

Media Literacy

champions

Teacher Guidance

This guidance accompanies The Student View's Media Literacy Champions lessons on digital and media literacy. These lessons are for years 8-10 and explore misinformation, disinformation and how media and advertising are targeted.

Please read this guidance before teaching the lessons.



Introduction

Why teaching about digital and media literacy is important in PSHE education

Teaching digital and media literacy in Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education is of increasing importance in today's society. The prevalence of false or misleading information demonstrates the critical need for young people to develop the skills to critically examine media and make informed decisions. PSHE education also offers a space for students to reflect on the feelings caused by online content, including where content has been developed with the intent to cause particular emotional responses, and the choices young people might make as a result of engaging with it.

By incorporating digital and media literacy into the PSHE curriculum, we can address key aspects of the Department for Education's statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and

Health education. For example, students can learn how information and data are generated, collected, shared, and used online. They can also gain knowledge about internet safety and harms, and the targeting of advertising and information. Moreover, we can empower students to navigate media (including social media) confidently and responsibly by helping them to develop skills to manage emotions, recognise when media intends to cause an emotive response, and report or seek support when online.

By equipping young people with relevant knowledge, skills and attributes, we enable them to become discerning consumers of information in an increasingly interconnected and media-saturated world.

Preparing to teach

These lessons can be effectively embedded within the PSHE core theme Living in the Wider World, which includes learning on managing personal and professional reputations online, for example considering what is shared via social media. They can be also be integrated in Relationships, including learning about harmful online behaviours. The lessons are not designed to be taught in isolation and should form part of the overall programme for PSHE education in your school. Please see the appendix for curriculum links to the PSHE Association Programme of Study and Department for Education's Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance.

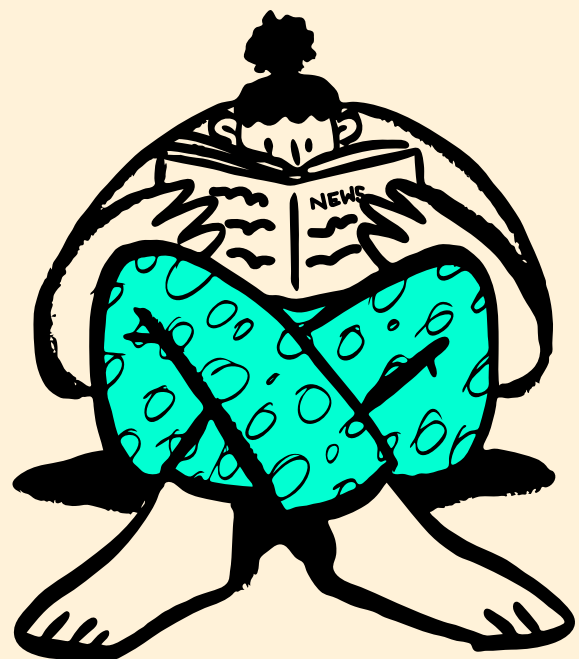
The lesson plans are based on one-hour lessons. The timings given are the minimum required to deliver the activities. Whilst it is always important for PSHE education lessons to be pacy, it is equally important to meet the needs of your students. More may be gained from spending longer on an activity that has fired up discussion and imagination, so long as you are comfortable leading the discussion and feel students are progressing towards the lesson objectives. When this is the case, it may be more appropriate for your group to extend the lesson plan across two lessons.

Creating a safe learning environment

A safe learning environment helps students feel comfortable with sharing their ideas and opinions without attracting negative feedback, and will help teachers to manage discussions on sensitive issues confidently. Students are likely to engage with media in a variety of forms across the course of their daily lives and may find some media or news distressing. It is good practice for teachers to:

- work with students to establish ground rules about how they will behave in discussion, such as:
 - Everyone has the right to be heard and respected.
 - We will use language that won't offend or upset other people.
 - We won't judge or make assumptions about anyone, their feelings, or experiences.
 - We will comment on what was said, not the person who said it.
 - We won't share our own personal experiences, or those of anyone we know.
 - We won't put anyone on the spot, and we have a right to pass.
- offer opportunities for students to discuss issues in small groups as well as sharing views with the class
- make a box/envelope available for students to put questions or concerns in (anonymously if they wish), to avoid having to voice them in front of the class
- provide factually accurate, up to date information
- provide balanced arguments to help students clarify their own opinions
- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals – some students may have direct experience of the issues covered such as exposure to hate speech online or exposure to child sexual abuse imagery through deepfakes and AI-generated imagery
- use distancing strategies to discourage personal disclosures in the classroom, allow students to explore topics objectively, and to keep the learning environment safe
- always work within the school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality
- link PSHE education into the whole school approach to supporting student wellbeing
- make students aware of sources of support, both in and outside the school.

Further guidance on creating a safe learning environment is available from the [PSHE Association](#).



Developing subject knowledge

Glossary

Sources	A source is a provider of information, data, or evidence used to support claims, arguments, or research, ensuring credibility and reliability of the information presented in various contexts such as journalism, academia, and investigations.
Social media	Social media refers to online platforms where users create profiles, share content such as text, images, and videos, and interact with others through likes, comments, and shares. Examples include Facebook, Instagram, and X (previously Twitter).
Tabloid	A tabloid newspaper is a compact-sized publication known for its concise and sensationalised style of reporting, often focusing on celebrity gossip, sensational stories, and eye-catching headlines.
Broadsheet	A broadsheet newspaper is a larger-sized publication that typically features in-depth and serious journalism, covering a wide range of news topics with detailed analysis and a more formal writing style.
Misinformation	Misinformation is information that is false, but not intended to cause harm. For example, individuals who don't know a piece of information is false may spread it on social media in an attempt to be helpful.
Disinformation	Disinformation is false information that is deliberately created or disseminated with the express purpose to cause harm. Producers of disinformation typically have political, financial, psychological, or social motivations.
Deepfake	A deepfake refers to a manipulated video, image, or audio created using advanced artificial intelligence techniques, often with the intent to portray someone saying or doing things they never actually did.
Recycled image	A recycled image refers to visual content, such as a photograph or graphic, that is reused or misrepresented to support false information or misleading narratives, often as a tactic in spreading disinformation.

AI-generated image	An AI-generated image is visual content created by artificial intelligence algorithms, which use data and patterns to produce realistic pictures, sometimes indistinguishable from those captured by human photographers or artists.
Fact	A fact is a statement or information that is objectively true, supported by evidence, and verifiable, making it an accurate representation of reality and not influenced by personal opinions or beliefs.
Opinion	An opinion is a personal viewpoint or belief about a particular subject or issue, often based on individual thoughts, feelings, values, and experiences rather than objective facts or evidence.
Bias	Bias refers to a prejudice or tendency that influences a person's judgement or decision-making, often leading to unfair or unbalanced treatment or favouring one perspective over others.
Targeted	Targeted refers to a focused approach aimed at a specific audience, group, or demographic; tailoring content, advertising, or marketing efforts to meet their needs and preferences for increased relevance and effectiveness.
Algorithm	An algorithm is a fixed series of steps that a computer performs in order to solve a problem or complete a task.
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	AI (Artificial Intelligence) is a branch of computer science that focuses on creating intelligent machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, learning, and decision-making.
"Echo chamber" or "Filter bubble"	<p>An echo chamber is a social environment where individuals are exposed only to information or ideas that reinforce their existing beliefs, leading to a reinforcement and amplification of those views without critical challenge.</p> <p>In an online context people may use the terms echo chamber or filter bubble to describe this phenomena as algorithms can serve users content that reinforces their existing beliefs.</p>

Teaching about misinformation and disinformation

When teaching students about misinformation and disinformation, it can help to explore the differences between the two. Misinformation is unintentionally false information, while disinformation is deliberately fabricated to deceive or manipulate. By fostering critical thinking skills, promoting fact-checking, and encouraging students to consider when emotive content is being used, we can support them to navigate news and media, both online and in-print. This will in turn enable them to pause before sharing further and combat the spread of false narratives.

Teaching about fact, bias, and opinion

Teaching students how to discern between fact and opinion, and to recognise when media may be biased, is essential for developing their critical thinking abilities. Facts are objective and verifiable information supported by evidence, while bias refers to subjective preferences or prejudices that can influence the interpretation of facts. Opinions, on the other hand, are personal beliefs or judgments that may or may not be supported by evidence. These lessons help students to develop the skills they need to make informed judgments about the reliability of media and increase their awareness that a wider variety of viewpoints and opinions may be helpful in better understanding an issue.

Teaching about algorithms

Part of young people's experiences of media, especially online, will be influenced by what information and advertising is targeted towards them by algorithms. An algorithm is a set of step-by-step instructions a computer follows to solve a problem or make decisions based on given rules. They play a significant role in determining the content and advertisements individuals are exposed to online, often based on their past behaviours, preferences, and demographics. By understanding that the media they see online is targeted by social media platforms and other

organisations, students can become more aware of how their views and behaviours are manipulated online. They should also come to recognise that there are a variety of opinions and viewpoints they are not exposed to when passively engaging with news and media online. Through education, we can help them to evaluate the credibility and bias of targeted content, consider what the intended effect of targeting information and advertising may be, and make conscious choices about their online interactions.

Signposting support

Support for students

Ensure students know where they can seek help and further advice, now and in the future if they have questions or concerns related to media and the news. Remind students that they can ask for help and advice from trusted adults at home, outside the home, in school or from appropriate organisations. Share the following website details with students:

- Childline www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111
- Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk
- The Student View www.thestudentview.org
- ThinkUKnow from NCA-CEOP has guidance on how to report content on different social media platforms: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/online-safety/reporting-and-blocking

Support for teachers

Further information on misinformation and disinformation can be found on The Student View's website including:

- how to access training to be a Media Literacy Lead
- more information on the Media Literacy Champions projects, such as guidance on how to set up a pop-up newsroom

<https://thestudentview.org/teacher-training/>

For further support please contact via email to info@thestudentview.org



Appendix

Links to the Programme of Study and DfE's statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health education

Lesson	Learning objective	Learning outcomes Students will be able to...
Lesson 1 Is this reliable?	To learn about the variety of media sources available and how to establish their reliability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify different sources of information, online and in print• describe features that can help people identify more reliable media• explain that not all media is factual and that some may cause harm
Lesson 2 Is this true?	To learn about strategies to identify and manage misinformation and disinformation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
Lesson 3 Why would they say that?	To learn about how fact, opinion and bias are presented in media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify whether media sources are reporting a fact or opinion• explain how bias can affect how information is presented• describe strategies for critically engaging with media• identify how what is shared online may affect others
Lesson 4 How did this get here?	To learn about how algorithms target information to people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• explain that online media uses data to target information and advertising to people• describe the intended effect of targeting users through algorithms• describe strategies to manage the effects of targeted advertising and information

PSHE Association Programme of Study links
Pupils should have the opportunity to learn...

Key Stage 3

L20	that features of the internet can amplify risks and opportunities, e.g. speed and scale of information sharing, blurred public and private boundaries and a perception of anonymity
L22	the benefits and positive use of social media, including how it can offer opportunities to engage with a wide variety of views on different issues
L23	to recognise the importance of seeking a variety of perspectives on issues and ways of assessing the evidence which supports those views
L25	to make informed decisions about whether different media and digital content are appropriate to view and develop the skills to act on them
L26	that on any issue there will be a range of viewpoints; to recognise the potential influence of extreme views on people's attitudes and behaviours
L27	to respond appropriately when things go wrong online, including confidently accessing support, reporting to authorities and platform

Key Stage 4

L22	that there are positive and safe ways to create and share content online and the opportunities this offers
L24	that social media may disproportionately feature exaggerated or inaccurate information about situations, or extreme viewpoints; to recognise why and how this may influence opinions and perceptions of people and events
L25	how personal data is generated, collected and shared, including by individuals, and the consequences of this
L26	how data may be used with the aim of influencing decisions, including targeted advertising and other forms of personalisation online; strategies to manage this
L27	strategies to critically assess bias, reliability and accuracy in digital content
L29	to recognise the shared responsibility to challenge extreme viewpoints that incite violence or hate and ways to respond to anything that causes anxiety or concern

Department for Education RSHE statutory guidance links
By the end of secondary school, pupils should know...

<p>Relationships & Sex education - Online and media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
<p>Health education - Internet safety and harms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online. • how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

Introducing the Skills Builder Partnership



The Skills Builder Partnership supports educators, organisations, employers and learners of all ages to develop eight *Essential Skills*.

Bringing together more than 800 organisations, joined by shared language, principles and outcomes, the Skills Builder Partnership is working towards a common mission: one day, everyone will build the essential skills to succeed.

We have worked with Skills Builder to ensure all of our resources not only develop Media Literacy skills, but also their essential skills of **Listening, Speaking, Problem-solving** and **Staying Positive**.

Within these categories, our resources and classroom-ready presentations specifically focus on these four highly transferable skill steps:



I explore complex problems by building my understanding through research.



I speak engagingly by using facts and examples to support my point.



I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their language.



I can tell when I feel positive or negative.

You will see prompts throughout the resources to show where the different skills are being developed. You can find out more about Skillsbuilder and their Essential Skills at [skillsbuilder.org](https://www.skillsbuilder.org).



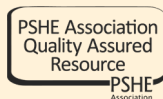
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