



MODULE 1

INFORMATION & DATA LITERACY

Evaluation of various Digital Data and Content

Expert Level Activities

Develop critical thinking – “How to spot Fake News”

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Fake news is very common nowadays considering the overwhelming amount of information and data exchanged at very ease among social platforms. Developing the ability to spot fake news is one more step towards critical thinking, a crucial skill when navigating the information society.

The following infographic created by IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) describes a procedure of simple eight steps that could help you to spot fake news and in the same context could be a guide to spot fake information or data that you are searching for.



Source: IFLA (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:How_to_Spot_Fake_News.jpg),
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>



Watch the following video considering Fake News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=AkwWcHekMdo> (How to Spot Fake News - FactCheck.org - YouTube)

Show the following videos for Misinformation

1st part

<https://youtu.be/g7WjrvG1GMk> (Pig rescues baby goat)

Discussion: Wow, that is amazing, right? How does this story make you feel?

2nd part

https://youtu.be/_2My_HOP-bw (Nathan For You - Petting Zoo Hero – The true story)

Discussion: How do you feel now knowing this video is fake?

<https://youtu.be/bvtJj6HoYHg> (optional, if there is time - Nathan For You - Petting Zoo Hero Pt. 2)

Discussion: This video is just meant to be funny and to make people laugh; however,

- what if it was something more serious, like a fake news story or false information about an important event, like a natural disaster?
- What ramifications might that have?

Discussion: Invite students to share their responses. Explain that online misinformation can have big consequences. *It can:*

- Increase tension and anger between groups of people
- Damage individuals' or groups' reputations
- Affect the outcomes of elections and ballot propositions etc.

Source: [Hoaxes and Fakes | Common Sense Education](#)

Lateral reading

A strategy called *lateral reading* combined with the eight-step procedure presented above, could have even better results in spotting fake news, videos and facts in general. Some guidelines in this strategy are:

- Find accurate information about your topic quickly by “googling” web pages and scanning them by opening new tabs before reading entirely a specific website
- Before taking something online for granted, do a little research about the source. You can never be too sure about a website’s reliability
- Before diving into a new webpage, take some time to look it over to make sure it’s legitimate. If it doesn’t pass the “smell test”, move on



- Pause on each new site to determine its validity before reading anything. Instead of reading the entire web page from top to bottom, scan the page, jump in and out of the browser tab, to check the validity of the website

YouTube Video on Lateral Reading

<https://youtu.be/SHNprb2hgZU> (Sort Fact from Fiction Online with Lateral Reading)

Activity

Questions in different forms could be shared on a piece of paper to the students regarding the video. A sample worksheet follows:

1. What's an important question you should ask when searching the web (0:15)?
Sample Answer
 - Who's behind the information
2. What do a lot of people usually do for evaluating a website (0:22 – 1:19)?
Sample Answers
 - Vertical reading
 - Evaluating sites by their look and aesthetic
 - Attribute importance to the URL
 - Not examining thoroughly, the mentioned references in the website
3. What other people do which is more efficient for evaluating a website (1:20 – 2:40)?
Sample answers
 - Slip webpages
 - Open new tabs and read laterally
 - They search broadly on the web for their subject
 - Cross check the validity of the information in other sites (e.g. Wikipedia)
 - Search and evaluate the credibility of the creator of the information or website
4. How can lateral reading help students (3:30)?

Fake News Activity

- Check if there is a Fact Checker from your country who is member of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) from <https://ifcncodeofprinciples.poynter.org/signatories>
- If there is not one for your country try to search one for yourself through the web or use one you like from the above list
- Go to latest news or articles, separate in groups, choose one article, discuss and demonstrate your results in classroom
- What is the fake news that the article is referring to?
- How does the article try to disprove those claimed fake news?
- Which article do you believe states the truth and why? (You could use some of the steps of the "How to spot fake news" infographic, especially in a bigger assignment or homework).



Additional resources, courses, lesson plans and relative stuff

- <https://cor.stanford.edu/curriculum/collections/teaching-lateral-reading> (Teaching Lateral Reading | Civic Online Reasoning (stanford.edu))
- <https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/hoaxes-and-fakes> (Hoaxes and Fakes | Common Sense Education)
- <https://youtu.be/xf8mjbVRqao> (Helping Students Identify Fake News with the Five C's of Critical Consuming)
- <https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/are-deepfake-videos-a-threat-to-democracy>
- <https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/help-students-fact-check-the-web-like-the-pros> (Help Students Fact-Check the Web Like the Pros | Common Sense Education)
- <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/projects/breaking-news-consumers-handbook> (On the Media | Breaking News Consumer's Handbook | WNYC Studios)

References:

Kiely, E. & Robertson, L., 2016. *How to Spot Fake News*. [Online]

Available at: <https://www.factcheck.org/2016/11/how-to-spot-fake-news>

TOOLS DATA & RESOURCES NEEDED

- Web Browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge, Opera, etc.)

TIME REQUIRED

- 5 minutes: Study the infographic
- 5 minutes: [\(182\) How to Spot Fake News - FactCheck.org - YouTube](#)
- 10 minutes: Show the following videos for Misinformation and Discussion
- 15 minutes: Lateral Reading
- 20 minutes or could be a homework: Fake news activity