



How to Rate “Other” Factors and Overall Reliability

Now that you have read the entire article and have rated the main factors of Expression, Veracity, and Headline/Graphic, you may or may not have noticed other factors that you want to consider in your overall rating.

Other Factors

Possible additional factors you could consider include:

- Story Importance
- Reporting Effort (including whether the story was original reporting)
- Sensationalism
- Hyperbole
- Grammar errors
- Punctuation misuse
- Spelling errors
- Unfairness

Not all of these factors apply to all articles. For example, most articles you rate will not have grammar or spelling errors. The ones that do, though, deserve a lower reliability rating. Further, you may not be able to detect the presence of some of these factors. For example, you may not recognize instances of unfairness or know whether a high amount of reporting effort went into a particular story.

Generally, the presence of any of these factors will make you want to rate an article slightly higher or lower than you would have otherwise. Detecting these factors will help you rate articles with greater nuance.

The more experienced you become with rating articles, the more you develop your reading comprehension skills, and the more political knowledge you gain, the more factors you will be able to detect.

Classroom discussions about articles you rate can also help you recognize the presence of additional factors you may have missed.

If you detect any of these “other” factors, use them to adjust your “overall reliability” rating accordingly. For example, if you rated a story high for each of the individual factors, and you detect that the story was original reporting (e.g., the story specifically tells you it was originally reported by the source you are reading), you can push the overall rating up even higher.

Overall Reliability

In general, though, unless there are other factors, your “overall reliability” score should be an approximate average of your three scores for Expression, Veracity, and

Headline/Graphic. You should place your slider accordingly. Your previous placement of the slider button for each of the individual factors should allow you to place your “overall reliability” slider fairly quickly.

Once you have made your overall reliability rating, you can hit “submit” and then verify the numerical scores of your ratings. If you read anything in any of the other articles that makes you think you should re-evaluate the “Veracity” factor or your overall reliability scores, you can come back and change them.

