



Next Gen Pol

Youth Media Literacy Curriculum

Media Literacy Capstone Project

Eloise Gordon, Christine Li, Jiwan Kim, Zarina Medeiros, and Theo Katzenstein

What is our Mission?

Mission Statement:

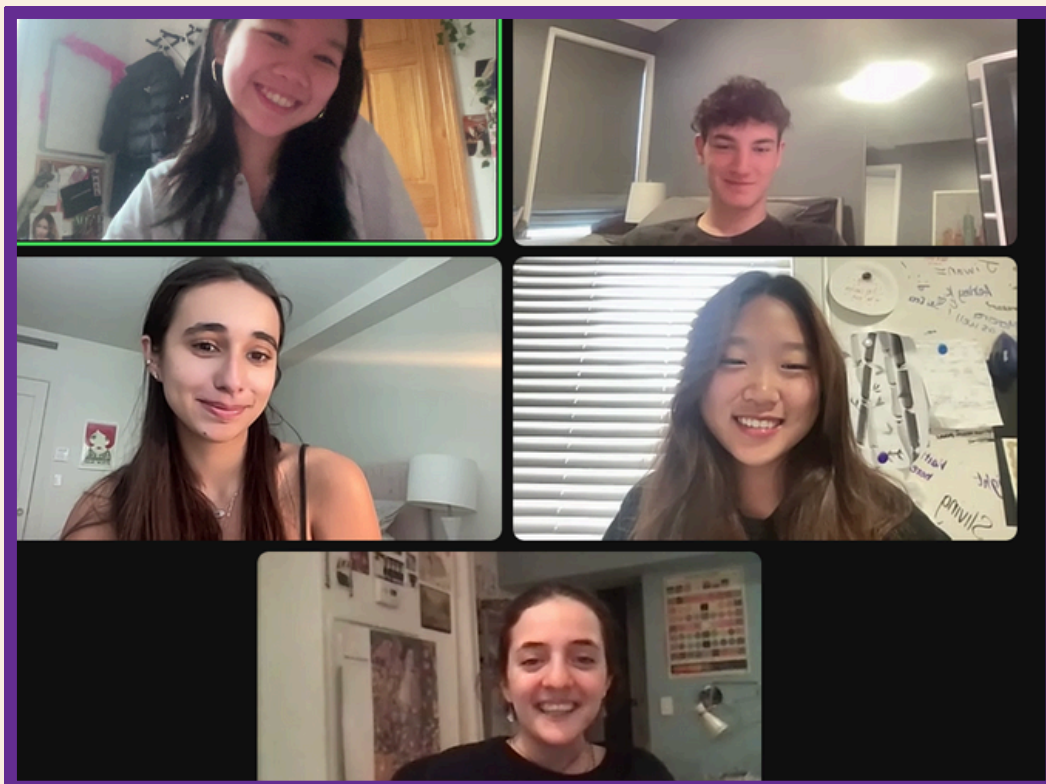
This curriculum seeks to educate **High School Students** on the skills necessary to fact-check and educationally consume political news on social media. We hope that by the time they are finished with it, students will:

- Understand the prevalence of **mis/disinformation** on social media
- Know the steps to **fact-check statements** made on social media platforms
- Recognize the biases they may approach social media with

This curriculum was created by **youth for youth**. It was made with a Blended Teaching method framework, and it incorporates Lectures, Cooperative Learning, and Gamification, which seek to aid students in applying curriculum content to **their** future social media usage.

Made for Youth. By Youth

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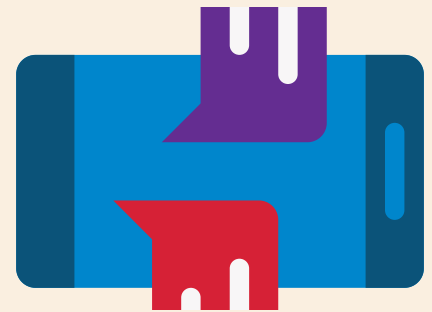
Lecture Content:

Intro to Media Literacy

Today's students are spending more time on the internet than ever before. With children ages 8 - 12 spending an average of 4 - 6 hours per day and adolescents over 12 using technology for 7 - 9 hours, the content they consume is bound to influence their **potential ideas, values, and identities**.

Although this access to technology can be positive in stimulating entertainment, empowering social expression, and presenting information can also breed risks including:

1. Online Safety Threats
2. Cyberbullying
3. Misinformation
4. Low self-esteem and body image issues
5. Depression and suicide
6. Substance abuse and other risky behaviors



Lenses of Media Literacy:

1. **Cognitive:** think about how the information and facts are being conveyed
2. **Emotional:** think about how emotions are being used and the underlying feelings expressed
3. **Moral:** think about the values being shared in content

Fact-Checking AI and ChatGPT: Why we need verification

ChatGPT has increasingly been used to test its many adaptive features and watch it generate content. But it can also be used as a source of misinformation.

ChatGPT is very susceptible to incorrect ideas. There is often a delay in covering the news and updating facts because they only seek information up to 2022 when used without the paywall. Only one is usually given in the sources cited, with no variety in opinion or context. It also often needs clarification, including a bias towards the English language and its news.

The NYT had tested these experiments, which proved the high usage of conspiracy theories and false narratives that can be harmful when spread. 80% of their narratives were wrong.

AI still is not strong enough to debunk falsehoods and resist biases. With prevalent usages of AI in writing and content, fact-checking is needed more than ever.

S.I.F.T. Method

The strategy developed by Digital Literacy Expert Mike Caulfield is to check credibility and seek reliable content.

Stop:

Before you read or share, think about what you already know. What do you already know about the source - is it reputable? What do you know about the topic?

Investigate:

Research the source and author: what are they known for? Look at potential “vested” interests and objectiveness. Are the facts of authority? Are the statements factual?

Consider lateral reading, another strategy for being media literate. Go beyond the site and seek other sources to better research the facts.

Find:

At this step, consider lateral reading, which is another strategy for being media literate. Go beyond the site seek other sources to better research the facts.

Look into better-trusted information or sources. Seek greater depth into the topic than the source. At this step, it is great to fact-check these “more reputable” or “authoritative” sources with fact checkers or reverse media searches. Potential and trusted sites include.

- FactCheck.org
- Snopes.com
- Washington Post Fact Checker
- PolitiFact

Trace:

Trace back to the original, look at all the claims and quotes from the media of choice - who are their references too? Locate the origins back to the expert or research cited. Then, connect these claims, quotes, and media back to the source. What was cut out? What was the original context? How are the facts used? Is it accurate?

Understanding the Social Media Echo Chamber

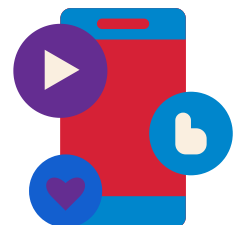
What is a Social Media Echo Chamber?
Check out this Video for an Introduction!
[Click here!](#)

An echo chamber refers to an environment in which the same opinions and facts that reinforce one's own are being shared. Though sometimes positive, they can cause misinformation that distorts potential perspectives towards looking at opposing viewpoints and engaging in discourse.

This is likely due to confirmation bias, the tendency to favor information that reflects existing beliefs.

Echo chambers can occur online and in real life. It is much easier to find and stay with those with the same ideas.

Online, there are Filter Bubbles: where algorithms track the content engaged with and continue to show content that matches past interests. This makes it harder to find new ideas and perspectives.



Breaking the Echo Chamber: Realize you are in one.

Ask these questions to decipher situations of an echo chamber:

1. Do they tend to only give one perspective on an issue?
2. Is that viewpoint mainly supported by rumor or incomplete evidence?
3. Are facts ignored whenever they go against that viewpoint?

How to Avoid an Echo Chamber Beyond:

1. Make it a habit to check multiple sources
2. Interact with people and content with different ideas. Be accepting of new ideas and treat individuals with respect.
3. Just because something you do not want to be true doesn't mean it is false.

Activities!

#1: Media Mashup!

Provide participants with various media clips (such as news segments, movie scenes, and commercials) and have them remix or mash them up to create a new narrative or message (in one sentence). This activity encourages creative thinking and helps participants understand how media can be manipulated or repurposed.



Example of Activity #1

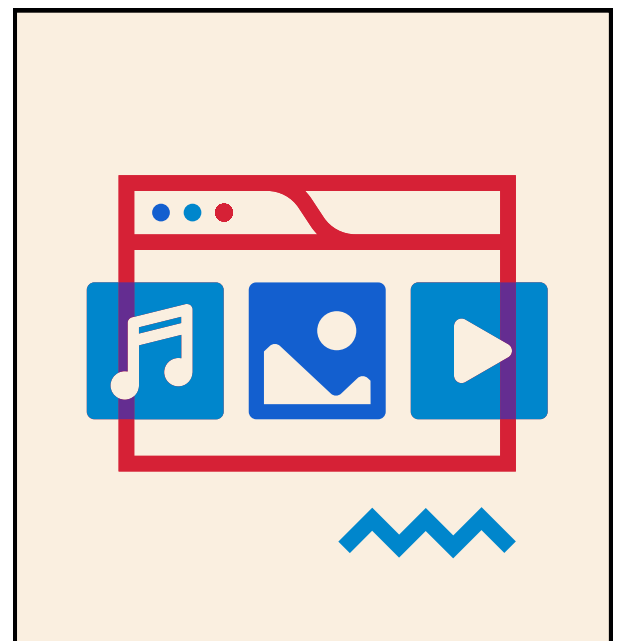
We will make our fabricated media clips say, “The Supreme Court agreed that stomach issues are still burning in some places, telling residents in the town of Fridge to prepare themselves as as many as 100 homes may be completely lost.”

Check it out here: youtu.be/fdlFo8Nh48Q
Here are some suggested media clips below:

- [Nightly News](#)
- [Trump Border Speech](#)

Activity Reflection Questions:

- Was it easy to create a new sentence from the clips?
- Do you think misinformation is created in this type of manner? Whether it be through writing articles, hosting podcasts, making videos, or engaging in conversation.
- How can you avoid misinformation from this type of media?



Activities!

#2: Historical Examples of Fake News

1. Provide participants with the below images and captions on three separate notecards. Instruct them to read and view them, making observations based on reflection question prompts.
2. Game of “Tabloid or Fake”: Present students with a headline and have them guess whether it appeared in a tabloid. Trick, they all did. The objective is to display just how “crazy” they can be. Have participants again make observations based on reflection questions.



Our Images: (These are all real!)



1. Kamala Harris to replace Tom Brady?
2. World War 2’s Best-Kept Secret: Adolf Hitler Was A Woman
3. Doctor Finds Baby Inside Year-Old Boy

Activity Reflection Questions:

1. What motivates people to spread mis and disinformation?
2. How might the way information is presented make it seem true or false?

Activities!

#3: Double Entendre Conversation

Write about your conversation between two people, which can mean two different things. You can create many meanings for a single sentence using metaphors or similes. After writing these conversations that can have double entendres, analyze the conversation itself. Write out the two meanings of the conversations. Through this activity, do you see how easy it is to make two opposing opinions based on a single conversation?

Example Conversation

A: Hey! What are you doing this weekend?

B: Nothing much. I'm just digging something.

A: Oh! In your garden? What are you planting?

B: A seed.

A: Mysterious. A Venus flytrap?

B: I've already trapped something.

A: Oh, I see. Trapping those seeds in the ground aye.

B: More or less. I'm digging and I'm trapping something in the ground.

A: That's what gardening is after all, heh heh heh.

B: Right, Neighbor.

A: Have you seen my dog, by the way? I couldn't find him. Just figured that little rascal was running around.

B: Your dog? I haven't seen him lately.

A: You're so obsessed with him, I would think you would be more concerned.

B: I've just got a lot on my hands right now.

A: Well good luck digging!

B: Good luck finding your dog.

Meaning:

Meaning #1: A nice conversation between neighbors about gardening and a lost dog. #2: A high-tension conversation between a man who is burying their neighbor's dog and a man who has lost their dog.

Activity Reflection Questions:

- What did you gain from conducting a conversation that can mean two things?
- Was it easy to get two different meanings from a single conversation?
- What does this activity have to say about media literacy and misinformation?

Backup Activity and Quiz

#4 Backup Activity: Out of Context

Search online to find clips of celebrities or politicians speaking. From the clip you found, find a portion that has a different meaning without watching the rest of the clip. Through this activity, you will see how showing clips out of context can influence people to think a certain way about an event or person, even if the clip is not based on truth.

Activity Reflection Questions:

1. What did you gain from seeing how one portion of a clip does not tell the full story and can be misleading?
2. Can you see how not providing context makes it incredibly easy to influence people's decisions?

SIFT ACTIVITY AND QUIZ: Potential Ideas to Teach and Practice SIFT

Have students cover one event in recent news and divide the class into thirds, each group having a different source. After having each student reach out and look into the images, information, and biases (SIFT), they can discuss with their group on their initial thoughts. Then, have them walk around to a partner with a different source in another group. Have a conversation:

- How do they report the same event?
- Do they use the exact quotes, images, and videos?
- Who did they seek information from? Were they direct?
- Which is the better source?

REVERSE FACT CHECK: Have students look into SNOPEs. Have students find a story, meme or report that is fake. Have students investigate the real source with SIFT.

Then, have them write recommendations for how initial readers could have avoided false information and fight misinformation.



Next Steps and Resources

Action, Next Steps and Resources: Media Literacy into Policy - How you can get Involved?

Potential Resources to use:

[MediaLiteracyNow](#)
[CommonSense.Org](#)
[ReadWriteThink](#)
[KQED](#)

Thanks for Reading!

Special Acknowledgements

We have two to thank for the production of our curriculum and project. Please read below and check them out!

First, our advisor, Ahmed Baba in his wonderful mentorship and guidance. We are greatly indebted to his support of media literacy and the inspiration he has given us to take this on. Find more information [here](#).

Second and last, we want to thank our Next Generation Politics Director, Sanda Balaban for her endless help and leadership, granting youth voices the power to take this on. Find more information about it [here](#).



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