**Worksheet: Journalism Ethics Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Jim Lehrer's 10 Rules of Journalism for Students**

1. Do nothing I cannot defend.
2. Do not distort, lie, slant or hype
3. Do not falsify facts or make up quotes
4. Cover, write and present every story with the care I would want if the story were about me.
5. Assume there is at least one other side or version to every story.
6. Assume the viewer is as smart and as caring and as good a person as I am.
7. Assume the same about people on whom I report.
8. Carefully separate opinion and analysis from straight news stories, and clearly label everything.
9. Do not use anonymous sources or blind quotes, except on rare and monumental occasions. No one should ever be allowed to attack another anonymously.
10. Acknowledge that objectivity may be impossible but fairness never is.

**Reflect after reading through the 10 rules:**

Why is it important for student journalists to follow a code of ethics?

What do you think could be some of the reasons why news organizations have ethics codes?

**What Would You Do?**

Instructions: You are the editor of your school’s newspaper. In each of the following scenarios, you are asked to consider a situation. Make an ethical decision about which stories you will publish and what you won’t. Write yes or no and briefly defend your choice. When making your decision, think about Jim’s 10 Rules and write down the number of the rule(s) that apply in the scenario.

1. A student at your school is highlighted on the local TV news. A reporter for the school newspaper uses information from the TV newscast without giving credit to the station. It turns out that several facts from the news report are wrong. Do you admit the mistake? Do you tell how you got the incorrect information?

2. A well-known musician is filming an anti-smoking PSA (public service announcement) at your school. The school newspaper photographer gets pictures of him smoking a cigarette during a break. Your photo editor wants to run the photograph with the cutline “Rock Star Filmed Anti-Smoking PSA on Tuesday.” Do you reword the caption?

3. The owner of a local business has refused to buy an advertisement in your newspaper. He graduated from your school, so you are really upset that he won’t support his alma mater. Later that day, as you look at the sports spread, you notice that the photo of the cross country track event that the sports editor plans to use has a billboard in the background with the local business’s name prominently displayed. It would be easy to remove the billboard with photo-editing software. Do you alter the photograph?

* Alternate scenario: The student newspaper photographer took an action photo of a sports game, but they want to crop out a person walking in the corner of the frame to make the photo "better" and fit more in the format of the paper. Is this allowed?

4. The daughter of the principal at your rival high school has been arrested for a DUI (driving under the influence). Do you report it? -How could this affect the daughter’s reputation? Does the public deserve or need to know about this?

5. One of your best friends says she saw the new basketball coach smoking an illegal substance at a rock concert. You tell the newspaper adviser that someone told you about seeing him and that you plan to report it in your concert review. The coach tells you he wasn’t even at the concert. Do you report the allegation?

6. One of the columnists at your student newspaper is covering the campaign for student body president. She is profiling each of the candidates and their policies. But during this time, the reporter posts an Instagram picture showing her hanging out with one of the candidates and the caption implies that they are good friends. Should the reporter be allowed to cover that candidate? Should the reporter be allowed to publish that photo?

7. Your publication accepts letters to the editor from its readers and publishes many of them. You receive one unsigned letter that is highly critical of the selection process for the school’s boys basketball team and claims one team member was picked because he was a relative of the principal. You suspect the letter was written by an unsuccessful athlete for the basketball team. Do you publish the letter?

8. Some students organized a protest against armed security guards being stationed at your school. The principal warned students that if they participate in the protest, they could face disciplinary action for not attending class and disrupting the learning environment. Your school newspaper covers the protest and publishes photos of the students protesting. Later, some students complain that the newspaper published photos of them without their permission, and they could face disciplinary action if the school uses the newspaper to identify them. Should you have published the photos? How do you respond to those students? Do you take the photos down?