

# The AI Truth Detective Challenge

Mini Journalism

Skill: Information Verification & Source Evaluation

45–60 Minutes

## RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

Ages 8–14 — Old enough to use search tools independently and understand the difference between accurate and misleading information, but young enough to build verification habits before high-stakes academic work.

## WHAT YOU NEED

Device with internet access and AI tool (ChatGPT, Copilot, or similar)

Notebook or paper for detective notes

Timer

Three different colored highlighters or markers

## ACTIVITY STEPS

- 01 Choose your mystery topic (5 min):** Each family member picks an interesting question they're genuinely curious about — "Why do cats purr?" "How was the Golden Gate Bridge built?" "What causes rainbows?" Write these down — they become your investigation cases.
- 02 Get three different answers (15 min):** Collect answers from three sources: one from an AI tool, one from a traditional website (encyclopedia or news source), and one by asking a knowledgeable person. Write each answer in your detective notebook without judging yet.
- 03 Spot the differences (15 min):** Use your colored highlighters to mark: facts in ALL sources (green), facts in only ONE source (yellow), and contradictions between sources (red). Look for what's missing — did any source leave out important information the others included?
- 04 The verification hunt (15 min):** For anything marked yellow or red, do detective work. Award points: 5 pts for confirming accuracy, 10 pts for catching something misleading, 15 pts for discovering what the AI made up or oversimplified.
- 05 Present your case (10 min):** Share findings with the family. Which answer was most reliable? What did the AI do well, and where did it fail? Write down your best detective question — the one that helped you spot the difference between good and unreliable information.

#### THE DEEPER LESSON

*This activity mirrors exactly what middle school AI courses teach: AI is a tool that requires human judgment. Students aren't learning to avoid AI — they're learning to verify, compare, and think critically about any information source, including AI. The "detective questions" your child develops this weekend are the same analytical thinking skills the World Economic Forum identifies as more valuable than technical AI knowledge itself.*

#### CONVERSATION STARTER

*“If you had to trust one of these answers for something really important — like medical advice for a sick pet, or directions in an unfamiliar place — which source would you choose and why?”*