again. Use these 7 steps to protect yourself and those around you:

**1. CHECK THE SOURCE**

**2. DON'T STOP AT THE HEADLINE**

**3. LOOK AT THE LANGUAGE**

**4. CHECK THE NUMBERS**

**5. FIND THE MOTIVE**

**6. LOOK AT OTHER SOURCES**

**7. CONFIRM WITH FACT-CHECKERS**

Anyone can fall prey to fake news, but together, we can put an end to it!



Thank you for helping me solve this crime. This is your friendly neighbourhood detective,

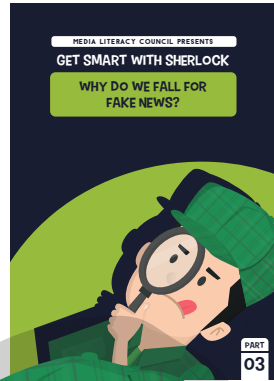
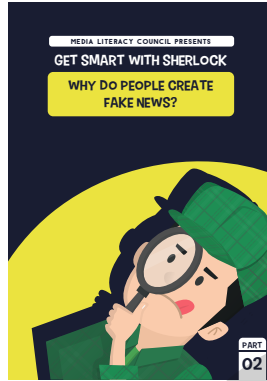
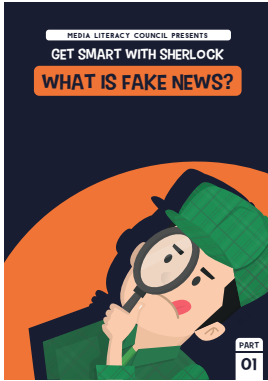
**SHERLOCK,**

*Signing off!*

FOLLOW

# SHERLOCK

THROUGH HIS CASES!



WE ARE HERE!



BROUGHT TO  
YOU BY



MEDIA  
LITERACY  
COUNCIL