

Directions:

1. Read the articles.
2. As you read, annotate the articles using a **combination** of the following system:
 - a. Circle and define unfamiliar words,
 - b. Underline/highlight important info,
 - c. Use “?” and ask a question,
 - d. Use “!” and show your reaction confusion/resolution, questions, and
 - e. Draw arrows to connect ideas.
3. Identify T.A.R.P.S. after the articles.
4. Follow the 6 steps that the second article lays out in your “AoW” section of your Writer’s Notebook to create a personalized “diet” of news.
5. Write a 1+ page reflection in your “AoW” section of your Writer’s Notebook using ONE of the prompts provided.

Students Have ‘Dismaying’ Inability To Tell Fake News From Real, Study Finds

Source: Camila Domonoski/NPR/November 23, 2016

If the children are the future, the future might be very ill-informed.

That's one implication of a new study from Stanford researchers that evaluated students' ability to assess information sources and described the results as "dismaying," "bleak" and "[a] threat to democracy."

As content creators and social media platforms grapple with the fake news crisis, the study highlights the other side of the equation: What it looks like when readers are duped.

The researchers at Stanford's Graduate School of Education have spent more than a year evaluating how well students across the country can evaluate online sources of information.

Middle school, high school and college students in 12 states were asked to evaluate the information presented in tweets, comments and articles. More than 7,800 student responses were collected.

In exercise after exercise, the researchers were "shocked" — their word, not ours — by how many students failed to effectively evaluate the credibility of that information.

The students displayed a "stunning and dismaying consistency" in their responses, the researchers wrote, getting duped again and again. They weren't looking for high-level analysis of data but just a "reasonable bar" of, for instance, telling fake accounts from real ones, activist groups from neutral sources and ads from articles.

"Many assume that because young people are fluent in social media they are equally savvy about what they find there," the researchers wrote. "Our work shows the opposite."

A professional appearance and polished "About" section could easily persuade students that a site was neutral and authoritative, the study found, and young people tended to credulously accept information as presented even without supporting evidence or citations.

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The research was divided by age group and used 15 different assessments. Here's a sample of some of the results:

Most middle school students can't tell native ads from articles.

The researchers showed hundreds of middle schoolers a Slate home page that included a traditional ad and a "native ad" — a paid story branded as "sponsored content" — as well as Slate articles.

Most students could identify the traditional ad, but more than 80 percent of them believed that the "sponsored content" article was a real news story.

"Some students even mentioned that it was sponsored content but still believed that it was a news article," the researchers wrote, suggesting the students don't know what "sponsored content" means.

Most high school students accept photographs as presented, without verifying them.

The researchers showed high school students a photograph of strange-looking flowers, posted on the image hosting site Imgur by a user named "pleasegoogleShakerAamerpleasegoogleDavidKelly. The caption read "Fukushima Nuclear Flowers: Not much more to say, this is what happens when flowers get nuclear birth defects."

Sam Wineburg, a professor of education and history at Stanford University and the lead author of the study, spoke to NPR on Tuesday.

"The photograph had no attribution. There was nothing that indicated that it was from anywhere," he said. "We asked students, 'Does this photograph provide proof that the kind of nuclear disaster caused these aberrations in nature?' And we found that over 80 percent of the high school students that we gave this to had an extremely difficult time making that determination.

"They didn't ask where it came from. They didn't verify it. They simply accepted the picture as fact."

Many high school students couldn't tell a real and fake news source apart on Facebook.

One assessment presented two posts announcing Donald Trump's candidacy for president — one from the actual Fox News account, with a blue checkmark indicating it was verified, and one from an account that *looked* like Fox News.

"Only a quarter of the students recognized and explained the significance of the blue checkmark, a Stanford press release noted. "And over 30 percent of students argued that the fake account was more trustworthy."

Most college students didn't suspect potential bias in a tweet from an activist group.

The researchers sent undergraduate students a link to a tweet by MoveOn about gun owners' feelings on background checks, citing a survey by Public Policy Polling.

They asked students to evaluate the tweet and say why it might or might not be a good data source.

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"Only a few students noted that the tweet was based on a poll conducted by a professional polling firm," which might make it a good source, the researchers wrote.

At the same time, less than a third of students cited the political agenda of MoveOn.org as a reason it might be a flawed source.

And more than half of the students didn't even click on the link within the tweet before evaluating the usefulness of the data.

Most Stanford students couldn't identify the difference between a mainstream and fringe source.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, which publishes the journal *Pediatrics*, has more than 65,000 members and has been around since 1930.

The American College of Pediatricians (ACPeds) split from AAP in 2002, over objections to parenting by same-sex couples. ACPeds claims homosexuality is linked to pedophilia. It's classified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, which estimates that ACPeds has about 200 members.

In an article in *Education Week*, Wineburg and his colleague Sarah McGrew explain that they directed Stanford undergrads to articles on both organizations' sites. The students spent up to 10 minutes evaluating them, and were free to click links or Google anything they liked.

"More than half concluded that the article from the American College of Pediatricians ... was 'more reliable,' " the researchers wrote. "Even students who preferred the entry from the American Academy of Pediatrics never uncovered the differences between the two groups."

You can see in-depth examples of some of the exercises — including sample responses — at the study's executive summary.

The project began before the recent uproar over the prevalence of fake news online. But its relevance is immediately clear.

Wineburg told NPR on Tuesday that the study demonstrates that U.S. classrooms haven't caught up to the way information is influencing kids daily.

"What we see is a rash of fake news going on that people pass on without thinking," he said. "And we really can't blame young people because we've never taught them to do otherwise."

In fact, as Wineburg and McGrew wrote in *Education Week*, some schools have filters directing students to valid sources, which doesn't give them practice learning to evaluate sources for themselves.

The solution, they write, is to teach students — or, really, all Internet users — to read like fact checkers.

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That means not just reading "vertically," on a single page or source, but looking for other sources — as well as not taking "About" pages as evidence of neutrality, and not assuming Google ranks results by reliability.

"The kinds of duties that used to be the responsibility of editors, of librarians now fall on the shoulders of anyone who uses a screen to become informed about the world," Wineburg told NPR. "And so the response is not to take away these rights from ordinary citizens but to teach them how to thoughtfully engage in information seeking and evaluating in a cacophonous democracy."

How to Read the News When You're in High School

Source: Jihii Jolly/future journalism project/February 28, 2016

Like any other habit, your news routine is a tricky thing to change once you get used to it. If you don't pay any attention to the news now, it gets harder as you get older to know where to start. If you pay lots of attention to a specific set of sources now, you could be missing out on a lot of great, eye-opening journalism. If you don't really think about it and just scroll through whatever comes across your social network feeds, you're actually getting used to a certain set of perspectives without even realizing it.

One of the best things you can do for yourself when you're young is develop a personal news routine that works for you, and, as the times and your lifestyle change, keep re-evaluating and updating it.

Here's a 5 step process for doing just that.

Step 1: Ask yourself why you want to consume the news.

This might change as you get older, but starting with as clear and honest of an intention as possible is always better than mindlessly consuming a lot of empty media calories. For example:

- I want to be up-to-date on news about a place, group of people or issue that I care about or am personally connected to.
- I don't want seem like I don't know what is going on in the world because it's embarrassing.
- I think keeping up with the news will help me do better in school (or at my job or internship).
- I'm really curious about the world and want to be inspired or entertained.
- I want to learn about journalism and do my own reporting one day.
- I don't really care to, but I probably *should* read the paper.

Step 2: Ask yourself if your current news consumption habits are helping you fulfill your intentions.

You can even make a list of all the places from which you get the news. For example:

1. TV: which shows? how often?
2. Social Media: who posts there? what type of stories?
3. Print Magazines and Newspapers: which ones? how much do you read?

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4. Online Videos: from where? about what?
5. Websites: which sources? how are you getting to them?
6. Apps: which ones? why?
- 7.

You might find that you already follow a ton of great sources. Or you might find that you don't really consume all that much "news" with any sort of discipline or regularity. Maybe you're constantly watching videos and reading articles from websites that aren't reliable sources. Delete the things from this list that you think aren't enriching you or helping you meet your goals. Or, at least move them over and make room for more journalism.

Step 3: Find new sources!

- Asking people you respect where and how they get their news is a great way to start. For example: Is there a teacher you really respect? Ask where he/she consumes their news. A friend who seems to know everything all the time? What news apps are they using?
- Do some research of your own. A lot of news discovery apps aggregate news from a variety of outlets, so keep your eyes open for which ones you are drawn to, and even if you don't do it very often, make it a point to visit their website, get a feel for what their slant is and who their writers and editors are at least once, so you're aware.
- Ask a journalist. Are there reporters you admire? See who they follow and interact with on Twitter. See where else they have bylines. Reach out to them.
- Ask a topic expert. Interested in a particular issue? Who covers the issue for a major news organization? Who specializes in it at a research department? Read their blog. Reach out to them and ask what sources they follow.

Step 4: Logistics.

How much time do you have per day for the news? Where will you be?

Maybe it's just 30 minutes in the morning before school. Maybe you have a long bus ride. Maybe you have a free period. Maybe it'll be over dinner in the evening with your family, or on Sunday morning at home. Maybe it's a couple of minutes here and there throughout the day.

- What medium(s) do you prefer?

Maybe you want to exclusively use your smartphone. Maybe you want to use a computer. Maybe you like to read the paper or magazines in print because your family subscribes. If you're on your phone, do you want to use several different news apps? Do you want one app that will aggregate a lot of sources? Do you want to read the news through your e-mail instead of an app? Maybe you just want to watch videos or listen to radio. Maybe you want more news on platforms you already use for social purposes, like Snapchat or Instagram. See what feels right.

Step 5: Assemble a diet!

Look at everything you have gathered in Steps 1–4 and see what you can put together for yourself. I would recommend consuming at least 1 reputable national publication for a snapshot of the big picture each day and then adding on sources you're interested in on the platforms of your choosing. You can aggregate sources using a service like Feedly or Paper.li. You can download apps for

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specific news organizations or subscribe to their e-mail newsletters. You can fill your social media feeds with news by following the accounts of news organizations. The list goes on.

My current diet, for example, looks something like this:

- In the morning: Read the NYT Morning Briefing and NY Today on my phone using the NYTNow App.
- On the train: 1 long-form/magazine story that I've either discovered on the Longform App or that I've come across online and saved using Pocket.
- On my 5-ish minute walk to the work from the train: Listen to the NPR Newscast on my phone with headphones.
- At work: I subscribe to about 35 e-mail newsletters from different news organizations and bloggers that filter into a "News" folder in my inbox. I'll sift through them over the day, read short things and save the long-stuff for later.
- On the train home: I'm tired of looking at the computer or phone so I'll listen to a podcast episode or an NPR show.
- At home: I don't have TV so I'll watch a newscast from the Reuters TV App, which lets you select the length of your newscast and personalizes it for you, or the app Watchup, which is similar but aggregates sources. Or, I'll watch videos that I've saved from Vice/NYT/The Guardian and various other news channels on YouTube.
- Weekend: I try to read everything I saved in Pocket that week but didn't get to, and I'll read the WSJ & NYT in print + 1 print issue of a magazine from that week, such as The Economist or The New Yorker.
- I also follow a lot of news organizations on Instagram and Twitter. Instagram because it's a gentle and non-invasive way to keep my eye on things passively. Twitter, because nearly all journalists are on it, and I can use services like Nuzzel to get notified when stories are trending that I should pay attention to.

How Other People Do It: The Wire used to do a series called Media Diet on how famous people read the news. There are some interesting tools and strategies in it.

Bonus Step: Do I want to act on this news I've just discovered?

- Maybe I want to share it in an email, an article, or social feed?
- Maybe I want to save it for later because it's too long to read or watch right now? (You can use Instapaper or Pocket to save things for later.)
- Maybe I want to participate in the issue by writing about it, commenting, blogging or incorporating it into an assignment.
- Maybe I did read something great and I want to remember it later so I'll bookmark it. (I try to keep a record of everything I read and enjoy so I can access it later, using Evernote.)

The more informed you are and the more naturally news fits into your life, the more likely you are to do the above, which is a public service to everyone.

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T – What is the topic of the articles?

A – Who is the author of the first article? For the second article, what is the future journalism project?

R – Who would want to read this article? Why?

P – What is the purpose/point of the article?

S – Summarize the article in 6 words.

Write a 1+ page reflection in your “AoW” section of your Writer’s Notebook one of the following prompts:

- What do you think about fake news? What do you think about the study? Why?
- The second article is a blog post and one person’s opinion about how to assemble a healthy “diet” of news sources? How did it work out for you? Will you be using the new “diet” daily? Why or why not?
- What can you do to help prevent the widespread use/misuse of fake news? How do you think your efforts will be perceived? Why?

AoW Article Rubric

	5 pts	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt	0 pts
Annotations	Annotations throughout the article.	X	Some annotations throughout the article.	X	X	No annotations.
T.A.R.P.S.	All T.A.R.P.S. are correct.	4 out of 5 T.A.R.P.S. are correct	3 out of 5 T.A.R.P.S. are correct	2 out of 5 T.A.R.P.S. are correct	1 out of 5 T.A.R.P.S. are correct	0 out of 5 T.A.R.P.S. are correct
Step-by-Step Diet	Great job!	X	Only half complete. More work needed.	X	X	Missing.
Reflection	Great reflection!	Good reflection with work needed.	Only half of a page written. More work needed.	Thoughts are somewhat developed.	Few sentences of reflection.	No reflection. OR

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