What is fake news?
Simply put, fake news can be defined as news stories that are completely false with no factual basis. These stories are circulated with the intention of deliberately deceiving readers for the purpose of political or financial gain.

Frequent Fake News Red Flags

The URL is fake
Fake news stories often come from websites that look real but aren’t. For example, the story might have a URL that reads abcnews.com.co when the real ABC News website reads abcnews.com.go. You can check whether or not a site is considered “fake” by consulting this list of spam websites: http://bit.ly/2ezvFbV.

It appeals to emotion
Fake news plays on your feelings - it makes you angry or happy or scared. This is to ensure that you don’t do anything as pesky as fact-checking. If you read a news story that causes you to get a sudden surge of emotions, be sure and take a closer look at its premises and try searching a fact checking website to confirm the claims.

The authors aren't experts
Always be sure to verify the author’s credentials by Googling his or her name. A quick search should easily show that an author is a professional, trained journalist or an expert in a particular field. Experts would include people with advanced degrees in subject areas or significant career experience in a certain area.

It can't be verified
A fake news article may or may not have links in it tracing its sources; if it does, these links may not lead to articles outside of the site’s domain or may not contain information pertinent to the article’s topic. Always use a fact-checking website like FactCheck.Org or PolitiFact to verify claims. Find a list of fact-checking resources here: http://guides.norwich.edu/fakenews/factcheck

Evaluating a Source

Here’s a simple and easy-to-remember test to help you evaluate any news story or website that you find.

The CRAAP Test

C - Currency (when was this information published?)
R - Relevancy (does the information relate to your topic?)
A - Authority (who is the author/source/sponsor?)
A - Accuracy (is the information supported by evidence?)
P - Purpose (does it inform/sell/entertain/persuade?)

Using the CRAAP Test, evaluate this post. Does this post provide strong evidence about the conditions near the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant? Explain your reasoning.

Exercise 1

On March 11, 2011, there was a large nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant in Japan. This image was posted on Imgur, a photo sharing website, in July 2015.

Using the CRAAP Test, evaluate this post. Does this post provide strong evidence about the conditions near the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant? Explain your reasoning.
Exercise 2

Review the "Figuring Out Fake News - Article Brief" handout that you received in class today. Answer the questions below to help you assess your article’s trustworthiness and bias levels.

1. Which number "Article Brief" did you evaluate? ____________

2. What is the name of the author of your article? _________________________________________

3. Google your author’s name. Does it appear that s/he is a legitimate journalist who has been to college or had other relevant job experience in that subject area?
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

4. Try and find the "About" page on your article’s news website. Do you think that this is a reputable news organization? Why or why not?
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

5. Using the chart below, draw an X where you think that your article would fall on the media bias scale.

Adapted from https://www.adfontesmedia.com/media-bias-chart-4-0-whats-new/