**Session 8: Engaging Students in Critical Reading Skills (English/Social Studies)**

**Objectives**

Teachers will consider the importance of helping students develop the critical reading skills needed to detect fake news, and leave the session with specific lesson planning ideas for how to teach these skills to their students.

**Guiding Questions**

* How can we leverage students’ natural interests to engage them in building one of the most critical skills in contemporary society: the ability to evaluate information from the media?

**At a Glance**

This session introduces the importance of teaching students the crucial critical reading skill of how to detect fake news. It gives teachers the opportunity to experience and debrief an activity they could use with their own students around the issue of how to evaluate what they read. Teachers then have the opportunity to browse various materials that could help them in planning future lessons around this issue, and to reflect on next steps.

**Materials**

Poster paper and markers for each table

Additional paper and pens

Handout 8ESS.1 (Evaluating a News Source - Dearborn)

Handout 8ESS.2 (Evaluating a News Source - Hillary Clinton)

Handout 8ESS.3 (Evaluating a News Source - RuPaul)

Handout 8ESS.4 (Evaluating a News Source - Sharia Law)

Handout 8ESS.5 (Evaluating a News Source - Trump Rally)

Handout 8ESS.6 (Detecting Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.7 (Lesson Plan Sites for Teaching Students About Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.8 (PBS Lesson Plan on Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.9 (Buzzfeed Article on Fake News)

Handout 8ESS.10 (Teacher Reflection Questions)

**Procedure**

Have teachers sit at tables of 4-5 for small group discussion during the session. Organize materials so you have multiple copies of the different “Evaluating a News Source” texts, a different text for each table. (If you have more than 5 tables, some groups will have the same story unless you generate ones in addition to the examples provided.)

**Introduction (7 minutes)**

Facilitator sets context by introducing guiding question and sub-questions (Slides 2-3), followed by leading participants in short discussion of the Wall Street Journal headline on Slide 4 – “Most Students Don’t Know When News Is Fake, Stanford Study Finds” – using questions on Slide 5. Facilitator assures group that this news is not fake (Slides 6-7).

**Small Group Discussion Exercise (15-20 minutes)**

Emphasize to teachers that this segment is designed to allow them to experience and debrief an activity they can use with their students in their own classrooms. With teachers in groups of 4-5, distribute different news stories to different groups (with all teachers at the same table receiving their own copy of the same story as others have at table). The five stories provided are about:

Dearborn, MI; Hillary Clinton; RuPaul; Sharia law; and a Trump rally

Teachers will play the roles of students divided into small groups to accomplish the following tasks collaboratively:

* Read the “news” story assigned to your group.
* Develop a list of questions you need to find answers to in order to evaluate whether the “news” story is reliable or not.
* List the questions in a logical order on your poster chart.
* Suggest at least one good way to find the answer to each question, and be ready to defend why it is a good approach.

**Large Group Share Out of Small Group Work (10 minutes)**

Teachers reflect on where students will need scaffolding if they were asked to do the same exercise (Slide 13).

Teachers discuss pros and cons of using a checklist prior to trying it on their own (Slide 14).

**Individual or Small Group Time to Browse Available Resources for Helping Students Identify Fake News   
(15 minutes)**

Facilitator challenges teachers to consider how they can fit this into their own curriculum (Slide 15). Share Common Core Standards that could be related (Slide 16). Provide copies for teachers to examine the various resources provided for developing lesson plans around identifying fake news:

List of Lesson Plan Sites with links (list with links can be on available computers/laptops in the room so teachers can easily reach the websites and browse)

Copy of PBS lesson plan on fake news

Copy of Buzzfeed article about fake news

Copy of “Ten Questions for Fake News Detection” from the News Literacy Project

**Teacher Reflection (5 minutes)**