**Is That Real? A Crash Course in Verifying Online Content**

**Learner Guide**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/verifying-online-content.html>

**Event Description**: Dive into the tools and skills that you and your patrons need to verify the authenticity of user-generated content, and learn how to create engaging fact-checking investigations that will empower learners to detect and debunk misinformation online. The [News Literacy Project](https://newslit.org/) (NLP) covers topics such as developing keen observation skills that help detect images circulating in a false context; using reverse image searches to find the origins of a digital image; using webpage archivers to explore deleted or changed content; and using Google Street View to explore and confirm details of locations around the world. This webinar will help you boost your own skills and give you confidence to help patrons evaluate their sources, too. The session will also include a brief overview of NLP’s work with public libraries and strategies for adapting its resources for non-school settings.

**Presented by:** Peter Adams, SVP of education, NLP; Damaso Reyes, director of partnerships, NLP; Maryanne Olson, assistant community library manager, Queens Public Library (Ridgewood)

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| **What are your goals for participating in this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Core Digital Verification Skills** |
| What ideas do you have for creating your own challenges targeting one of the verification skills introduced in the webinar?What ideas do you have for creating your own challenges that involve combinations of the verification skills and tools introduced in the webinar?What creative ideas do you have for engaging patrons in these challenges? How might you structure them so that they interest a group people? |
| **Segment Your Audiences** |
| How might different groups of patrons (e.g. teens, retirees, community organizations) respond to digital verification training? What ideas do you have for reaching each of these segments? What opportunities might there be to have these segments work together in some way? |
| **Gauge Your Comfort Level** |
| Rate your level of comfort instructing patrons and creating verification challenges and other materials in the following areas:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Confident | Capable | Need Practice |
| Observation skills |  |  |  |
| Image magnification |  |  |  |
| Lateral reading & research |  |  |  |
| Geolocation |  |  |  |
| Reverse image search |  |  |  |
| Reverse image search for partial screenshot |  |  |  |
| Web archivers |  |  |  |
| Domain registration (ICANN lookups) |  |  |  |
| Use of satellite imagery |  |  |  |

Now compare skill levels with your colleagues and partner up! What additional verification skills are you interested in developing?**Resource:** [Navigating Misinformation](https://knightcenter.utexas.edu/blog/00-20646-learn-how-identify-and-verify-what-you-see-web-sign-free-online-course-navigating-misi) — a free online course from the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas. |
| **Unique Position of Libraries** |
| How can you and your colleagues make the best use of the comparatively high levels of trust the public has for libraries/library staff?What problematic aspect of today’s information environment do you think you can help your patrons better understand?* Standards and ethics of journalism
* Algorithms
* Digital advertising
* “Web literacy” (use of shortcuts, advanced search, etc.)
* Computational propaganda
* Mis- and disinformation trends
* “Fake news” (fabricated news stories designed to look legitimate)
* Social media platforms
* The attention economy
* Role of a free press in a democracy
* Press freedoms around the world
* Competing perceptions of news media bias
* Branded content
* Evaluating claims and evidence online
* Artificial intelligence (AI) generated information (“deepfake” videos, fake people photos, etc.)
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| **Integration of News and Information Literacy** |
| What existing programs and events at your library are well-suited to integrating some of the skills listed above?What challenges might you face as you try to integrate news and information literacy at your branch? In your system?Brainstorm strategies for overcoming patrons’ pre-existing attitudes about the information environment (e.g. the cynical notion that all information is manipulating you): |
| **Resource Planning** |
| What resources — from the News Literacy Project and other organizations — do you think will be most useful as you begin doing more of this work?What resources do you anticipate needing?What opportunities would be made available if you partnered with one or more local journalists for an event, series of events or program? |