

S VIRTUAL HOME LEARNING COMMUNITY

**FOR STUDENTS** 



# BREAKING NEWS: It's time for a pop quiz!

This is a headline you can trust and get excited about! But not all news is real or trustworthy. What makes it stand out is that it can look more interesting or outrageous than the real news - but there's a reason for that. 'Fake News' is intentionally designed to mislead, misinform and spread rumours.

For instance, there might be a catchy headline like, *Discover the secret to losing 20lb in 1 week!*, or *Find out what shocking thing Chris Hemsworth said at the Oscars*, and *Woman trains squirrel to scare her mother... and is arrested.* These are prime examples of 'clickbait' - attention - grabbing stories to make you click and get directed to a dodgy site.

False articles can also be shared across social media, so you can easily come across a hoax when you're checking social media. However, a <u>report from the National Literacy Trust</u> revealed some startling statistics:



2% of children can tell if a news story is real or fake.



The report also found that **49%** of young people are worried about **not being able to spot fake news**, both online and offline.

See? It's not easy to tell fact from fiction (adults find it difficult too!) And 50% of teachers that were surveyed felt that the national curriculum does not equip children with the right level of literacy skills to identify fake news either.



### Take our quiz to find out if you can tell fact from fiction:

1.	Opinion pieces or personal blog posts are unreliable as accurate sources of news - and may even be false. A lack of is an obvious sign it is FAKE news. Fill in the blank:  a) Margins b) Named quotes c) Paragraphs d) Celebrity interviews
2.	When in doubt, where should you check to make sure the website looks GENUINE?  a) Homepage b) Other articles with similar headlines c) URL d) Click on other links on the same page
3.	If a news site doesn't have a, this is suspicious - don't trust it! Fill in the blank:  a) Photo b) Logo c) Contact Us page d) Twitter post
4.	To determine if an article is TRUE, look at the type of message the article is trying to communicate. If there is it's genuine! Is the answer:  a) The same news in multiple places b) No other news online c) No credible source online d) A range of "expert" quotes that don't match
5.	What is another word for the type of websites that can't be taken seriously because their purpose is to be funny or comical?  a) Sitcom b) Superficial c) Sunshine d) Satirical



- 6. Fake news stories often have some kind of agenda to change opinions or persuade people to react to something. Which of these sensational story headlines is NOT a work of fiction:
  - a) The Prime Minister adopts alien baby
  - b) Town evacuated amid fears of the moon colliding with Earth
  - c) 94-year-old Harriette Thompson becomes oldest woman to run half marathon
  - d) Doctors discover incredible new pill to reverse the aging process
- 7. Did you know that even .com or .net website domains may not be entirely safe from fakers? Which of the following ones is definitely the LEAST credible?
  - a) .gov
  - b) .edu
  - c) .co
  - d) .org
- 8. If the story doesn't come from a media outlet you recognise (like BBC News, Metro.co.uk, etc.) or has a URL that doesn't seem to match the name of the website what else can you search for?
  - a) The author's name in Google or LinkedIn
  - b) Similar images using Google Image Search
  - c) If the website has recent news posts or if they're outdated
  - d) All of the above
- 9. Which of the following media outlets is NOT a reputable source for news coverage?
  - a) BBC News bbc.co.uk/news
  - b) Reuters uk.reuters.com
  - c) The Guardian theguardian.com/uk
  - d) NBC News nbcnews.com.co
- 10.Taken from a BBC News April Fools' Day 2017 post and BBC Radio 4's funniest news stories of 2018 - can you spot which unbelievable news story is actually FAKE? Go on, it's a difficult one...
  - a) "Missing woman unwittingly joins search party looking for herself"
  - b) "London's iconic Big Ben clock to go digital"
  - c) "Student discovers a massive Crunchy Nut cornflake"
  - d) "Sharks love jazz, say Australian scientists"

We hope you learned and laughed during the quiz! Find out your score from your teacher to see if you're a pro at spotting Fake News...



## Can You Crack Cryptography?

Privacy is paramount when you are online. You don't want to give away your personal information to someone you've never met, right? If you don't know who they are, what they want or how they're going to use your private details - it could be dangerous. Don't make it easy for cyberbullies and hackers to invade your privacy - there are simple ways to stop this from happening.

We've hidden 5 secret messages in the below 'cryptograms' - word puzzles, with messages that have been written in code. Each answer you reveal will make you think twice about how private you're being online and what to consider next time you log on...

In this activity, we've used numbers instead of letters. Take a look at the encryption key below:

Α	В	C	D	Е	F	G	Н	_	J	K	٦	М
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

N	0	Р	ď	R	S	Т	U	٧	W	Х	Υ	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

See how each letter is now linked to a number: A is 1, B is 2, C is 3, and so on..

To decrypt the hidden messages below, you'll need to use this secret key by matching the numbers to their corresponding letters. Each block of numbers is a new word and there is a hint to point you in the right direction.

Go on and get solving!



#### 1st MESSAGE:

3		В	15	15	1	9	5
1							
12						, 1	
19	2	20	18	15	_	4	7
						4.5	
16	1	19	19	23	15	18	4

**HINT:** You'll need to do this when logging into any device (computer, phone or tablet) and for social media accounts too!

#### 2ND MESSAGE:

4	4		15										
				<u></u>									
1	14		15		20								
16				15			19	)		20			
16		18	9		22			1	20		5		
9 14		6	15	18	1	3	1	20	9	15	14		

HINT: Your date of birth, password and address...



#### 3RD MESSAGE:

2		5	23		1	14	5		
15		6	]						
			]						
4	15	23	14	12	15	1	4	19	

**HINT:** Don't get tricked into putting malware on your computer, which steals your private information and causes disruption.

#### **4TH MESSAGE:**

1		22			15			9			4			
19			8 1			18			9		14	4 7		7
5	13		2	1	18	18	1		19	19	9		14	7
19	)		5 12		12	6			9		5			19

**HINT:** Any images (or mean messages too) can't be removed - even if you delete them once they've been posted.



#### **5TH MESSAGE:**

14			5		22			5			18	
3				8	1				20			
20				15								
19	20	)	18	1	1	4		7	5		18	19
15		1	4	12	!		9		1	4		5

**HINT:** If you don't know or trust them, you shouldn't do this...

#### Don't stop there...

Why not make up your own hidden messages using the key above? Then try them out on your family and friends! Don't forget to use the answers you revealed in this activity to put into practice next time you're online...



How can you make sure your social media time is fun without worrying about the fake profiles? There are plenty of handy hints and tips to help you spot the difference between a friend and a phoney. These may be tricky at first - but you'll quickly get the hang of it when you put it into practice.

Look at our step-by-step guide for staying safe online (with some activities too!)...

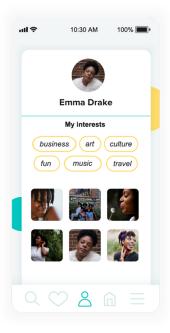
#### 1. Investigate the profile image

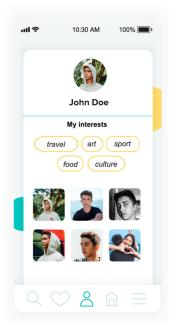
- O Is there only **one main image?** If you click on the profile pic and there are only one or two photos this is most likely an imposter. Compare this to how many photos you have in your album. There are dozens, if not hundreds, right? Real people typically change their profile pic every couple of months, especially if they go on holiday, have fun with friends or celebrate a special occasion.
- O Is there **no image** whatsoever? Whether it's a brand-new profile or if it has been created at least 2 years ago this could be fake. Don't risk it report and block it.
- O Are they using a **celebrity image**? It's not uncommon for someone to upload a main image of an actor, singer, celebrity or public figure. It tells you a bit about who they are and that they're a big fan of their work. But that is not always the case. The best way to confirm that the person is who they claim to be is to check the rest of their photos. If there aren't any other images excluding the celebrity ones it doesn't look good.
- Are they using **images of models?** If the pictures look like they've been lifted from an advert, catalogue, photo shoot or stock images you can do a bit of detective work using Google!
  - Simply right-click on the photo and then click on "Save image as..."
  - Save it to your Desktop
  - Next, click on Google Image Search (or type <a href="https://images.google.com">https://images.google.com</a> into your web browser's address bar)
  - Choose the camera icon to "Search by image" and then click on "Upload an image"
  - Select the image from your desktop in the new window
  - Check the Google Image Search results to see if there are any duplicates or similar photos

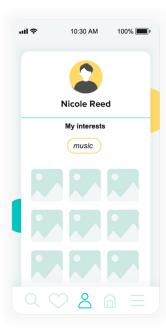


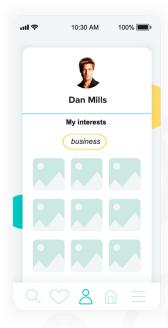
Now, can you spot the difference between these genuine and fake profiles below. All you need to do is circle the image that you think is a real profile:

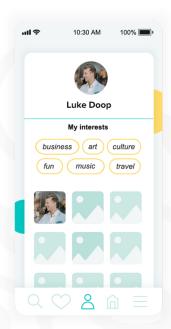












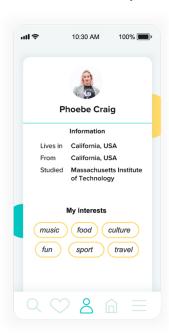


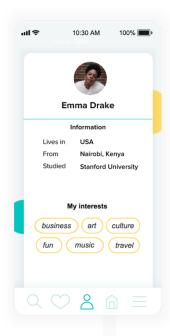
#### 2. What's their About section about?

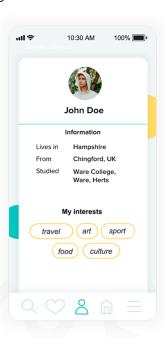
Who doesn't like to share (and brag a little bit!) about what they like, where they're from and the things they've done? It's only natural to want to talk about these things and show them off to your friends and family. What else would you put in your About section?

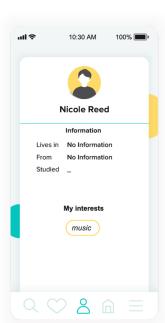
Well, if you're a social media faker, you're not a sharer. Not in the slightest. Therefore, if a profile only has information like where they live, where they work and where they studied this is a red flag. Especially if they just repeat the same place name. If it's too basic, don't buy it.

Now it's time to identify the fake from the for-real! Circle the right one below:

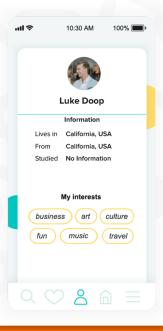














#### 3. Check the Timeline activity

- O Are there lots of posts with links? Like with phishing scam emails, social media posts with links are a clear giveaway that this person is not genuine. If you notice that all they're posting is external links to "Check this out" then be wary. Don't trust a serial linker. If you click on an unknown link this could direct you to an untrusted site. Even if the link looks cool and is advertising a band or the latest smartphone, they could be trying to sell you something or get hold of your data.
- O Is there no activity or reaction to the posts? Dig deeper into the posts and see if there have been many comments posted by others. Fakes and phonies are not going to spend time liking and carrying on a conversation with replies even if they're positive. However, if there are posts, comments or replies by the suspicious user that don't make sense in context of the conversation, we recommend the block and report approach too.

Investigate further and highlight the images that display genuine profile activity:

