

WHAT YOU NEED:

- access to *PrimeTime Politics Weekend* (cpac.ca/en/programs/primetime-politics-weekend/)
- Check Please! task card, one per person

WHAT'S UP:

- When you think about it, people place a great deal of trust in the media. When we read, watch, or listen to a news story we presume the media source has communicated accurate information, and that it's taken a fair and balanced approach. It's true, most credible news outlets have a process by which each story is checked for fairness, balance and accuracy before it ever reaches us, the consumers of the news. As a result, we're comfortable forming our opinions based to some extent on what we've read, watched, or heard in mainstream media. But what if we're wrong? What if all the facts weren't checked? What if all sides weren't represented? When you think about it, there's a lot at stake, particularly if people get their news from contributors who don't follow the same guidelines as credible journalists and news media sources.

WHAT YOU DO:

- *PrimeTime Politics Weekend* looks at a week's worth of topical news stories so there are a lot of issues covered in each show. If you've been assigned a specific show, you can find it by clicking on the corresponding show date. If you're picking your own show, click on a few episodes and check out their summaries in the website description until you find one topic your group is interested in or is already familiar with.
- Once you've found an episode, if your group is unfamiliar with the issue you've been assigned or have chosen, watch the introduction in which news anchor, Martin Stringer, summarizes the various issues to be addressed in that particular episode. If your group is already familiar with the issue you've been assigned or have chosen, skip straight to the panel discussion featuring Members of Parliament (MPs) from different political parties. While watching the MPs discuss the assigned or chosen issue (approximately 10–12 minutes) each group member completes their own Check Please! task card to identify and record one interesting statement presented as a fact by each MP. Once each member of your group has one interesting, factual statement given by each MP, they will use a minimum of three different sources to research and check the accuracy of each MP's statement, noting any discrepancies.

WHAT NOW:

- Consolidate your learning as a group and prepare to present your findings to the class as follows:
 - ▷ Determine whether or not fact checking is important to delivering a fair and balanced news story. Support your ideas with examples from this task.
 - ▷ With so many bloggers and contributors posting on social media and forums, does the average person need to check facts for accuracy and fairness? Why or why not?
 - ▷ Is it easier to check facts with resources available to us now, or does the amount of information available make it more challenging to find "the truth"?
 - ▷ Determine whether or not fact checking has a role in the democratic process. If not, why not? If so, to what extent? Use examples from your own experience with this task to support your ideas.
 - ▷ Develop co-constructed guidelines on what to look for in credible sources and questionable sources; give examples from your task.

PROGRAM: PrimeTime Politics Weekend

SHOW DATE: _____

AT ISSUE: _____

PART A: FOCUS ON FACTS

While watching the panel discussion by Members of Parliament (MPs), identify and record one interesting statement presented as a fact by each MP. Use three different sources to check their accuracy, noting any differences. If there are more than two MPs in the panel discussion, please use another page to record your findings.

| MP NAME: | POLITICAL PARTY: | RIDING: |
|-------------------------|---|---------|
| FACTUAL STATEMENT | | |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 1: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 2: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 3: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |

| MP NAME: | POLITICAL PARTY: | RIDING: |
|-------------------------|---|---------|
| FACTUAL STATEMENT | | |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 1: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 2: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |
| FACT CHECKING SOURCE 3: | <input type="checkbox"/> fact checks out <input type="checkbox"/> fact doesn't check out | proof: |

PART B: THOUGHT SPOT

- Co-construct a list of "Look For" and "Look Out For" to determine if a source is reliable or not.

- Were facts used to reflect different viewpoints? Is that important for a fair and balanced news story? Why or why not?

- Since many bloggers and contributors post on social media and forums, does the average person need to check facts themselves? Why or why not?

- Does the amount of available information make it easier or more challenging to find "the truth"? Explain your thinking.

- To what extent, if any, do facts influence opinions? Explain your thinking.

- To what extent, if any, does fact checking play a role in the democratic process? Use your experience with this task to support your ideas.
