Name: _____   Website URL or name: _____

Is This a Hoax?

1. Scan the perimeter of the page and look for answers to these questions, using the 5 W's of Cyberspace	
Who created the page? • Is there an "about us" section? • Do they list credentials? • Is there contact information? • Who is the intended audience?	
What information are you getting? • Are there multiple points of view represented? • Does the author use OPINION words, such as *always, never, least, greatest, best, worst, all, none, should,* or *most*? • What is the tone? Is it serious? Does it contain elements of parody, satire, or irony? • Can the information be verified through other sources?	
When was this article posted? • Is it current? • Has it been updated recently?	
Where is this webpage located? • Look at the URL. Is this a personal page or site? • What is the domain (.com, .org, .net, .edu, .gov)?	
Why would I use this site as a source of information? • Can I verify this information? • Why was this site published? Was it to entertain, to inform, to explain, to persuade, to sell, or some combination of these things?	
2. Look for quality, asking yourself the following questions:	
Does the overall design look professional?	
Are there any spelling mistakes or other writing errors?	
Are links credible or broken?	
Are there any advertisements?	

4. Look at the images, asking yourself the following questions:	
Who created the images? Is credit given?	
Do they look like they have been changed with a photo-enhancing program? • Are shadows consistent? • Are there jagged edges? • Are there identical objects in the photograph? • Could the scene in the photo really have happened?	
5. Explore how the site is viewed by others:	
What sites link to it? (You can find out using Google by entering *link: URL of the website*)	
Use a search engine for the topic. What sites come up?	

5 W's of Cyberspace questions adapted from the Media Awareness Network, "Deconstructing Web Pages" available at http://mediasmarts.ca/backgrounder/deconstructing-web-pages-teaching-backgrounder