

Module 3

Information & Media Literacy

Incl. Mis-, Mal- and Disinformation
& Fact-Checking



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1 Learning Objectives

1. Learning about the concept of information, the intentions behind it (including malevolent ones) and how it spreads
2. Acquiring the instruments to distinguish reliable from unreliable pieces and sources of information and putting them into practice
3. Creating awareness on the risks of disinformation and how to counter it

2 General Description

The concept of “information literacy” is not easily pinpointed, nor is its relationship with the concepts of “digital” and “media literacy”; various definitions, however, point to “competencies that emphasize the development of enquiry-based skills and the ability to engage meaningfully with media and information channels in whatever form and technologies they are using”¹. This module invites students to reflect on the way information spreads around us and in our societies, keeping in mind that information sources might be pursuing a specific agenda. Students will learn to weave their way through information received through different channels (with a focus on digital content), to identify indicators of less reliable or biased sources and to systematically disassemble and analyse a piece of information. Having assimilated the instruments to engage with information critically, they will be able to spread awareness on the topic among their peers and networks.

3 Introduction to the Topic

We are constantly surrounded by all kinds of information, coming to us increasingly through digital channels. How to make the most of this opportunity without being overwhelmed or misled? This module will teach you to approach information (especially online information) armed with critical thinking skills, to tell apart reliable and unreliable sources and to explain to others how to do the same.

¹ [Media and information literacy curriculum for teachers](#), UNESCO (2011)

4 Framework

TOPIC 1	Indicators (Level)	Benchmarks (Aim)	Syllabus	Activity	Resources / Scenarios <i>Basic</i> (10-12 y.o.)	Resources / Scenarios <i>Advanced</i> (12-15 y.o.)	Assessment
INFORMATION & MEDIA LITERACY	Understand	<p>1.1 Students understand the concept of <i>information</i> (what it is, how it is produced and how it shared across different channels).</p> <p>1.2 Students understand that information is shared for <i>different purposes</i>, including malevolent ones.</p> <p>1.3 Students understand the difference between <i>mis-information, mal-information</i> and <i>dis-information</i>.</p>	<p>1.1 The concept of information (definition and basic notions)</p> <p>1.2 Sharing information and the reasons behind it</p> <p>1.3 Classifying false and harmful information²</p>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3 Lecture	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.3 PPT + Kahoot / Mentimeter or Nearpod</p> <p>1.3 - Real or invented examples of mis-, mal- and dis-information selected by the teacher and relevant to the age group (e.g. food styling, ...) - Discussion on the impact it</p>	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.3 PPT + Kahoot / Mentimeter or Nearpod</p> <p>1.3 - Real or invented examples of mis-, mal- and dis-information selected by the teacher and relevant to the age group - Discussion on the impact it may have on students</p>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3 Quiz

² [Information Disorder: toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking](#), Council of Europe (2017)

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					may have on students (practical/emotional/relational etc.)	(practical/emotional/relational etc.) - Possible assignment: bring examples from students' own social media accounts	
Engage / Interact	<p>2.1 Students know <i>where to source information</i> on a desired topic online and offline.</p> <p>2.2 Students understand that sources may have <i>different levels of reliability and/or bias</i>.</p>	<p>2.1 Sourcing information online and offline</p> <p>2.2 Reliability and bias in information sources</p>	2.1, 2.2 Classroom discussion starting from students' experience and reinforced by teacher's guidance and examples	2.2 Teacher shows appropriately selected examples of questionable sources and biased media and sparks a discussion	2.2 Teacher shows appropriately selected examples of questionable news sources and biased media (e.g. questionable sources , conspiracy/pseudoscience , politically biased sources left and right) and sparks a discussion	N/A	
Analyze	3.1 Students are familiar with the <i>indicators of an</i>	3.1 The indicators of an unreliable source of information	3.1, 3.2 Lecture with practical	3.1 Compare the indicators provided by the	3.1 Compare the indicators provided by the	<u>Quiz</u>	

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	<p><i>unreliable source of information</i> across different channels (website, social media platforms, ...).</p> <p>3.2 Students understand how the <i>fact-checking process</i> works and are able to adapt it to the pieces of information they come across.</p>	<p>3.2 Understanding and applying fact-checking strategies</p>	<p>examples followed by discussion and exercises</p>	<p>teacher with the guidelines of major social media platforms (e.g. Facebook's tips on how to spot fake news; Reddit's rules regulating posts on r/news)</p> <p>3.2 Go through fact-checking reports produced by experts and identify the methods and strategies adopted (e.g. can you pop popcorn with a pickle and an AA battery?; was a 5-metres-tall human skeleton unearthed in Australia?; ...)</p>	<p>teacher with the guidelines of major social media platforms (e.g. Facebook's tips on how to spot fake news; Reddit's rules regulating posts on r/news)</p> <p>3.2 Go through fact-checking reports produced by experts and identify the methods and strategies adopted (e.g. Autism prevalence is up but scientists have consistently found that vaccines don't cause it; One born every minute? How many migrants arrive in the UK)</p>	<p>- T/F which of these elements might be indicative of an unreliable source of info?</p> <p><u>Assignment</u></p> <p>Identifying a questionable article and setting out a strategy to verify its credibility</p>
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					and how many children do they have?; ...)	
Evaluate	4.1 Students can <i>label</i> a piece of information they find online or offline as “reliable” on “unreliable”	4.1 Evaluating the reliability of a piece of information	4.1 Practical exercises	4.1 The teacher invites students to test their skills against preset invented scenarios (e.g. BBC’s iReporter) or real, previously researched cases (first asking for their opinion, then presenting expert conclusions)	4.1 The teacher invites students to test their skills against preset scenarios (e.g. learning how to read news articles critically) or real, previously researched cases (first asking for their opinion, then presenting expert conclusions)	Teacher presents a real scenario (e.g. news article) and invites students to draw their own conclusions and label it “reliable / unreliable”; students’ conclusion are checked against the conclusions of fact-checking experts
Create	5.1 Students can produce a <i>structured explanation</i> of why a piece of information is to be considered reliable or unreliable 5.2 Having internalized the instruments to recognize unreliable	5.1 Presenting the thought process behind the evaluation of the reliability of a piece of information 5.2 The impact of “fake news” and how to counter its spread	5.1 Students’ presentations 5.2 Guided classroom activity + online game 5.3 Assignment	5.1 Students’ presentations 5.2 Playing the Bad News game (version for ages 8 to 11 ; material for teachers)	5.1 Students’ presentations 5.2 Playing the Bad News game (version for ages 15+ ; material for teachers)	Students’ presentations

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	<p>information, students are able to <i>create</i> their own realistic “fake news” in order to test their impact within a controlled environment</p> <p>5.3 Having internalized the instruments to recognize unreliable information, students are able to <i>raise awareness</i> on the topic within their networks</p>	<p>5.3 The importance of awareness raising: spreading the wo</p>		<p>5.3 Plan an awareness raising campaign to inform a specific group of people (friends; family members; ...) about the risks of disinformation and how to address them; design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a logo - a catchphrase - a small-scale event or initiative 	<p>5.3 Plan an awareness raising campaign to inform a specific group of people (own social circles; local social groups, ...) about the risks of disinformation and how to address them; design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a logo - a catchphrase - a flyer - a social media page - a small-scale event or initiative that can be easily replicated in different contexts 	
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