



Using Videos as Sources: Detecting Trustworthiness – English Transcript

Everyone loves a video. They're fun! And, sometimes we learn things by watching them, too. Videos can be for entertainment, instruction, or gathering information. You can use them to learn a new skill. You can also use them to learn about news and what's happening in the world. Some videos are trustworthy, and some aren't.

How do you know which videos provide the best information? It's your job to look for clues and detect if a video is worthy of being a source for your research. Here are three tips to keep in mind while you're on the case.

Popularity doesn't mean accuracy. Just because a popular YouTuber or content creator has thousands of subscribers doesn't make them trustworthy. You want to choose a video that was created by a trusted expert or organization.

Let's look at these videos about manatees. Where did these videos come from and why would you choose one over another? Some content creators are trusted and have a reputation for providing trustworthy information. For example, well-known and respected organizations such as National Geographic, The Smithsonian, PBS, the San Diego Zoo, and others are good places to start. Even though this video has millions of views, we do not know who the creator ManateeFanClub is. We should find out before using this video as a source.

Let's look more closely at the creator. What can you find out about them? Are they a respected expert? Do they work for a company or organization in the field that they are creating the video about? What do they stand for?

A quick search shows that ManateeFanClub creates videos about manatees. Like a detective, look for evidence that would show whether you can trust the information in her videos. Check for information that would tell you if ManateeFanClub is a scientist, an expert on manatees, or has another reason for viewers to trust the information she shares.

After rewatching the video she created, you realize that ManateeFanClub did not cite any sources for the information she shared. It also does not seem like ManateeFanClub is a scientist or other kind of manatee expert. If you're still not sure whether to trust this creator, you can ask a trusted adult what they know about the person or organization.



After detecting and discussing, you realize that there is no evidence that suggests that you can trust the information from ManateeFanClub. While these videos are entertaining, they are not quality sources for research. Knowing that, you should find a different video to learn about manatees for your project.

Some videos try to grab your attention by shocking you or using exaggerated claims. This is called sensationalism. The creator is hoping that you will click on their links, which is called clickbait, or buy their products if they can get you to pay attention to their outlandish claims. When you see a video that is trying to create a sensation, your detective radar should go on alert. Ask yourself, who is making this claim? Why are they saying this? What do they stand to gain if I watch their video and accept their information?

Here are a few clues to help you spot sensationalism. Watch for overly dramatic words or big claims. Be suspicious of promises that seem impossible. Avoid videos that seem to be focused on scaring or worrying the viewer. These are signs that the source may not be trustworthy.

If something seems off, trust your instincts. Don't use videos like these as sources for research or even for entertainment. Sensationalism is your clue to ignore the content.

Videos and images can be altered or distorted to change the way you understand them. You might see an image that is posted without context. Context is extra information about a situation that helps you fully understand what is happening. Without knowing the context, you may jump to conclusions that might not be supported by the facts.

For example, when you see this person yelling, you might assume that they are angry or upset. However, when you see more context, you can infer, or conclude based on additional evidence, that they are celebrating a sporting event, and they might actually be happy or excited. To understand the meaning, you need to know the context. Context matters. Sometimes a video or image creator might intentionally hide some of the context so that you, the viewer, jump to a conclusion that isn't true.

When you're watching a video or looking at an image, always stop to question whether you're seeing the whole story. Are there details that are missing or intentionally left out that might change the way you understand the information? If you find that a creator has intentionally left context out, you should not trust the video as a source.



The internet is full of entertaining videos and funny pictures. Use your skills to detect when you can trust content and sources. Check the creator, spot sensationalism, consider the context. Apply these tips to detect trustworthy videos for research projects and quality information throughout your life. Case closed!

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