

Name: _____ Date: _____

Glossary of News Terms

This handy list of terms will help you when you are conducting research and evaluating sources of information.

accurate: If something is accurate, it is correct. It is true and free of errors.

advertisement: An advertisement is a text created and presented to the public to help sell a product or to bring attention to a company, event, or place. Advertisements appear in magazines, newspapers, and social media feeds, and on websites. On television and radio, advertisements are also called commercials.

biased: If an article is biased, the opinions and information in the article obviously support or favor one side of an argument or issue. A biased writer is not objective (see *objective* on page 2).

cite: *Cite* means “mention” or “note.” If you are asked to cite three examples of something, you are being asked to mention, or give, three examples. When a writer includes information from a source—whether it is a quote from an interview, a statistic from a study, or information from another article—the writer must cite the source of that information. In other words, a writer must tell readers where the information came from.

credentials: Credentials are qualifications—qualities, skills, experience, or education that make a person suited to do a job. To be considered an expert in a field, you must have the right credentials. A farming expert’s credentials would include years of experience and success as a farmer.

credible: To be credible is to be believable and trustworthy. If an expert quoted in an article is considered credible, people generally believe that what the expert says is true and accurate (see *accurate*, above).

fake news: Fake news is content—articles, videos, etc.—that presents made-up or false information as real or accurate (see *accurate*, above). Real news articles can contain mistakes or inaccurate information sometimes, but these mistakes are not intentional. Legitimate news organizations do not knowingly publish false information. Fake news writers, on the other hand, are aware that the information they are publishing is misleading and false. That information is usually written to make money or to influence public opinion. Fake news is most often found online.

evaluate: When you evaluate something, you make a judgment about it. You determine how trustworthy it is, how good or bad it is, or how weak or strong it is after giving it careful thought.

headline: A headline is the title of an article in a newspaper or magazine or on a website. The headline is generally in larger type than the rest of the text on the page.

legitimate: The adjective *legitimate* means “allowed according to rules or laws” or “thought of as real, official, or acceptable.” When *legitimate* is used to describe a publication or news source, it means the publication adheres to rigorous journalism standards, has a reputation for fair and honest reporting, and can be trusted.

objective: *Objective* means “not influenced by personal feelings or interpretation.” If an article is objective, it does not express the writer’s personal opinions or feelings.

out of context: Context is the situation in which something happens. If someone’s words are taken out of context, they are repeated—in a conversation, in an article, in a video, or somewhere else—without explaining the context, or situation, in which they were originally spoken. For example, you hear Maddie say that she doesn’t want to go to Sarah’s birthday party because she is feeling sick. But you tell Sarah only that Maddie said she doesn’t want to go to her party, without explaining that it’s because Maddie is sick, you are taking Maddie’s words out of context. Taking words out of context can be a problem because it can twist the meaning of what someone says.

photo credit: When a publication uses a photo in an article or video, the publication must include a photo credit, which tells who took the photo. A photo credit often appears underneath or along the side of a photo.

relevant: If something is relevant, it is connected to the matter being considered—it has something to do with the matter at hand. When writers include claims, evidence, or sources that are *irrelevant* (not relevant), they weaken their message.

reliable: If something is reliable, you can rely on it—that is, you can depend on it. For a source of information to be reliable, it must be accurate and credible (see *accurate* and *credible* on page 1). If a news publication is reliable, you can depend on it for true and trustworthy news. If an expert quoted in an article is reliable, you can trust what he or she says.

retraction: The verb *retract* means “take back.” A retraction is a statement that a person or an organization makes to the public to “take back” something that was written, said, or reported because it turned out to be incorrect or untrue. A retraction admits a mistake and provides the correct information if it is available.

satire: Satire is a literary technique that uses humor, exaggeration, or irony to make a point about something. The stories on satirical websites are not meant to be taken as fact.

sensational: When something is sensational, it creates a quick and intense emotional reaction, usually by using eye-catching images or unbelievable details. To describe an event in a sensational way is to make it seem more exciting or shocking than it really is.

source: In the context of news, the word *source* refers to the place or person(s) where or from whom a writer got the information. A source can be a book, a study, an eyewitness account, a primary document, or an expert. In a reliable news piece, the writer will always provide the sources for the information in the article.

sponsored content: Sponsored content is content that is paid for by an advertiser and is intended to promote that advertiser’s product. Sponsored content can sometimes look like a regular news article, but the opinions and information presented are usually biased and not reliable (see *biased* on page 1 and *reliable* on page 2).

verify: To verify something means to confirm or prove it. If a fact or statement has been verified, it has been proven true.