

Media Checklist

The next time you watch the news, read a newspaper, or listen to the radio, consider these questions to help identify potential problems in the information being broadcast:

- ✓ In what **tone** is the information being provided?
- ✓ Does the information come from someone with a particular set of views?
- ✓ Is there any evidence of **prejudice** or **unfairness**?
- ✓ Is the information mostly **opinionated** or **objectively based on facts**?
- ✓ Would you call the information **propaganda**?
- ✓ Is the information as **current** as possible or possibly **outdated**?
- ✓ Is the information **easy to understand** or full of **difficult words**?
- ✓ Are you being told the **complete story**?
- ✓ **Who** is offering the information?
- ✓ **Who or what is the source** of the information?
- ✓ Are **no named sources** provided?
- ✓ If you can **identify the source**, which **people or organizations involved** with it?
- ✓ What **motives** might be behind this information?
- ✓ Might the source **benefit or profit** in some way in giving this information?
- ✓ Is the person or organization behind this information **qualified**?
- ✓ Do you **trust** the source?
- ✓ Can the information be **confirmed elsewhere**?
- ✓ Which persons, companies, or organizations are **associated** with the source?
- ✓ Have you checked to see if there are there **better sources elsewhere**?
- ✓ Are you **relying heavily or exclusively on a search engine or website** for the information?
- ✓ Are you aware of **potential issues** with online searches? (if not, go to <http://thrall.org/docs>)
- ✓ **Have you searched anywhere else other than the Web**, such as in an article database?
- ✓ Did you know that **much information is not yet (nor might ever be) on the Internet**?
- ✓ Have you attempted to **research the topic further at your local library**?
- ✓ Did you know **most libraries offer free access to databases**?
- ✓ Did you know, in addition to **databases** ([http:// thrall.org/databases](http://thrall.org/databases)) Middletown Thrall Library also offers **free guides to help you** with your online research? (<http:// thrall.org/guides>)

There are even more questions yet you could (and probably should) be asking with regards to all the information you encounter every single day. These kinds of questions involve what are called **critical thinking skills** and can save you from wrongly acting on erroneous information.

If you would like to learn more about critical thinking, stop by our Reference department to pick up a free copy of our Critical Thinking flyers (or go to [http:// thrall.org/docs](http://thrall.org/docs)).

Our librarians will be happy to help you locate sources to consider for topics you wish to research. If you cannot visit us in person, you can call us at (845) 341-5461 or ask a question online at <http://www.thrall.org/ask>