

Media Literacy

champions

Lesson 2 Is this true?

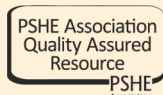
Years 8-10

This is the second of four lessons on digital and media literacy for years 8-10. This lesson focuses on identifying misinformation and disinformation, and managing content that's intended to cause an emotional response to encourage people to share it further.

No lesson should be taught in isolation, but always as part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme. These lessons would work well as part of wider learning about life online, including managing personal and professional reputation online, and responding to harmful online behaviours.



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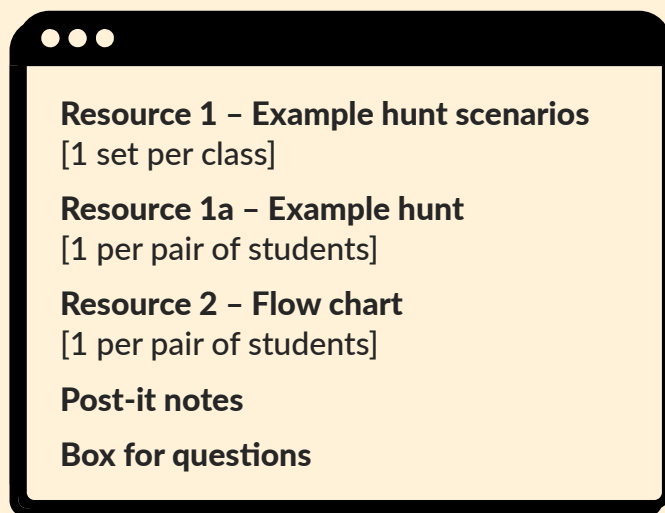


The Student View

Learning objective

To learn about strategies to identify and manage misinformation and disinformation.

Resources



Learning outcomes

Students will be able to...

- describe what misinformation and disinformation is in media
- explain strategies to fact-check information
- assess when media is intended to generate an emotional response to encourage further sharing
- identify other ways someone can respond to emotive media

Overview

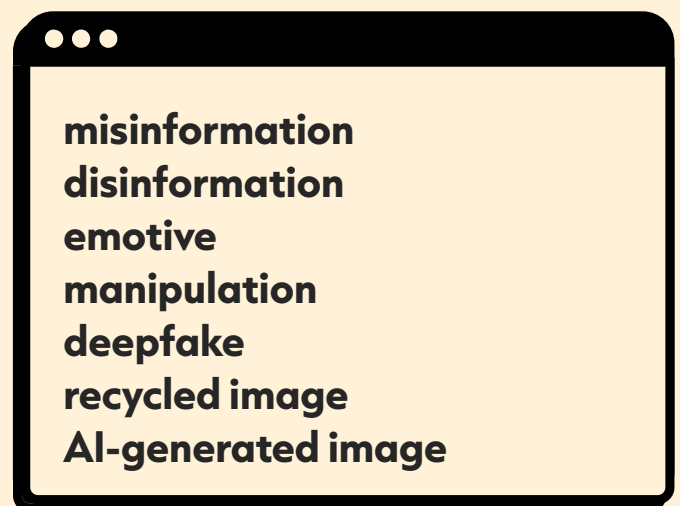
Activity	Description	Timing
Lesson baseline assessment	Students respond to an overheard conversation about an article online.	10 mins
Find an example of...	Students find examples of signs the media might contain misinformation or disinformation from scenarios around the room.	10 mins
Fact-checking flow chart	Students complete a flow chart to help decide whether to trust information and media or whether to disregard it.	10 mins

Strategy sort	Students identify strategies for managing emotive content and add their own, and sort these from most to least likely to be effective.	15 mins
Reflection and endpoint assessment	Students return to the overheard conversation from the start of the lesson and consider if there are any changes or additions they would like to make.	10 mins
Signpost support	Respond to questions and signpost students to relevant support.	5 mins

Climate for learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson. These include guidance on ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, curriculum links and relevant subject knowledge.

Key words



Lesson baseline - Slides 2-5

10 mins

Using **slide 2**, establish or revisit ground rules for the lesson. Remind students of the question box and that they are welcome to add questions at any time, anonymously or with their name.

Show students **slide 3** and ask them to respond to the overheard conversation by answering the questions on the slide. Gauge students' starting points by circulating during the activity. Ask students to keep their responses safe as they will return to these at the end of the lesson.

Use **slide 5** to introduce the learning objective and outcomes for the lesson, explaining to students that today's lesson will explore how to identify when media or news is untrue, the kinds of 'untrue' media there are, and how people can manage emotive media and news that uses emotion to encourage people to share it further.

Find an example of... - Slides 6-7

10 mins

In pairs, ask students to read the scenarios from **Resource 1: Example hunt scenarios** around the room. Using **Resource 1a: Example hunt** they should find an example of each of the forms and features of misinformation and disinformation from the scenarios. Explain to students that they only have to find one example of each, but that in some cases there is more than one example among the scenarios.

Take feedback from students, using **slide 7** to direct them to examples they may not have spotted. Ask students if there are any examples they spotted that are not included on the slide.

Key learning:

- There is a range of features of disinformation and misinformation to look out for. For example, attempts to create an emotional response so that people share something quickly without thinking about whether the information is true.
- Sometimes false information can be spread by people who are popular, such as influencers. It's important for someone to think as critically about what an influencer shares as they would about any other source of information.
- Some false information may make promises that seem 'too good to be true'; if news or advertising is making claims that seem extraordinary it can help to check other sources for further information.
- It can help to look for the features of a reliable source as explored in the last lesson, including transparency about where information has come from. For example, named authors, links to evidence and contribution from named experts.

Support:

Ask students to focus on Jake and Kean's scenarios and to identify any similarities and differences between the scenarios.

Draw out key learning that in both scenarios the characters are sharing false information, but that in Jake's scenario this is not intentional, whereas Kean is intentionally misleading others. Clarify that in Jake's scenario he is spreading misinformation which means that Jake doesn't know the information is false, but in Kean's the intentional deception means this is disinformation.

Challenge:

Ask students to choose one of the scenarios from **Resource 1: Example hunt scenarios**. They should advise the character on how they might manage the situation, for example by assessing the reliability of the source or seeking help.

Fact-checking flow chart - Slides 8-9

15 mins

In pairs, ask students to fill in the gaps on **Resource 2: Flow chart**. Ask students to decide which statement from the table at the bottom of the resource matches each letter to complete a process someone could use to critically think about content they see online, and to fact-check the information it's sharing.

Use **slide 8** to take feedback and ask students to discuss any similarities or differences in their responses.

Key learning:

- There are a number of strategies people can use to think critically about content online, and to fact-check information.
- Someone could consider whether any of the content is aiming to manipulate them, for example whether it is particularly emotive, including content that is funny, heart-warming, upsetting, or angering.
- Strategies to fact-check information include going to other news sources to see if they are reporting about the issue, and if so, how the issue is being presented. People can also use fact-checking websites which examine claims made in the media.
- Someone could consider whether an image used in news and media is recycled (an image taken at a different time, place or for a different purpose, but shared with news to give the illusion of the information being accurate or factual), manipulated (for example changing details in the image, or who the image is of), or in some cases AI-generated.
- AI-generated images are increasingly difficult to distinguish from 'real' images, so small details such as errors in how AI has generated the background of the image, errors in details in the subject of the image itself, or a general feeling of "uncanniness" when something about the image just doesn't feel right can be helpful clues to question whether the image is real.
- Manipulated images may include deepfake images. Students may raise concerns about these as there are cases they may be aware of in which these images have been used to abuse others (for example, editing someone's face into explicit media without their consent). In any case in which sexualised content is shared without someone's consent online, focus on encouraging the young person to report to the platform it was shared on, promote help-seeking behaviours, and flag tools such as the [Report Remove tool](#).

Challenge:

Ask students to consider whether there are any other steps students would add to their flow chart, or whether they would re-order it in any way to make the process easier or faster.

Strategy sort - Slides 10-12

15 mins

Remind students of the part of the flowchart that asked whether media is intending to be emotive (to create an emotional response). Use **slide 12** to explain that when media is emotive people can be more likely to share it than if it was presented in a calmer, more factual way.

As a class read the talking heads examples on **slides 10-11**. In small groups of 3-4, ask students to identify what strategy each of the talking heads examples is using to manage emotive media. They should add each strategy to a separate post-it note, and then think of any other strategies that might help someone to pause before sharing information that's caused them to have strong feelings. Students should then sort these on their tables from most likely to be effective to least likely to be effective.

Key learning:

- Sometimes people sharing disinformation will make it intentionally emotive to cause someone reading or watching to share the content quickly. This is because if content is emotive, people may be less likely to question its accuracy as they're more engaged with the feelings the post has raised than critically thinking about the accuracy of the information or the reliability of the source.
- People sharing misinformation may inadvertently add to the emotive nature of the content, for example by adding their views and concerns, or expressing their feelings about the content.
- Having feelings about news and media is a normal part of engaging with information and content. However, there are strategies people can use to manage strong feelings so that they have a bit more time to decide whether content has been created with the intent of emotionally manipulating them.

Support:

Explain to students that the strategies in the talking heads are as follows:

- Talking to someone about the news
- Taking a break from the news
- Deep breathing to calm down
- Thinking about how other people might see the issue

Now ask students to add these strategies to their post-it notes and ask them to decide which strategy is most likely to be effective, and which is least likely to be effective.

Personal reflection and endpoint assessment - Slides 13-15

10 mins

Show **slides 13 and 14**. On their own, ask students to return to the overheard conversation from the baseline assessment. They should make any additions or changes they feel they need to, to show their progress within the lesson. It may help to remind them of the learning outcomes for this lesson.

Finally, ask students to reflect privately on the questions on **slide 15**. The answers to these need not be shared with the class:

- Which strategies for managing emotive news and media would be most helpful for you?
- When might you need to use this strategy?

Signposting support - Slide 16

5 mins

Respond to any questions from the question box. Ensure that students know where they can seek help and advice, both now and in the future, if they are worried or concerned about media content including misinformation and disinformation, or what they've seen on social media. Students wishing to seek further guidance can:

Speak to someone in school, such as a tutor or head of year.

Contact

Childline: www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111

Full Fact: www.fullfact.org

[The Report Remove tool](#) can be used to confidentially report sexual images and videos and have these removed:

[ThinkUKnow from NCA-CEOP](#) has guidance on how to report content on different social media platforms

Extension activity - Slide 17

Choose one or two strategies for managing emotive media and write a brief "how-to" on when this strategy might be helpful and how to use it.