



DIMELI4AG

MODULE 3: INFORMATION LITERACY



LLLP



Erasmus+

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MODULE 3 – INFORMATION LITERACY

Module description

The concept of “information literacy” is not easily pinpointed, not 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.

Learning Outcomes







- Understanding the concepts of mis-, dis- and mal-information, bias and confirmation bias;
- Acquiring an analytical framework to approach a piece of information and assess its reliability (*What? Where? Who? How? Why?*);
- Improving critical thinking skills by applying the instruments previously acquired to gamified or real-life scenarios.

Keywords

- *Mis-information*: when false information is shared, but no harm is meant;
- *Dis-information*: when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm;
- *Mal-information*: when genuine information is shared to cause harm, often by moving information designed to stay private in the public sphere;
- *Bias*: tendency to prefer one person or thing to another, and to favour that person or thing;
- *Confirmation bias*: tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with one’s existing beliefs.



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



Legend


	Keywords/Definitions
	Scenarios
	Tips
	Questions
	Activities
	Resources

Topic: Information Literacy



Lesson plan **1 of 3**


Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 1 of 3			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Learn about mis-, dis-, mal-information and the reliability of sources		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introductory discussion	<i>PPT slide n. 4</i>	10'	 Introductory discussion with students on the topic of <i>information</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is information? (<i>Use dictionary definitions in your national language to start the discussion, if desired</i>). What are some examples of information? - Who is involved in information? Who produces it and who consumes it? - Why do we produce and exchange information? What are the intentions behind information exchange? (Information exchange can be neutral, e.g. weather forecast; positive, e.g. sharing an inspirational message; negative, e.g. spreading a false gossip). <p><u>Conclusion</u>: information is exchanged everywhere around us, by all of us. Facts are objective, but the way we communicate about them can vary based on varying intentions (good or bad – <i>see smiley and frowny faces on slide n. 4</i>).</p>
Concept of disinformation, misinformation and malinformation	<i>PPT slide n. 5-6</i>	15'	 Presenting the “information disorder” framework focusing on the distinction between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mis-information: when false information is shared, but no harm is meant (e.g. food styling, heavily filtered pictures on a

			<p>personal social media account, misleading content in general etc. (see Annex I, p. 22);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dis-information: when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm (e.g. intentionally creating and spreading a false gossip, targeted disinformation campaigns meant to skew electoral results, intentionally created conspiracy theories etc. (see Annex I p. 21); - Mal-information: when genuine information is shared to cause harm, often by moving information designed to stay private in the public sphere (e.g. deliberate publication of sensitive, private information for personal interest, sharing someone's private pictures online without consent and with malevolent intent etc. (see Annex I p. 22) <p>After presenting the concept, solving the simple exercise in slide n. 6 and discussing together other potential examples and their consequences on the targeted person/group/government/...</p>
<p>Sources of information: reliability and bias</p>	<p><i>PPT slide 7</i></p>	<p>15'</p>	<p>Continuing the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What sources of information do students rely on, e.g. when doing assignments?  Is Wikipedia a trustworthy source of information? Do students use different sources for different purposes? (See here a US-centred list of reliable resources for reference; share with the students other reliable sources in your national language/context). <p> Presenting the concepts of bias and confirmation bias:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bias: tendency to prefer one person or thing to another, and to favour that person or thing; - Confirmation bias: tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with one's existing beliefs (e.g. being attacked by a dog)

			<p>once might turn into a conviction that “all dogs are bad”).</p> <p><u>Conclusion:</u> we are all subject to biases, and in order to exercise sound judgement we should be aware of them. Sources of information, however, and news outlets in particular, should strive to be as objective as possible and not lean towards one side or another.</p>
Wrap up	-	5'	<p>Summing up the new concepts introduced during the class.</p> <p> <u>Possible assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the extra exercise provided and discuss the results in class; - Look for or invent realistic examples of mis-, dis- and mal-information online; - Look for one or more examples of topics or news stories presented in different perspectives by different sources (e.g. shape of planet Earth: NASA’s perspective here, here or here v. Flat Earth Society’s perspective; climate change: an emergency or not an emergency; examples of the same news story presented by your country’s right-leaning v. left-leaning newspaper etc.). Summarize the supporting arguments of both sides.

Lesson plan 2 of 3

Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 2 of 3			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Learn how to choose your news		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introductory video	<i>PPT slide n. 8</i>	10'	 Showing students the video “ <i>How to choose your news</i> ” (5’) to introduce the topic: how should we approach the endless amount of information available online, especially when it come to the news? (<i>Video subtitles available in 29 languages</i>). <u>Conclusion</u> : information now flows more freely than ever, but with freedom comes the responsibility to curate our own online experience; the key to doing so is diversifying our sources and developing our critical thinking skills.
The indicators of a reliable piece of news	<i>PPT slide n. 9-10</i>	15'	 Discussing the indicators of an unreliable piece of news or source of information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which of these tips are students familiar with? - Which ones are new to them? (Since information literacy is heavily related to one’s critical thinking skills, <i>there is no universally effective list of indicators of reliability/unreliability for a piece of news</i> . Slides 9-10 present 10 tips to spot false news as suggested by Facebook and are meant to be used as a conversation starter rather than as a list of rules to memorize. Other criteria or tips from relevant sources can be used to start the discussion, also based on country-specific social media websites or authoritative media platforms).
5 good questions to ask yourself	<i>PPT slides n. 11-12</i>	10'	Presenting a 5-step framework to approach a piece of online news critically (<i>What? Where? Who? How? Why?</i>). This framework sums up the examples

			presented in the previous section in a way that is easy for students to remember and flexible enough for the teacher to add/remove guidelines based on the age and competence level of their students.
Fact-checking	<i>PPT slide n. 13</i>	10'	<p>Introducing the concept of fact-checking services/organisations and possibly offering reliable fact-checking website in your national language.</p> <p> Presenting one or two examples of fact-checked claims, e.g. Was a 5-Meter-Tall Skeleton Unearthed in Australia?; Can You Pop Popcorn with a Pickle and a AA Battery?; A viral photo of an empty European Parliament doesn't prove anything.</p>
Wrap up	-	5'	<p>Summing up the new concepts introduced during the class.</p> <p><u>Possible extra activity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drawing up a list of the indicators of unreliability that struck the students the most, complemented by indicators the teacher considers relevant. The list can be hung on a classroom wall an integrated over time. <p><u>Possible assignment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research an interesting example of fact-checked claim: what steps did the fact-checkers follow to verify the reliability of the claim? Can you draw up a sequence of actions you can take when you need to verify if something you read online is true?

Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alt. n. 1)

Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alternative n. 1 – computers/tablets <u>required</u>)			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Fact-checking practice		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introduction	<i>PPT slide n. 14</i>	5'	Critical thinking cannot be learned on books: it requires practice. Fact-checking websites are the go-to place to verify a claim, but what to do when we come across a piece of news that no one has fact-checked before?
Playing the BBC iReporter game	<i>BBC iReporter</i> <i>(only available in English)</i>	35'	Playing the BBC iReporter game alone or in small groups. The game puts the player in the shoes of a newly-hired BBC reporter who is asked to investigate a malware attack case. Students have to choose how to interact with their colleagues and react to a sequence of scenarios aiming to keep a high score in accuracy, impact and speed, as well as to make the 10pm bulletin.
Wrap up	-	10'	Discussing what the students learnt from the game.

Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alt. n. 2)

Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alternative n. 2 – computers/tablets <u>optional</u>)			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Fact-checking practice		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introduction	<i>PPT slide n. 14</i>	5'	Critical thinking cannot be learned on books: it requires practice. Fact-checking website are the go-to place to verify a claim, but what to do when we come across a piece of news that no one has fact-checked before?
Playing the Evidence Toolkit game	<u>The Evidence Toolkit</u> <i>(only available in English)</i>	35'	Playing the Evidence Toolkit game alone or in small groups. This online tool helps students learn how to identify the main claims and supporting arguments of an article. While not being particularly interactive or colourful, it provides a solid, well-structured approach to breaking down a piece of text and identifying its essential elements. The approach can be re-utilized on any other argumentative text. <i>If computers with an Internet connection are not available, the same exercise can be conducted under the guidance of the teacher on a printout of selected articles.</i>
Wrap up	-	10'	Discussing what the students learnt from the exercise.

Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alt. n. 3)

Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alternative n. 3 – computers/tablets <u>required</u>)			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Fact-checking practice		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introduction	<i>PPT slide n. 14</i>	5'	Critical thinking cannot be learned on books: it requires practice. Sometimes we can do that by putting ourselves in the shoes of the creators of disinformation.
Playing the Bad News game	Bad News game (ages 8-11) <i>(only available in English)</i> Bad News game (ages 15-35) <i>(available in English, Czech, Dutch, German, Greek, Esperanto, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian and Swedish + versions for Bosnia and Moldova)</i>	25'	Playing the Bad News game alone or in small groups. This game aims to build resistance against disinformation by putting players in the shoes of the people who create it. The player is put in charge of the school's website and/or of a Twitter account (depending on which age-version of the game is played) and is asked to publish fake content while making strategic choices to increase their credibility and number of followers. The game is broken down in 6 levels/badges which cover 6 crucial aspects of online disinformation: impersonation, emotion, polarization, conspiracy, discredit and trolling. An info sheet for educators can be found here.
Wrap up	-	10'	Discussing what the students learnt from the game. How was their experience of putting themselves in the shoes of the "bad guy"? Do they feel like they know a bit more about disinformation? Are they more aware of why it is a serious problem?

Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alt. n. 4)

Module 3: Information Literacy			
Topic 1: Information Literacy			
Lesson plan 3 of 3 (alternative n.4 – computers/tablets <u>optional</u>)			
Duration: 45 minutes / 1 hour max			
Aim	Fact-checking practice		
Target Group	Secondary School Students		
Steps	Resources	Duration	Additional information
Introduction	-	5'	Critical thinking cannot be learned on books: it requires practice. Fact-checking websites are the go-to place to verify a claim, but what to do when we come across a piece of news that no one has fact-checked before?
Analysing and fact-checking a claim	<i>Handouts prepared by teacher</i>	35'	The teacher selects an interesting claim which has been fact-checked by professionals and presents it to the students (without revealing the results of the analysis). After analysing the main claim and its supporting arguments and preparing a fact-checking strategy, the students are invited to go through the process and reach a conclusion (either by doing research online or by going through a set of documents provided by the teacher as evidence). Did the claim turn out to be true or false (or any degree in between, to increase the difficulty of the exercise)? What process did the students go through to find out? Which arguments are there to support their conclusion?
Wrap up	-	10'	Discussing what the students learnt from the exercise. Do they feel like they have more instruments than before to analyse claims the find online?

References

Lesson plan 1 of 3: Learn about mis-, dis-, mal-information and the reliability of sources

- Mis-, dis- and mal-information: Council of Europe (2018), *Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making*; retrieved from: <https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-report-version-august-2018/16808c9c77>.
- Trustworthiness of Wikipedia as a source of information for academic use: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Academic_use.
- List of reliable sources of information for students (US-centred): <https://www.common sense.org/education/top-picks/most-reliable-and-credible-sources-for-students>.
- Definition of “bias”: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/bias>.
- Definition of “confirmation bias”: <https://www.britannica.com/science/confirmation-bias>.
- Possible assignment: a few examples
 - Shape of planet Earth:
 - NASA’s perspective:
 - NASA Science: Solar System Exploration <https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/planets/earth/overview/>.
 - NASA: What is Earth? <https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/features/nasa-knows/what-is-earth-58.html>.
 - NASA Science: Why are planets round? <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/planets-round/en/>.
 - Flat Earth Society’s perspective: <https://theflatearthsociety.org/home/>.
 - Climate change:
 - NASA Global Climate Change: <https://climate.nasa.gov/>.
 - “There is no climate emergency”: an open letter signed by a network of 500 scientists and professionals <https://via.hypothes.is/https://clintel.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ED-brochureversieNWA4.pdf>.
 - Media Bias / Fact Check: a database of biased media sources
 - Questionable news sources: <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/fake-news/>.
 - Conspiracy/pseudoscience: <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/conspiracy/>.
 - Left-wing bias: <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/left/>.
 - Right-wing bias: <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/right/>.

Lesson plan 2 of 3

- “How to choose your news” TED-Ed video (subtitles available in 29 languages): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-Y-z6HmRgl>.
- Discussion starters for indicators of unreliability:
 - o Facebook’s “Tips to Spot False News” (available in all languages supported by Facebook): <https://www.facebook.com/help/188118808357379?helpref=search&sr=1&query=fake%20news>.
 - o Reddit’s r/news rules (right sidebar): <https://www.reddit.com/r/news/>.
- Examples of fact-checked claims:
 - o Was a 5-Metre-Tall Skeleton Unearthed in Australia? (Snopes): <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/5-meter-tall-human-skeleton/>.
 - o Can You Pop Popcorn with a Pickle and a AA Battery? (Snopes): <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/popcorn-pickle-battery/>.
 - o A viral photo of an empty European Parliament proves nothing (EU Fact Check): <https://factcheckeu.info/en/article/la-c%C3%A9l%C3%A8bre-photographie-dun-parlement-europ%C3%A9en-vid%C3%A9o-ne-prouve-rien1>.
- Fact-checking services:
 - o Mentioned in the PPT presentation:
 - BBC Reality Check (UK-based): https://www.bbc.com/news/reality_check.
 - Snopes (US-based): <https://www.snopes.com/>.
 - Fact Check EU (EU-based, centred on the EU Parliamentary elections of 2019): <https://factcheckeu.info/en/>.
 - o Map of fact-checking services worldwide: <https://reporterslab.org/fact-checking/>.

Lesson plan 3 of 3

- *Alternative n. 1*: BBC iReporter game (only available in English): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-8760dd58-84f9-4c98-ade2-590562670096>.
- *Alternative n. 2*: The Evidence Toolkit (only available in English): <https://evidence-toolkit-moral-maze.pilots.bbcconnectedstudio.co.uk/index.html>.
- *Alternative n. 3*: Bad News game
 - o *Ages 8-11* (only available in English): https://getbadnews.com/drogame_book/junior-uk/#intro.

- *Ages 15-35* (available in English, Czech, Dutch, German, Greek, Esperanto, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian and Swedish + versions for Bosnia and Moldova): <https://getbadnews.com/#intro>.
- *Info sheet for teachers*: <https://getbadnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Bad-News-Game-info-sheet-for-educators-English.pdf>.

PROJECT INFORMATION

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CONSORTIUM



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