

**NEWS LITERACY
FRAMEWORK**

HOW TO IDENTIFY TRUSTWORTHY NEWS

There are certain things to look out for and consider when deciding if the news we get is trustworthy.

This is an adapted version of the eight Trust Indicators from *The Trust Project*. Not all of these will be relevant all the time, but it gives a good basis for questioning the news presented to us.

HOW TO IDENTIFY TRUSTWORTHY NEWS

–1–

The journalist is an expert

(Someone who is very knowledgeable on the subject)

Why is this important?

This is important because we receive news from other people - we are rarely there to see events in the news for ourselves. So we rely on the author to give us accurate information about these events. It is important for the author to base what they say on solid evidence and knowledge.

Questions to ask:

Who made this? Do they have a good professional reputation? Are they reporting on an area they are an expert on?

–2–

You can clearly see what its purpose is

Why is this important?

It's important to know the purpose - why this was written - so we can see how it is affected by bias. For example, if it is an advert, or if it was paid for by an organisation that's trying to communicate a particular message, then it is supposed to persuade us to have a certain opinion.

Questions to ask:

Why has this been created? Does this have a clear opinion? Is this sponsored or advertising something? Is the purpose clearly indicated?

–3–

**You can find
and access the
sources**

Why is this important?

When a journalist is writing a news story, they might use information from lots of different places, such as people's personal accounts of what happened, or official reports. The places where a journalist gets their information are called sources. When a journalist shows what their sources were, we can check for ourselves whether they are accurate.

Questions to ask:

What's the source? For investigative or in-depth stories, do we have access to the sources behind the claims? Can you find another source to back up what is being said?

–4–

**It has used local
knowledge**

Why is this important?

If a journalist has witnessed an event themselves, they can describe what they have seen with their own eyes. If they speak to other people who were there, they will get the most up-to-date knowledge and learn how the event is affecting people. This all results in a more accurate report about what happened.

Questions to ask:

Was the reporting done on the scene, with deep knowledge about the local situation or community? Does it let you know when the news sources are local?

–5–

**It brings in
diverse
voices**

Why is this important?

If certain voices, ethnicities, or viewpoints are missing from the news, then we are unlikely to get the full picture. Often, minority voices are left out or heard from the least, so it's important to seek out these voices.

Questions to ask:

What are the newsroom's efforts and commitments to bring in diverse perspectives? Are certain voices, ethnicities, or political persuasions missing?

–6–
It allows
readers to
participate

Why is this important?

Sometimes the journalist might have got it wrong or have an incomplete picture. Allowing the public to give feedback means that journalists can make sure their work is accurate and up to date. They might also use the public to help them find important news worth talking about.

Questions to ask:

Can we participate? Can we give feedback?
Does it acknowledge contributions from the public?

–7–
We can tell the
process used to
make it

Why is this important?

Knowing why a journalist chose to research a particular story and how they went about developing the story can help us to understand how a news story came together. It might reveal how well researched or balanced the story is.

Questions to ask:

How was it made? How long did it take to make?
Who else was involved in the process?

–8–
The journalist or
news organisation
shows they care
about these
indicators

Why is this important?

The journalist or organisation might have lots of rules to ensure the news they publish is accurate, or they might have no rules at all or even purposefully publish false news. If a journalist or organisation has a set of rules that they stick to in order to make sure they are being accurate, then their news will be more trustworthy.

Questions to ask:

Does the journalist or organisation have a list of rules that they have to follow? How do they check their facts? Who funds it? What is the journalist's mission? Does the journalist or organisation make corrections if they are wrong? Do they have a commitment to ethical/diverse/accurate reporting and how do they show they are sticking to the rules?