



Is it True?

Assessing Online Source Credibility

Improving online research skills and critical analysis of internet resources

What are we doing today?

- ❓ Introductions
- ❓ Julie talks about Public Health and piloting the Stanford tasks
- ❓ Psyche walks us through a Rhet Analysis and some great resources
- ❓ We share our experiences teaching about this
 - Are you teaching classes around these topics?
 - What's working and what's not?
 - What do your students need to learn or need reinforced in this area?
 - How can we help provide interdisciplinary support to develop activities and assignments that work?

Why media literacy is so critical right now

- ❑ Because it drives who our students are as scholars and as citizens.
- ❑ Because students start every research project by googling.
- ❑ Because Facebook is now the world's leading news source.
- ❑ Because “fake news” was more widely circulated on US social media in the 3 months leading up to the Presidential election than actual journalism.
- ❑ Because our social networks are often drivers of our social norms and this profoundly impacts how we acquire and interpret new information and act on that data.
- ❑ Because there is a pervasive and growing feeling that all information is unreliable.

Observations from the classroom

? Students are overwhelmed with information

- Not so much “critical” thinking as skeptical thinkers
- They lack awareness that good information is out there
- They need confidence in the ability to analyze and evaluate

? We have seen:

- A need for transparency
- A need to instill a scholarly approach
- A need to reframe the approach to assessing information to make it less overwhelming and more automatic

SHEG Task

Spend about 5 minutes reading and assessing the reliability of:

<https://www.acped.org/the-college-speaks/position-statements/societal-issues/bullying-at-school-never-acceptable>

Then spend about 5 minutes doing the same with:

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/Stigma-At-the-Root-of-Ostracism-and-Bullying.aspx>

You may use any methods you would normally use to assess the reliability of the information on these sites.

Please work silently.

When I prompt you, please answer two questions here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BQT67SZ>

Review our results

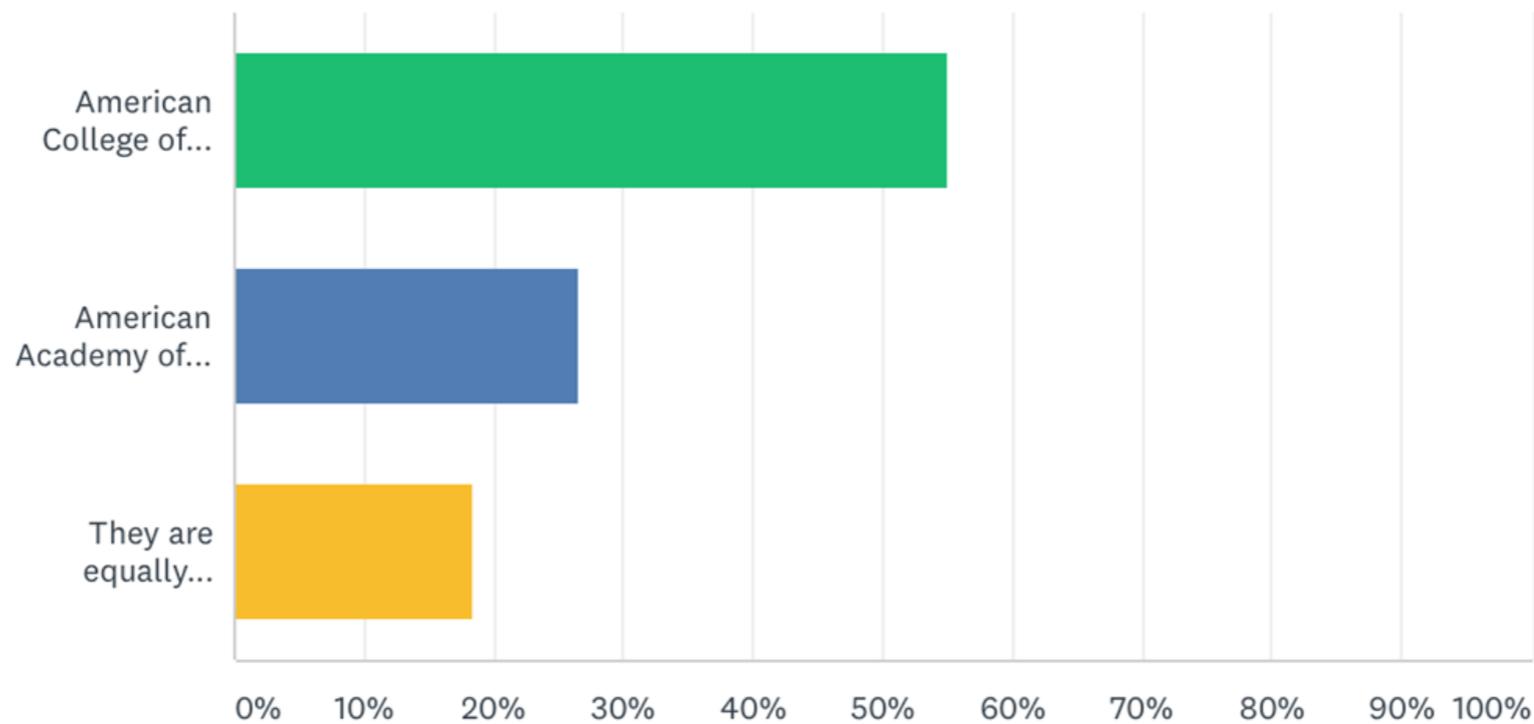
Q1

Customize

Export ▼

Which website did you find to be more reliable?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ American College of Pediatricians (the first link)	55.10% 27
▼ American Academy of Pediatrics (the second link)	26.53% 13
▼ They are equally reliable	18.37% 9
TOTAL	49

Results from Stanford

- ❓ From an article in the journal *Education Week*:
 - ❓ “We asked 25 undergraduates at Stanford—the most selective college in the country, which rejected 95 percent of its applicants last year—to spend up to 10 minutes examining content on both sites. Students could stay on the initial web page, click on links, Google something else—anything they would normally do to reach a judgment. **More than half concluded that the article from the American College of Pediatricians, an organization that ties homosexuality to pedophilia and which the Southern Poverty Law Center labeled a hate group, was "more reliable."**

Homework

(1) Please read the recent (1/20/17) executive order "Minimizing the Economic Burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Pending Repeal".

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/20/executive-order-minimizing-economic-burden-patient-protection-and-affordable-care-act-pending-repeal>

(2) Please make some notes and briefly/roughly summarize the executive order in your own words.

(3) Please read these two articles which (as of this morning) were the top 2 articles returned by a Google search for "Trump ACA Repeal":

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2017/01/31/why-trumps-efforts-to-repeal-and-replace-obamacare-will-fail-part-i-partisan-opposition/#27b8071e362e>

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/16/politics/trump-obamacare-slow/>

(4) Write a one page response comparing your summary/understanding of the primary document (the executive order) and the news articles responding to it. Did reading the primary document impact your response to the articles? If so, how? Did the primary document create more questions than answers for you? Think about and discuss our civic and scholarly responsibilities in both seeking out accurate information and avoiding misinformation online.

What happened and why?

- ❓ Students conducted surface-level evaluations
- ❓ They sped through the tasks as fast as possible
- ❓ Even though they know what to do, they consistently fail to do it

How do we assess the elements of a website?

- ❑ Surface and Content
- ❑ Start with surface analysis
 - ❑ Does it seem legit?
 - ❑ Format and site design
 - ❑ Professional or amateur?
 - ❑ Graphics and images
 - ❑ Easy to navigate?
- ❑ If found acceptable, proceed to content analysis.

Basic (intuitive) content analysis

- ❑ Content analysis is also subjective.
- ❑ Is it current or old?
- ❑ Has it been widely read or shared?
 - ❑ You may look at apps the same way - how many reviews
- ❑ Is it presented as fact or opinion?
- ❑ Who wrote the content?
- ❑ Are facts linked or sourced in any way?
- ❑ What other criteria do you use?

Prominence in search results

- ❑ 70% of people under 30 believe that search engines provide “fair and unbiased” search results.
- ❑ Most people click on the first result. WHY?
 - ❑ Trust in or approval of the particular search engine
 - ❑ Assumption of relevance
 - ❑ Assumption that it's the most widely-viewed result
 - ❑ It must be relevant/accurate/helpful or it would not be among the top search results
- ❑ Page rank can be gamed. Results can be sponsored.
- ❑ Let's google something!

Steps to Assess Credibility: CRAAP

? **Currency**

- ? Assess if the information is current. Why does that matter?
- ? Is there a dateline? If not - why not? If so, has it been updated or republished?

? **Relevance**

- ? Is the content relevant to the subject matter, to the headline, to the site?

? **Authority**

- ? Who is the author and what are their credentials?
- ? Who “owns” the website?
- ? Is it an .com, .org, .gov or .edu? Why does this matter?

? **Accuracy**

- ? Look at the data sources and then verify those sources
- ? If there are no links or data sources provided, why not?
- ? Is there an editorial or fact-checking process for the website?

? **Purpose**

- ? Is the information presented as fact or opinion?
- ? Is there a clear bias or viewpoint?
- ? Is there an “ask” or call to action?
- ? What is the author trying to convey?

Action steps to encourage

- ❓ Pay less attention to the order of search results
 - ❓ Don't just look at the top results, read all of them before clicking
 - ❓ Look at the URL's
- ❓ Pay more attention to your search terms
 - ❓ Do multiple searches using different terms, on different engines, of different types (news/all/images/videos)
- ❓ Look at dates and bylines
 - ❓ If there's no date, check the social shares or comments
- ❓ Open those tabs
 - ❓ Instead of relying on the "about" section of the website, open another tab and investigate about the site, author, etc.

Questions to ask

- ❑ How did you find that resource?
- ❑ How many articles or sites did you look at?
- ❑ How did you conduct your search? What were your search terms?
- ❑ Why did you pick that website or article over other ones?
- ❑ Were there links embedded in the article? What were they?
- ❑ Did the author cite their research? Did you check out their data sources?
- ❑ Tell me more about the author.
- ❑ Where else does that writer publish?
- ❑ Does the author have a “lane”?
- ❑ Did you perceive a perspective or bias in the piece from either the author or the website?
- ❑ Did you look at the writer’s social feeds?
- ❑ What can you tell me about that website?
- ❑ Is that article the most recent on the subject?
- ❑ Did you think it was an objective resource? Why or why not?

Rhetorical Analysis

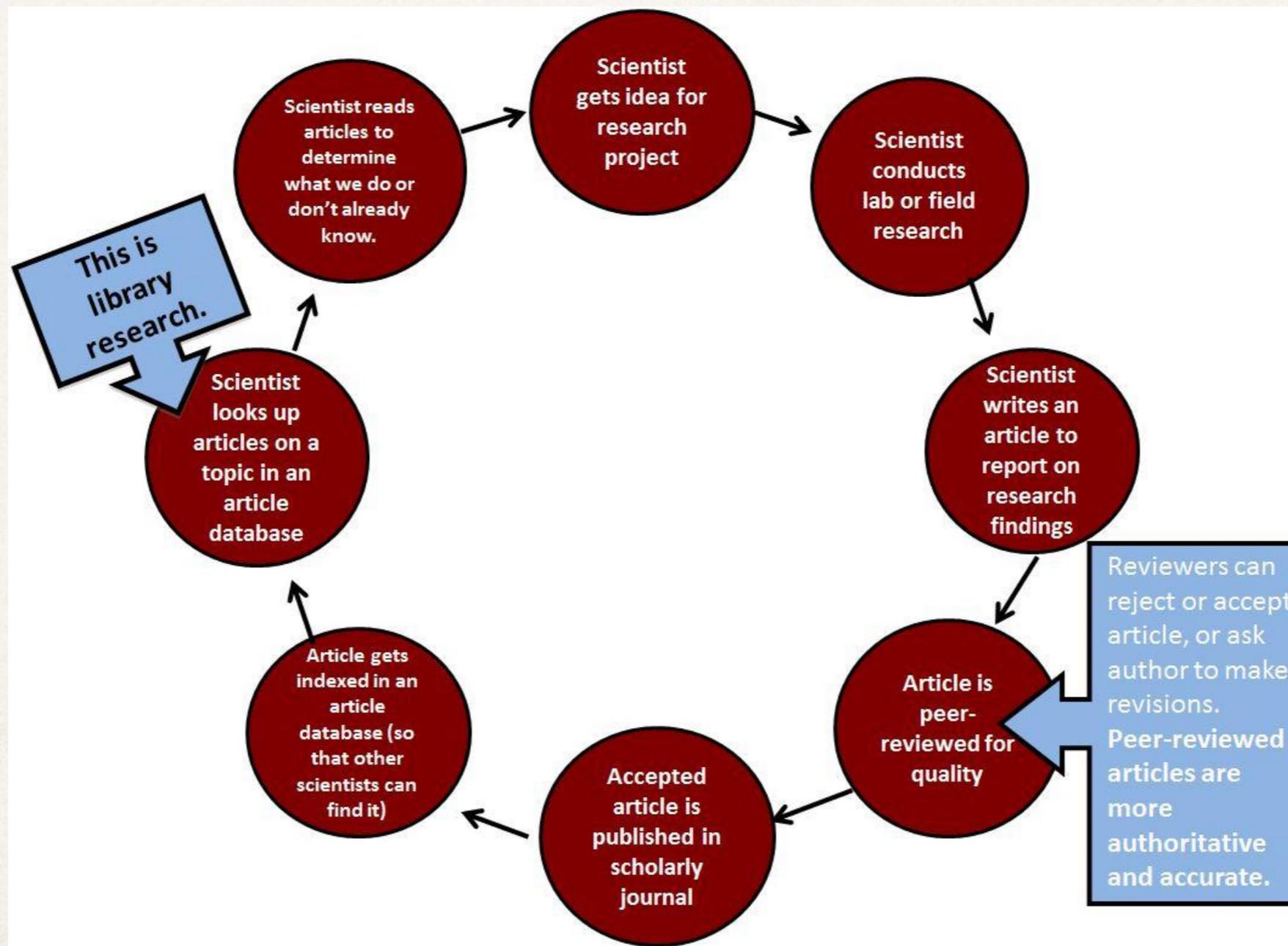
In-Class Activity

Full Class Session

Before the Activity

Skills to introduce first

The Peer Review Cycle



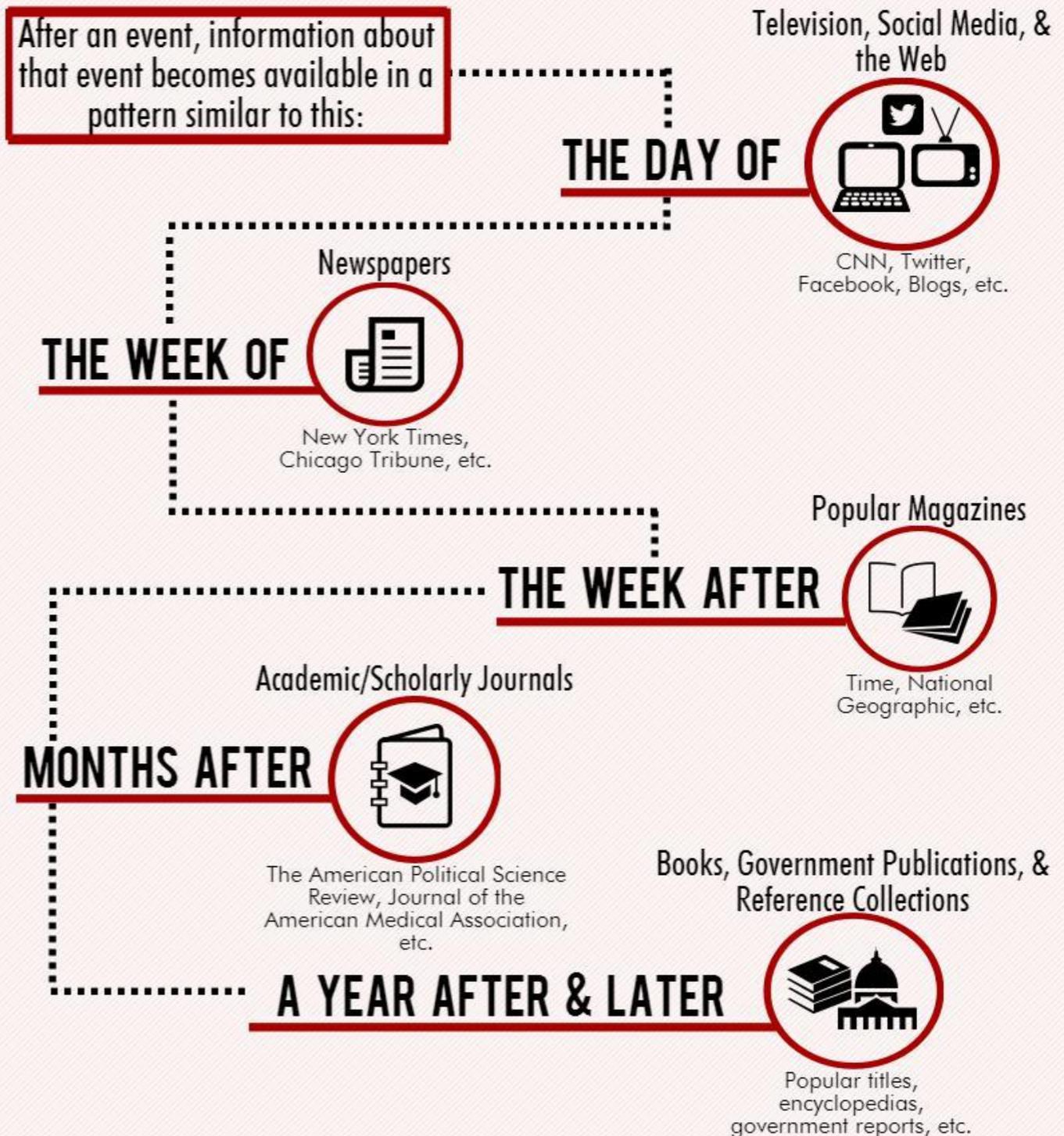
The Information Cycle

THE INFORMATION CYCLE

What is the Information Cycle?

The Information Cycle is the progression of media coverage of a particular newsworthy event. Understanding the information cycle will help you to better know what information is available on your topic and better evaluate information sources covering that topic.

After an event, information about that event becomes available in a pattern similar to this:



Evaluating Sources

- **CRAAP Test**

- Currency, Relevance, Accuracy, Authority, Purpose

- **Focused Internet Searches**

- Boolean Tools, Quotation marks, Filtering Results

- **Clues to Credibility of Websites**

- .org/.gov/.com, ownership, editing

Fake News Activity

Fukushima Nuclear Flowers

by [pleasegoogleShakerAamerpleasegoogleDavidKelly](#) • a month ago

Not much more to say, this is what happens when flowers get nuclear birth defects



“Fighting Fake News”
[Lesson Plan](#)

Rachel Roberson,
KQED Learning

Based on evidence
from [Stanford Study](#)

Rhetorical Analysis

Goals:

- Awareness that a writer is a human being who has made writing choices for a specific reason.
- Ability to evaluate those choices.
- Go beyond passively receiving information to critical analysis--includes confidence in your own skills.

Analyze an Article in your Discipline

Choose an article that is:

- Recent
- Easy to read
- Short
- Represents a scholarly dialogue

Cat Poop

Read [Article](#)

Discuss as a Group

**“Cat poop parasites don't actually make you psychotic:
Correlation and causation get mixed up again.” Sara Chodosh,
February 22, 2017, *PopSci.com***

Discussion Questions

- What is her main argument?
- What was her purpose in writing this article?
- How many studies does Chodosh refer to? Identify them. Are the sources in agreement with each other?
- Is her article in response to something? Something that readers already know, or that is happening in the world?

After this Activity

- Read a scholarly article in discipline
- Ask the same Rhetorical Analysis questions
- Discuss similarities and differences
- Discuss benefits of both

Share Our Experiences

- Are you teaching classes around these topics?
- What's working and what's not?
- What do your students need to learn or need reinforced in this area?
- How can we help provide interdisciplinary support to develop activities and assignments that work?