

Media Matters



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True or False

People say that you can't believe everything you read. Can you tell fake news from real news? This is important to think about before diving into new information.

Misleading **memes** and factually incorrect articles are all over the internet. Some are meant as jokes. They use **satire** as a way to comment on real events. Usually, satire is used to point out what the author thinks is ridiculous. But other false information is not meant as a joke. It is designed to **deceive** people. The author may have a reason why they want people to get the wrong information. Often, that reason is to convince people of something the author wants them to think or do.





When all is said and done, some information is just too important to get wrong. News reports fall into that category. People look to news reports to learn what the government is doing. They learn about new laws and what is happening in their communities. They find out how America is relating to the world. They get information about plans their leaders have for their community and country.

People need to know they are getting the truth. But how can they be sure?

Jump into
Fiction



Unbelievable News

Marcene could hardly believe what she was reading. But there it was, right on her big sister Alison's computer.

"No More Left-Handed Students in America," the headline read. Just below it, another line explained, "Beginning this year, all left-handed students will learn to write 'righty.'"

It was outrageous! But reading the article, Marcene learned that long ago, schools didn't allow kids to write left-handed. Now, the government decided the rule should be brought back. They voted to make left-handed kids switch and become right-handed.





Marcene was worried. Maybe she wouldn't do well in school anymore if she had to start using her right hand instead of her left.

At school, Marcene told her best friend, Henrietta, the bad news. Henrietta was also left-handed. And she wasn't worried. She was angry!

"I've been writing with my left hand for my whole life!" she fumed. "Why should I have to switch now?"

Patrick overheard and asked what they were talking about. When the girls explained, he got angry, too.

"It's not fair," he said. "When they try to switch us, we'll just refuse!"



Marcene, Henrietta, and Patrick talked to their other friends. Everyone agreed the rule was unfair to left-handed kids. All week, they waited anxiously for their teacher to make an announcement. But she never did.

On Friday night, Marcene finally had time to talk to her sister. Alison was also left-handed. Marcene was sure she must be upset.

“Are you worried about switching hands?” Marcene asked. But her sister seemed confused when Marcene tried to explain what she’d read. Finally, they went to Alison’s computer.





“See? It’s true, and there’s the article to prove it!” Marcene said triumphantly when the headline appeared. But Alison just laughed.

“That’s not a news article, silly,” she said. She scrolled down to the bottom of the page. Marcene read the company name.

“Lefties Rule the World—what’s that?” she asked.

“They sell products for left-handed people,” Alison explained. “They put joke articles on their site to bring in customers.”

Marcene felt tricked. “How was I supposed to know that?” she asked.

“There are tons of clues to look for,” Alison said. “Grab a chair—I’ll teach you how to be a detective!”



Back to
Nonfiction



Media Matters

There are many ways to learn what's happening in the world. You can go online, read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch TV. Information can come from anywhere. So, how do you know the difference between what's true and what isn't? Who can you trust?

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