**Teaching with NewsGuard**

Best Practices and Other Tips

**Target audience:**

What student level and subject area should use NewsGuard?

* **Ages**: Middle school, high school, and university students
* **Subjects**: English, writing, science, social studies, history, journalism, etc.
* **Units**: Any unit involving online research or current events

**Introducing NewsGuard:**

When should I introduce NewsGuard to my students?

* **If your institution will install NewsGuard for your students**: Introduce NewsGuard at the beginning of the semester/year, or as soon as the extension is loaded onto students’ devices. It would be wise to incorporate a NewsGuard demo into existing sessions during which your institution’s instructors/librarians give students an overview of the software, databases, and other tools they have at their disposal.
* **If students will be installing NewsGuard on their own:** Educators should consider introducing NewsGuard ahead of a research unit or at the beginning of the semester/year if the course will involve a lot of online research and current events discussions. It would be wise to incorporate a NewsGuard demo into existing sessions during which your institution’s instructors/librarians give students an overview of the software, databases, and other tools they have at their disposal.

**Using NewsGuard:**

How should I use NewsGuard with my students?

1. **First, get students thinking about source reliability and misinformation**. Consider starting with a teaser exercise, such as showing students a hoax website or having them compare two different sites of varying quality — e.g. Cancer.org vs. Cancer.News
2. **Introduce NewsGuard’s nine criteria** as a framework for evaluating source reliability. Educators should consider using the **NewsGuard Guide for Educators\*,** which walks through a lesson plan surrounding the nine criteria.
3. **Encourage students to install the NewsGuard browser extension**. Provide students with the **NewsGuard Access Code Redemption Instructions\*** document, containing your school’s NewsGuard access code.
4. **Explain how to use the extension**. Give students the “**How to use NewsGuard\***” packet and accompanying **short video tutorials\*** to ensure they are equipped to use NewsGuard properly.
   1. **Have students read the Nutrition Labels for a few different websites**. Ask them to explain whether they would rely on each source or not, encouraging them to cite excerpts from the Label (beyond just the overall Red/Green rating for the site).
   2. Underscore that **not all green-rated sites are equal** (nor are all red-rated sites, for that matter) and that students should look beyond the overall red/green rating by **hovering** on the icon to see the site’s ranking on the nine criteria, and **clicking** to read the full Nutrition Label review.
   3. Explain, also, that **sites without NewsGuard ratings still might be highly reliable**, but that they simply do not fall into the list of sites NewsGuard prioritizes to rate. Students should use NewsGuard’s criteria or other source evaluation skills to assess the reliability of sites without NewsGuard ratings.
5. **Students should reference NewsGuard throughout the semester/year**, any time they need to do research for a project or paper or any time they need to consult current events. When teaching research skills, educators might, for example, have students annotate their bibliographies with explanations for why they selected each source, drawing from NewsGuard’s Nutrition Label reviews to provide evidence for why they deemed certain sources reliable.

**Outcomes:**

What does success look like?

Students who get the most out of NewsGuard will...

* Rely on high-quality sources in all class assignments
* Understand NewsGuard’s nine criteria and be able to articulate why they are important
* Be able to identify credible sources — even without the help of NewsGuard
* Understand the nuance between sources of different quality. They know that not all green sites are equal, and some are more credible than others.
* Apply what they have learned outside of the classroom, questioning dubious sources they see on social media and elsewhere

***\*To access these and other resources, visit*** [***newsguardtech.com/turnitin***](https://www.newsguardtech.com/turnitin/)