NEED HELP?

IS IT REAL?
Does the EVIDENCE hold up? Is the SOURCE legitimate? Run a search for the source name and key facts, people or images from the story to weed out the fakes.

IS IT WELL-MADE?
Are you impressed by the EXECUTION? A well-made story starts with solid facts. It should be calm, clear and neat, not a train wreck of exaggerated emotion (like ALL CAPS WORDS!!!!) and sloppy mistakes.

IS IT NEWS OR OPINION?
What is the PURPOSE? News mainly explains what is happening. Opinion takes a stance to judge or make an argument about it. First-person voice or words like “perspective” and “editorial” are often tipoffs it is opinion.

IS IT SUPPORTED BY FACTS?
Is there good EVIDENCE? Look for statistics, studies, historical examples, primary sources, expert analysis or other signs that the writer has done their homework and can back up their argument.

IS IT BIASED?
Does the EVIDENCE show you the big picture? Biased stories may leave out key facts, so you only see one side of an issue. They may also exaggerate or downplay the importance of the story in the CONTEXT of other news.

IS THE BIAS OPEN OR SNEAKY?
Does the EXECUTION clearly aim for a specific AUDIENCE? News with an open bias often uses partisan labels in its titles (like “Left-Wing News”) or declares support for partisan missions (like “help Republicans get elected”). News with a sneaky bias pretends it isn’t biased at all.

IS IT ENTERTAIN AND/OR RAISE AWARENESS?
What is this story’s PURPOSE? Weigh whether the story was created for darker reasons, like causing destruction, scamming people for profit, or unfairly hurting someone or something.

IS IT SUPPORTED BY FACTS?
This is real, solid information. It may not be all sunshine and rainbows, and you may not like what it has to say, but it’s backed up with facts to provide plenty of food for thought. It doesn’t have the check value of a crazy fake news story or the viral potential of an angry rant, but what it lacks in sparkly distractions it makes up for with reliability and real-world implications.

IS THE BIAS OPEN OR SNEAKY?
It all depends on how you do it. These stories can be perfect for getting insight into how other people think or starting a productive debate, but only if you stay aware of the risks. Take a minute to foresee the possible consequences of your actions and choose your words wisely to show clear of crude bait or flame-wars. Look for a way to sit in the pot without making it boil over.

IS IT NEWS OR OPINION?
Marred by hidden agendas and bad intentions, these stories can fuel destruction and chaos. With no concern for consequences, they can spread deceit, fear and sometimes even danger. From scamming the system for profit to tricking people into bad decisions to just plain making folks look stupid, there’s something tricky going on here.

IS IT WELL-MADE?
This is a good sign. The story is clear and well-constructed. The facts are solid, the language is clear and concise, and the overall presentation is polished.

IS IT REAL?
A well-supported story is typically more reliable than one that lacks evidence. Run a search for the source name and key facts, people or images from the story to weed out the fakes.

IS IT NEWS OR OPINION?
Most news is straightforward reporting. Opinion pieces often use more emotional language and are more likely to present a particular viewpoint.

IS IT BIASED?
Biased stories are more likely to leave out key facts or spin the story in a particular way. Watch for labels, hidden agendas, and other signs of bias.

IS IT WELL-MADE?
Stories that are well-made are typically more engaging and interesting. They are often well-written, and the facts are presented clearly.

IS IT REAL?
A story is real if it is supported by facts and sources. Run a search for the source name and key facts, people or images from the story to weed out the fakes.

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