**Exploring Covid 19: A Media Scavenger Hunt**

In the past, we had a low quantity of high-quality information. In today’s world we have a constant and instantaneous news cycle that generates a massive amount of information of varying quality. As informed citizens, we need tools to sort through the piles of information to ensure we are using credible sources to find reliable information. During this global pandemic, it is imperative that we use solid information to make informed decisions about this issue.

In the example below, you will find the analysis of a news article [(“U.S. Surpasses China In Cases Of Coronavirus,” NPR.org](https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/03/26/822248693/u-s-surpasses-china-in-cases-of-coronavirus) using the provided graphic organizer. Use this example to help you determine how to fill out the graphic organizer for the four given articles. Given the source of this information and the analysis below, this article is credible and comes from a reliable source.

Example:

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| **Authors and Audiences**  -created by NPR (National Public Radio) News  -intended for US citizens  -this message matters because it describes the number of cases of COVID 19 in the United States to the other countries in the world  -The article also discusses the current obstacles to widespread testing for coronavirus in the United States and the proposed (now passed) stimulus bill to help the economy during this time | **Messages and Meanings**  -the article uses statistics/numbers and a graph to catch the reader’s attention  -If people heard this message from me, they may assume that my political bias is influencing the information  -the audience could feel hopeful that the rates are not increasing as sharply as before and could feel that the social distancing measures are helping to accomplish this slow down |
| **Representations and Reality**  -the business owners and workers of the US economy are not directly represented in this article  -the article represents the knowledge gained by the coronavirus task force, governors throughout the country, and the data gathered by Johns Hopkins University  -the potentials for error are mostly rooted in the date of the article--the numbers used are outdated by the next day, but the sources of research are credible and well-respected institutions (the fact that our understanding can change day to day does not mean that the information is wrong, but instead shows the tentative and changing nature of science. As we learn more, our understanding changes) | **Bias**  -the article uses varied sources that help to eliminate a political slant one way or the other  -the reader’s bias could include personal feelings about the president, the impact that COVID 19 has had on them or their family (health-wise or economic-wise)  -some of the research is from Johns Hopkins University and is probably funded by the university and/or research grants and other research is provided by the coronavirus task force put together by the White House  -this could put a political bias on the information |

Now it’s your turn to evaluate four sources. Each source falls into one of the following categories: satire, clickbait, invented news, or hyperpolitical (far left or far right). You may want to research these categories before you get started. Your job is to evaluate each source using the graphic organizer tool and then decide which category the article belongs.

1. **“**[British Royal Family Orders Citizens To Leave U.K. Until Prince Charles Recovers](https://www.theonion.com/british-royal-family-orders-citizens-to-leave-u-k-unti-1842492045)”

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| **Authors and Audiences**  Who created this message?  Who is the target audience?  Why might this message matter? | **Messages and Meanings**  What techniques are used to attract my attention?  How might people understand this message differently from me?  What might the audience do with this message? |
| **Representations and Reality**  What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented and/or not represented?  Are the conclusions based on evidence, facts, data, and/or sound reasoning - or are they based on values, preferences, and/or expectations?  What are any potential areas for error?  (data collection, interpretation, communication)  Is it credible? Has the research been peer reviewed? | **Bias**  What judgments or preconceived ideas could influence the science or social sources of information about the issue?  What biases might influence your understanding of the information presented?  Who is paying for the research? What biases might this create? |

* How would you classify this article? (satire, clickbait, invented news, or hyperpolitical (far left or far right)? Why did you classify the article this way? Is this a credible source/article?

# [“Doctors And Nurses Say More People Are Dying Of COVID-19 In The US Than We Know”](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/nidhiprakash/coronavirus-update-dead-covid19-doctors-hospitals)

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1. [“COVID-19 A ‘Bio-Weapon’, Iran Should Be Suspicious of US Aid Offer”](https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2020/03/24/2229270/covid-19-a-bio-weapon-iran-should-be-suspicious-of-us-aid-offer-researcher)

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1. [“Inaccurate Virus Models Are Panicking Officials Into Ill-Advised Lockdowns”](https://thefederalist.com/2020/03/25/inaccurate-virus-models-are-panicking-officials-into-ill-advised-lockdowns/)

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**Conclusion Questions**

1. What is your normal source of news? Basing your answer off of the graphic organizer tool, does your normal source of news provide credible and reliable information?
2. This global pandemic is due to a novel coronavirus, meaning that it is a new or previously undiscovered virus. Taking this into consideration, why is it important that citizens stay informed over time? Could our current information about the virus be wrong? If so, does this mean that the source of information is not credible or reliable? Why or why not? (Watch [this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkvjDZseD4k) about the nature of science before you formulate your answers)