Ontario History and Social Science Teachers' Association
Association des enseignant·es des sciences humaines de l'Ontario

Unit 1 Lesson 5 - Media Literacy - Why Verify?

Lesson Overview

75 minutes

Students will learn how information is created for the purposes of news and social media. They will develop skills to evaluate their sources and 'fact-check' their information and assess their skills using game-based learning at the end. This lesson has been modified from *the* CIVIX *Canada Ctrl+F* program using the lesson, "Why Verify?".

Connections to Inquiry Process (at least one)	**Connections to Political Thinking Concept(s)**
★ Interpret and Analyze ★ Evaluate and Draw Conclusions	● Objectives and Results ● Political Perspectives

Curriculum Expectations

A1. Political Inquiry: use the political inquiry process and the concepts of political thinking when investigating issues, events, and developments of civic importance

A1.2 select and organize relevant evidence, data, and information on issues, events, and/or developments of civic importance from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including media forms such as social and traditional media, ensuring that their sources reflect multiple perspectives

A1.3 apply critical-thinking skills to assess the credibility and biases of relevant sources from a wide variety of media forms, including social media

A2. Developing Transferable Skills: apply in everyday contexts skills developed through investigations related to civics and citizenship education, and identify some careers in which civics and citizenship education might be an asset

A2.1 describe some ways in which political inquiry can help them develop skills, including transferable skills and skills related to the citizenship education framework, that can be applied to the world of work and/or to everyday life

A2.4 identify some careers in which civics and citizenship education might be useful

B1. Civic Issues, Democratic Values: describe beliefs and values associated with democratic citizenship in Canada, and explain how they are related to civic action and to one's position on civic issues (FOCUS ON: Political

Learning Goals

Copied directly from Ctrl+F lesson 1:

We are learning to distinguish between misinformation and disinformation in order to investigate different perspectives on civic issues.

We are learning how to use vertical and lateral reading strategies to analyze websites and media sources.

We are learning about jobs in media literacy to understand how information is created and marketed to different groups.

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Significance; Political Perspective)

B1.1 describe some civic issues of local, national, and/or global significance, and compare the perspectives of different groups on selected issues

C1. Civic Contributions, Inclusion, and Service : analyse the importance of various contributions to the common good, and assess the recognition of beliefs, values, and perspectives, in communities in Canada and internationally (FOCUS ON: Political Significance; Stability and Change; Political Perspective)

C1.5 explain various ways in which people can access information about civic matters, highlighting the importance of applying related digital literacy and critical-thinking skills, and assess the effectiveness of ways in which individuals can voice their opinions and influence others' opinions on these matters, including through social media

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Readiness

- Students have previously been exposed to legacy/mainstream media news sources
- Students have learned and practiced political thinking
- The Grade 9 English curriculum includes expectations related to media literacy

Terminology

- Misinformation
- Disinformation
- Information Pollution
- Lateral Reading vs. Vertical Reading
- Conspiracy Theories
- Hoaxes

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Materials:

- Computer
- Projector
- Screen
- Speakers
- Computer and internet access for students
  - Laptop cart
  - Computer lab
  - Mobile devices
- All websites and links are embedded within the lesson

Lesson plan directly from CIVIX's website:

- 1.-Lesson-Plan

Video:

- CIVIX Explains: Information Pollution

Glossary of key terms:

- Why verify_glossary

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Minds On

- Establishing a positive learning environment
- Connecting to prior learning and/or experiences
- Setting the context for learning

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Connections

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Description	Assessment **for** learning
1. Distribute a copy of the diagnostic survey, Your Media Habits, to each student. This will help students assess their experience with social and other forms of media. The survey is to be done individually. 2. Read through the questions to clarify any ideas or vocabulary.	• diagnostic self-assessment of prior media use • media use entry survey ***Differentiated Instruction:*** The survey can be completed on paper or online via Google or Microsoft Forms.

Action	*Connections*
• Introducing new learning or extending/reinforcing prior learning • Providing opportunities for practice and application of learning (guided > independent)	

WHOLE CLASS:
 	
1. Distribute a copy of Ctrl+F Activity 1.2 What is Information Pollution (video worksheet) and review questions with students. Students will complete this worksheet as the slide deck is being presented.
 	
2. Begin the Information Pollution slide deck with the class.
Teacher Note: stopping and prompting students to write down their answers as you teach is a good strategy to keep students on task and prevent overwhelming them with too much information.. Have students volunteer answers or consider assigning certain questions to students or groups to answer for the class so that the worksheet is completed collaboratively.
 	
3. At the end of the slide deck, discuss student responses to Steps 1 and 2 as a class.
 	
4. Step 3 is a self-assessment piece asking students to think about their own interactions with 'fake news'. This could even start with a discussion about memes, IG or Snapchat posts they have seen about people they know.
 	
5. To provide examples and make connections to new terminology learned in this lesson, have students engage with one or several media literacy game-based activities. Some examples are:
    a. Fake or Real? The all-new NewsWise headlines quiz! (Guardian website) This is based on 2021 headlines and is a good way to gauge student engagement in the news. As you 'reveal' each answer, the vertical and lateral reading strategies are provided and reinforced.
 	
    b. An additional quiz using the same format is found here.
	Assessment as learning:
	• Teacher prompting throughout the slide deck - feedback to students throughout lesson
	• Students will check their answers at end of lesson through a whole-group discussion
	• Self-assessment during online games
	
	Differentiated Instruction:
	• Have students do games in pairs or small groups so they can give each other feedback and work collaboratively to discuss articles.
	• Assign questions to each student to be answered at the end of the slide deck.
	
	Quick Tips:
	
	• Media literacy game-based learning is very effective. There are multiple examples:
	   ○ This quiz challenges students to identify if social media posts are real or fake. This allows reinforcement of vertical and lateral thinking. This can be done as a class.
	   ○ Ctrl+F has a variety of digital tools to help students verify information.
	   ○ Media Smarts 'Reality Check' Game
	   ○ Civix - Fake out
	   ○ Digital Skills for Democracy, an offline game to learn online skills from Elections Canada

Consolidation	Connections
● Providing opportunities for consolidation and reflection ● Helping students demonstrate what they have learned	

INDIVIDUAL: **Options** 1. Use the Thinking Routine: Connect , Extend, Challenge as an exit card: <u>Connect, Extend, Challenge</u>. Use these prompts from the above document to have the students reflect on the lesson: ● How are the ideas and information connected to what you already knew? ● What new ideas did you get that broadened your thinking or extended it in different directions? ● What challenges or puzzles emerge for you? 2. Students can complete the <u>Exit Card</u> for this activity. **Teacher Note: If students struggle with organization, have them use this <u>Exit Card tracking page</u> to record their answers and keep track of their learning and assessments.** ● These prompts in step 1 have been embedded as a physical exit card, but this can also be done orally or using post-it notes.	**Assessment as learning:** ● Self-reflection in an exit card will allow students to monitor their own progress on this topic. **Assessment of learning:** ● Exit card tracking page will be assessed at the end of the course. **Differentiated Instruction:** ● Allow students to complete this activity as homework if time does not permit them to complete it by end of class.

Additional Resources	

Other sites for news literacy: ● Teaching Kids News - <u>https://teachingkidsnews.com/</u> ● Guardian Newswise resources: <u>https://theguardianfoundation.org/programmes/newswise/families/looking-out-for-fake-news</u> ● Mediasmarts - media literacy - <u>https://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources</u> ● SPOT fake news tool - <u>https://spotfakenews.ca/</u>	

Why verify? Glossary of terms

Conspiracy theory A belief that a secret, powerful group of people is causing major news events, manipulating politics and the economy, or hiding important information about the world.

Disinformation False information that is deliberately created and shared to cause harm. It has the goal of confusing people about what is true and influencing how they think and act.

Hoax A deliberate falsehood designed to trick people into believing something happened that didn't.

Information pollution The accumulation of false, misleading, or otherwise low-quality information that is circulated online, making it difficult for people to determine what information is reliable or true.

Lateral reading The process of evaluating online information by 'leaving the page' to conduct simple research into a source or claim. Examples of lateral reading strategies include using Wikipedia to look up the reputation of a source or checking to see how a story or claim has been reported by other sources.

Misinformation Information that is false but that is created and/or spread without the intent to cause harm (though harm may result). The person sharing misinformation believes it to be true.

Vertical reading The process of evaluating information by analyzing the text itself to assess reliability. Vertical reading strategies are commonly packaged as checklists, such as the CRAAP test, and have been demonstrated to routinely backfire when applied to information online. Examples of vertical reading strategies include looking for signs of professionalism, checking to see if the URL is a .com or a .org, and looking for ads on the page next to the information.

Activity 1.1: Your Media Habits

If you heard from a friend that there was a meteor crash in your city/town, how would you confirm this story?	☐ Ask someone face-to-face ☐ Turn on the radio ☐ Turn on a television ☐ Text someone to find out (friend or family) ☐ Google it and read info under first link ☐ Check social media platform (TikTok, IG, Snapchat) ☐ Try to find it on a news platform (CTV, CBC, CNN, BBC) ☐ Try to see if it comes up in several different online platforms ☐ Other: _____
What are your main sources of news and information and why?	☐ Friends ☐ Family ☐ News stations on TV ☐ The radio ☐ Online news stories from mainstream media (CBC, CTV, CNN, *Toronto Star*, *Hamilton Spectator*) ☐ Online news stories from other sites (6Buzz, InfoWars, Rebel Media) ☐ Social media posts ☐ Other: _____
How often do you share news with your friends through social media or messaging apps?	☐ Multiple times per day ☐ Once per day ☐ 3-4 days per week ☐ Once per week ☐ A few times per month ☐ Almost never
Do you ever check to see if news is true before sharing it?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes – it depends on the story. For example: _____

When you come across an unfamiliar website, how do you know if you should trust it?	Write down THREE things that you think make a website a credible source. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
Identify a story you have seen online that you thought was FALSE or misleading. How could you tell?	
How confident are you in your ability to assess the quality of information you see online?	☐ Not at all confident – I believe everything I read and see online ☐ I am ok – I recognized outright lies when I see them ☐ I am pretty good – my instincts tell me what fact or fiction is ☐ I am really good – I can verify information as being false within minutes of investigating it

Activity 1.2: What is Information Pollution?

As we go through the slide deck and videos, answer the questions below.

Step 1: Watch "CIVIX Explains: Information Pollution" to get a better understanding of the problem of false and misleading information and answer the questions below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGYGzCHDhv4&t=3s&ab_channel=CTRL-F

Now, answer the following questions based on this video and the slide deck:

a) How has the invention of the internet led to information pollution?
_____

b) Why is it hard to identify trustworthy or reliable information online?
_____
_____

c) What is the difference between **misinformation** and **disinformation**? Provide an example for each (not mentioned in the video).

INFORMATION POLLUTION FALLS INTO TWO CATEGORIES …	
MISINFORMATION is….	**DISINFORMATION is …**
Example:	**Example:**

d) What is the 'first step' or questions you should ask to combat information pollution and become and informed citizen?
_____

e) What is the difference between 'Lateral' and 'Vertical' reading of a news story?

Lateral reading involves….	*Vertical* reading involves ….

What are the FOUR key questions in lateral reading? SPOT the fake news by asking …
1.
2.
3.
4.

Step 2: Watch "<u>Introduction to CTRL-F with Jane</u>
<u>Lytvynenko and Mike Caulfield</u>" and respond to the
questions below.
<u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRxOoCYWqbQ&t=1s&ab_channel=CTRL-F</u>

a) Jane Lytvynenko is a **fact-checker** for Buzzfeed News - what is her official job title?
_____

b) What does her job involve? Identify THREE tasks she performs as a 'fact-checker'.
_____
_____
_____

c) What are some examples of misinformation provided by Mike Caulfield that he considers 'harmless.' Provide 2.
_____

d) What causes misinformation and disinformation to spread?
_____
_____
_____

e) What was Mike's main message about how we should be evaluating information we see online?

_____

Step 3:   Personal Connection

Have you ever shared a news story with a friend or family member that you did not verify, and it turned out to be false? This can even be something you saw on social media. Circle one.
Y   or   N

How did it make you feel? Did the event cause you to change any of your habits?
Y   or   N

Have you ever had someone share a false news story with you that made you emotional (either happy, sad, angry)?   Y   or   N

Lesson 1
Introduction: Why Verify?

With the rapid rise of false and misleading information online, the ability to tell what is reliable or trustworthy has become an essential skill.

As an entry point to the program, students will reflect on where they get their news and the criteria they use to determine if it is trustworthy. Students will learn about information pollution and the contributing factors to false and misleading information. Students will be introduced to the idea of "lateral reading" skills and how it compares to other source evaluation techniques they may have used before.

1

Why is it challenging to identify trustworthy information online?

2

What causes false and misleading information to spread?

3

How does lateral reading differ from vertical reading?

Key Terms
conspiracy theories, disinformation, hoaxes, information pollution, lateral reading, misinformation

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the lesson, students can:
• describe the problem of information pollution and distinguish between misinformation and disinformation;
• analyze how false and misleading information spreads online;
• explain the concept of lateral reading.

Overview

Starter

25–30 min

To introduce students to the key themes of the program, ask them to fill out Activity 1.1. Use a

Think-Pair-Share approach to allow for discussion between students, and then follow up with a whole class discussion.
• If you heard from a friend that there was a meteor crash in your city/town, how would

you confirm this story?

• What are your main sources of news and information and why?

• How often do you share news with your friends through social media or messaging apps? • Do you ever check to see if news is true before sharing it with others?

• When you come across an unfamiliar website, how do you know if you should trust it? • Have you seen information online that you know to be false or misleading? How could you tell?

• Are you confident in your ability to assess the quality of information you see online?

Fundamentals

35–40 min

1. Show students the following two posts and ask them if they think either is real (Slide Deck 1). Ask them to provide reasoning or evidence to back up their answer. Afterwards, reveal the details of each
post.

• KFC Donuts: Instagram post

• KFC video game console / chicken warmer: Twitter post

2. Introduce the concepts of **information pollution**, **misinformation** and **disinformation**,
using the video "CIVIX Explains: Information Pollution" and Slide Deck 1. Ask students to respond to the first three questions in Activity 1.2 or as part of a discussion.

• Why do we have information pollution? • Why is it hard to identify trustworthy or reliable

information online?

• What is the difference between misinformation and disinformation? Provide a specific exam ple for each (not mentioned in the video).

3. Explain to students that they will be learning new skills to verify information they see online. These "lateral reading" skills differ from what they may have been taught before, such as the CRAAP test. Review the difference between vertical read ing and lateral reading, and why lateral reading skills are more effective. (Slide Deck 1).

Vertical reading: "staying on the page," examining the content critically and asking yourself what you think. These strategies are time-consuming and often lead to incorrect conclusions.

Common examples of vertical reading strategies include:

• Reading a site's "About" page

• Looking for typos

• Analyzing whether a site "looks professional" or if it has lots of ads

• Checking the URL to see if it's a .com, .org, .gov, etc.

• Reading a story closely to see if it sounds realistic or plausible.

Lateral reading: "leaving the page," doing some investigative work and analyzing what others have to say. These strategies are faster and more effective and they are used by fact-checkers around the world.

Common examples of lateral reading include: • Using Wikipedia to learn about the reputation of a source.

• Checking to see if a story or claim has been reported by

multiple reliable sources.

• Using the web to trace information, quotes, or images back to the original source.

4. Watch "Introduction to CTRL-F with Jane Lytvynenko and Mike Caulfield" and ask students to respond to the last three questions in Activity 1.2 or as part of a discussion.

• What causes misinformation and disinforma tion to spread?

• Can you think of a time when you shared news with a friend or family member that turned out to be false? How did it make you feel? Did the event cause you change any of your habits before sharing news?

• What was Mike's main message about how we should be evaluating information we see online?

Consolidation

5–10 min

Ask students to fill out the Exit Slip (Activity 1.3). • Describe three things you learned today… • List two things you want to learn more about… • Ask one question you have or wonder related to the topic…

Extension Activity

Create Your Own Verification Handbook

The Verification Handbook Assignment has been designed to help students consolidate their learning from the CTRL-F program and to record information for future reference. It can be completed on an ongoing basis as students proceed through the activities or as a culminating activity to review what has been learned. Within the Handbook, students will describe the strategies and skills in their own words, and then demonstrate their ability to use the skills with their own examples. Please refer to Handout 1.4: Verification Handbook on page 12. A rubric and exemplar are provided at ctrl-f.ca/resources in the Verification Handbook section.

Connect, Extend, Challenge

Consider what you have just read, seen, or heard, and then ask yourself:

- How are the ideas and information connected to what you already knew?

- What new ideas did you get that broadened your thinking or extended it in different directions?

- What challenges or puzzles emerge for you?

Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?
This routine helps students connect new ideas to those they already have and encourages them to reflect upon how they have extended their thinking as a result of what they are learning about or experiencing.

Application: When and where can I use it?
Use this routine when you want students to make explicit connections to something previously learned or experienced. Since it is designed to help students process new information actively, it works well as the conclusion to lessons in which students have been reading, watching videos, or otherwise taking in new information. Another approach is to use the routine to close the discussion of a topic or unit of study in order to help students synthesize the information. Some questions you might consider in your planning: Are there connections to be made between this content and what students already know? Will students be engaging with new information that they might find challenging?

Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?
This routine works well with the whole class, in small groups, or individually. If you are using it in a group discussion, ask students to share their thoughts. As you process each step of the routine, document their comments either in a public space for all to see or in your own notes. If students are working individually, they could document their responses in a journal or in a way that can be displayed in class.

Share your experience with this thinking routine on social media using the hashtags #PZThinkingRoutines and **#ConnectExtendChallenge.**

PROJECT ZERO
HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

VISIBLE THINKING

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Visible Thinking project at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Explore more Thinking Routines at pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines

Name:

	Connect, Extend, Challenge … 3-2-1 Exit Slip
3	How does all of this **connect** to what you already knew? Make THREE (3) connections to information you already understood.
2	What are TWO (2) new ideas that broadened your thinking or **extended** it in different directions?
1	What is ONE (1) **challenge** or puzzle that emerged for you?

EXIT CARD: ONGOING JOURNAL

This is your exit card ongoing journal for the duration of the course. Throughout the course, you will be asked to write an exit card - this journal is where you will keep track of all your entries.

Fill in the chart below each time your teacher asks you to write an exit card:

EXIT CARD #:	DATE and NAME/TOPIC OF LESSON	QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED	YOUR ANSWER (make course and life connections, too)

EXIT CARD #:	DATE and NAME/TOPIC OF LESSON	QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED	YOUR ANSWER (make course and life connections, too)

EXIT CARD #:	DATE and NAME/TOPIC OF LESSON	QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED	YOUR ANSWER (make course and life connections, too)

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EXIT CARD #:	DATE and NAME/TOPIC OF LESSON	QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED	YOUR ANSWER (make course and life connections, too)

Using the **RUBRIC BELOW THIS CHART**, give yourself a mark out of 10 for **EACH** of the categories: Knowledge, Thinking, Communication, and Application and a one-sentence explanation (for each category) as to why you gave yourself that mark. Write your answer below:

CATEGORY	MARK OUT OF 10	ONE SENTENCE EXPLANATION
Knowledge		
Thinking		

Communication		
Application		

EXIT CARD RUBRIC: Ongoing Journal

Name:_____

Categories	Below Level 1: 0-49%	Level 1: 50-59%	Level 2: 60-69%	Level 3: 70-79%	Level 4: 80-100%
Knowledge: (e.g., facts, terms, definitions) *Did you fill in ALL the exit cards from the course?*	Did not meet requirement OR No evidence	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Thinking: Use of planning skills (e.g., organizing an inquiry; formulating questions; gathering and organizing data, evidence, and information; setting goals; focusing research) *Did I answer the questions in a robust way? Did you give yourself a mark?*	Did not meet requirement OR No evidence	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication: Clear expression and logical organization in oral, visual, and written forms *Are my responses clear and easy to understand?*	Did not meet requirement OR No evidence	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Application: Making connections within and between	Did not meet requirement OR	makes connections within and between	makes connections within and between	makes connections within and between various contexts with	makes connections within and

various contexts (e.g., between topics/issues being studied and everyday life; between disciplines; between past, present, and future contexts; in different spatial, cultural, or environmental contexts) *Am I making connections to my life and/or the course?*	No evidence	various contexts with limited effectiveness	various contexts with some effectiveness	considerable effectiveness	between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness