

Warm-up question: What makes someone a journalist?

After warm-up time, discuss their answers.

Potential prompts:

- Should someone have special training to be considered a journalist?
- Does how the information is communicated determine this?
- If someone regularly talks about current events, are they a journalist? Why or why not?

Instruction of new material: Traditional media vs. news influencer

As a class, look at two videos on the same topic. One should be from traditional media and the other should be from a news influencer. The links below are about the July jobs report.

[ABC report](#)

[News influencer](#)

As a group, discuss:

- What are the differences in how the information is presented?
- Does one feel more reliable/believable than the other? Why or what not?
- Which do you prefer and why?
- Are these both journalism? Why or why not?

Group practice: Influencer analysis.

Using the chart on the next page, give small groups a different news influencer/post/video to examine. After they have completed their charts, have students explain whether their source is an influencer or a journalist (or both) using evidence they collected. Potential sources:

Chron.com explainers, Washington Post Universe, Dave Jorgenson

After the groups complete their tables, they should share with the class whether they believe their creator should be considered an influencer, a journalist or both.

Exit ticket question options: What is one responsibility a journalist has that a regular social media user or news influencer may not have?

Name: _____

Social media video analysis

Question	Evidence
Who created this content?	
What is the purpose of the video?	
What sources are used?	
Are sources named or linked?	
Are the sources trustworthy/reliable? Why or why not?	
Does the creator separate facts from opinions?	
Does the headline/caption seem designed to get clicks?	
Can you verify the information?	
What makes the creator seem trustworthy/untrustworthy?	
Who is the intended audience of the video?	

Extension activities

Option 1: Class discussion

Have students discuss this scenario:

A news influencer discovers a major breaking story from a source who has been reliable in the past. They have the information but don't know if the traditional outlets do because no one else is reporting it. They can immediately share it with 1 million followers, but they haven't independently verified the information yet. Should they post it?

Students should respond with legal/ethical principles that inform their answer.

Option 2: Create examples

Have students create two videos about the same school-related topic. One should be in the traditional format and the other should be the influencer version.

Groups should explain what changed between the two videos and whether one is more credible than the other.

Other resources

The News Literacy Project has several lessons and resources on influencers/content creators and the overlap with news. Two to consider:

- [Dig Deeper: What is the difference between journalists and content creators?](#)
- [Is it news?](#)