

Worksheet: Headline vs Reality — Evaluating News Credibility

Objective: Learn to critically assess news headlines and underlying articles for credibility and bias.

1. True/False Quiz

For each statement below, circle True (T) or False (F) and then explain your choice in one sentence.

1. **T / F:** "All-caps headlines always mean the story is fake."

Explanation: _____

1. **T / F:** "A well-known news outlet never publishes clickbait."

Explanation: _____

1. **T / F:** "If a headline has no author listed, the story is less trustworthy."

Explanation: _____

1. **T / F:** "Sensational language (e.g., 'SHOCKING!') is a sign of potential bias or manipulation."

Explanation: _____

2. Source Checklist

Below are two sample articles. Use the checklist to rate each article on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high).

Criteria	Rating (1–5) for Article A	Rating (1–5) for Article B
1. Author expertise provided	_____	_____
2. Publication date included	_____	_____
3. Cited sources or links	_____	_____
4. Domain (e.g. .edu, .gov)	_____	_____
5. Balanced language	_____	_____

Overall Trust Level: - Article A: _ / 25 - Article B: _ / 25

3. Headline Redesign

Below are sensational headlines. Rewrite each one to be clear, accurate, and neutral, without changing the main point.

1. **"You Won't Believe What This Mayor Did Last Night!"**

2. *Your Version:* _____

3. **"Doctors Hate This Simple Trick to Lose Weight FAST!"**

4. *Your Version:* _____

5. **"BREAKING: Celebrity X's Shocking Confession Rocks World!"**

6. *Your Version:* _____

7. **"This One Weird Fact Will Change How You See History!"**

8. *Your Version:* _____

4. Reflection

In a few sentences, answer the questions below:

• **Why is it important to look beyond the headline before sharing a story?**

• **How can you use the skills from this worksheet to help friends and family avoid misinformation?**

Instructions for Teachers/Facilitators: - Provide two contrasting articles (A & B) on the same topic for Section 2.

- Allow 20–30 minutes for students to complete.

- Discuss answers as a class, focusing on how small wording changes can significantly alter perception.

Feel free to customize examples to current events or local news stories.