

How false news can spread

1. Study the sentences and complete the definitions below with the underlined adjectives.

- a) We should not tolerate this biased media coverage.
- b) The newspaper has been accused of publishing sensationalist stories of the murders.
- c) The report presented fabricated evidence which was really ridiculous.
- d) There are so many pseudoscientific beliefs, for example astrology.
- e) Judges need to be impartial to make objective decisions.

- 1): falsely or mistakenly claimed or regarded as being based on scientific method
- 2): something false which is invented or produced in order to deceive someone
- 3): preferring one person, thing, or idea to another in a way that is unfair
- 4): not connected to or influenced by one particular person or group
- 5): presenting events in a way that makes them seem as exciting or shocking as possible

2. Discuss the questions.

- How do you keep up with the news?
- Do you trust the information you get?
- Is media in your country biased?
- How can you know that the information you've read/heard is not fabricated?
- What do you know about fake news?



3. Read the text and answer the questions.

Circular reporting can occur when:

"(...) publication A publishes misinformation, publication B reprints it, and publication A then cites B as the source for the information. It's also considered a form of circular reporting when multiple publications report on the same initial piece of false information, which then appears to another author as having been verified by multiple sources."

source: <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-false-news-can-spread-noah-tavlin>

- In your own words, what is circular reporting?
- How do you think it can be avoided?
- How can it affect our everyday lives?

4. Before watching a video about false news, explain what this quote attributed to Mark Twain means.

*"A lie can travel half way around the world
while the truth is putting on its shoes."*

5. Watch the video [https://youtu.be/cSKGa_7XJkg] and answer the questions.

- a) What examples of circular reporting does the speaker mention?
- b) How do wikis contribute to circular reporting?
- c) What should we do to avoid circular reporting according to the video?

6. Discuss the questions.

- Have you seen people sharing fake news on social media pages? What types of behaviours did you notice when it happened?
- What impact do you think fake news has had on you, or on people in your life?
- What impact do you think fake news sites have on elections?

7. Your teacher will show you four pieces of news. Decide which of them are true and which are fake.