the news literacy project
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TEN QUESTIONS FOR FAKE NEWS DETECTION

Use the questions below to assess the likelihood that a piece of information is fake news. The more red flags you circle, the more skeptical you should be!

START

1. Gauge your emotional reaction:
   Is it strong? Are you angry? Are you intensely hoping that the information turns out to be true? False? YES | NO
2. Reflect on how you encountered this. Was it promoted on a website? Did it show up in a social media feed? Was it sent to you by someone you know?
3. Consider the headline or main message:
   a. Does it use excessive punctuation(!!) or ALL CAPS for emphasis? YES | NO
   b. Does it make a claim about containing a secret or telling you something that "the media" doesn't want you to know? YES | NO
   c. Don't stop at the headline! Keep exploring.
4. Is this information designed for easy sharing, like a meme? YES | NO
5. Consider the source of the information:
   a. Is it a well-known source? YES | NO
   b. Is there a byline (an author's name) attached to this piece? YES | NO
   c. Go to the website's "About" section: Does the site describe itself as a "fantasy news" or "satirical news" site? YES | NO
   d. Does the person or organization that produced the information have any editorial standards? YES | NO
   e. Does the "contact us" section include an email address that matches the domain (not a Gmail or Yahoo email address)? YES | NO
   f. Does a quick search for the name of the website raise any suspicions? YES | NO
6. Does the example you're evaluating have a current date on it? YES | NO
7. Does the example cite a variety of sources, including official and expert sources? Does the information this example provides appear in reports from (other) news outlets? YES | NO
8. Does the example hyperlink to other quality sources? In other words, they haven't been altered or taken from another context? YES | NO
9. Can you confirm, using a reverse image search, that any images in your example are authentic (in other words, sources that haven't been altered or taken from another context)? YES | NO
10. If you searched for this example on a fact-checking site such as Snopes.com, FactCheck.org or PolitiFact.com, is there a fact-check that labels it as less than true?

    YES | NO

REMEMBER:

- It is easy to clone an existing website and create fake tweets to fool people.
- Bots are extremely active on social media and are designed to dominate conversations and spread propaganda.
- Fake news and other misinformation often use a real image from an unrelated event.
- Debunk examples of misinformation whenever you see them. It's good for democracy!

Visit www.checkology.org for a comprehensive collection of news literacy e-learning experiences and other resources from NLP.