

Fake News



RATIONALE:

There have been many “fake news” controversies during the US presidential election and in the aftermath of the European Union referendum in the UK. This lesson has been produced to provide students with the necessary skills to navigate the potential hazards of “fake news” and media manipulation.

KEY CONCEPT:

Fake News

KEY WORDS:

Mass media, newspapers, means, channels, credible, methods, false, genuine, exploitation, falsification, prolific, bogus, deception, impressionable, engagement, ad revenue, incentive, unethical, viral, yellow journalism, disseminate, echo chamber, truth, lies, misinformation, inform, vested interests, victims and misreporting.

SUBJECT AREA RELEVANCE:

Social studies, citizenship, journalism, language and literature

ANY PRIOR LEARNING NEEDED:

It would be preferable for the students to have some media literacy skills, so that they have had experience of navigating and interacting with the media.

LEARNING INTENTION:

To gain an understanding of what fake news is and to consider where, when and why the media might be doing it.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

- Students will analyze the problems and potential consequences associated with the spread of fake news.
- Students will understand what “fake news” is and identify strategies for differentiating real and fake news.

STRATEGY USED:

Choosing corners, Venn diagram, diamond ranking

1. Identify The Concept:

Some of the key areas to investigate within and around the concept of media manipulation are the following:

- Social media
- Journalism
- Propaganda
- Incentives
- Being impressionable

Concepts are the foundations of thinking. Dialogue will give you a really nice insight into your students' beliefs, questions and misconceptions.

2. Challenge The Concept (Cognitive Conflict):

Questions for students

Continue through all of the questions for older students, for younger children stop where you feel appropriate.

- What is news?
- Where do you get your news?
- Does news cause more positive effects or negative? Why?
- How can we determine if something is real or fake?
- Does misreporting something make it fake?
- Is getting the age wrong of the boy who got lost in the Australian outback an example of fake news?
- Is getting the fact that he was wandering around on wasteland a mile from his house rather than deep into the outback an example of fake news?
- Why do you think there is growing concern about fake news?
- What happens when fake news spreads?
- What can you tell me about the statement, 'fake news, real consequences'?
- What might be the consequences of fake news going viral?
- What are potential consequences when fake news goes viral?
- Do you think you could spot fake news or would you be fooled? Why or why not?
- What media literacy skills do students need to evaluate the reliability of a news source?
- How can you be sure that the news you consume is true?
- How do you think fake news could influence individuals' beliefs?
- Why might it be in someone's interest to have fake news reported?

3. Construct Understanding:

Activity 1: Choosing corners

This structure uses the four corners of a room, the focus isn't on opinion; rather, it is on giving reasons for a choice.

Question to discuss:

Where do you get the majority of your news?

Explain that we are able to get our news from a variety of sources.

Read the four signs placed in the corners of the room as follows:

- Social Media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, SnapChat, YouTube)
- Written Online News Website/ Newspaper/ Magazines
- Television or Radio Broadcasted News
- Friends and Family



Clarify any questions students may have about the categories. Give your students thinking time to make their choice. Encourage them to move around the room, considering each option. Then ask them to go to their chosen corners and share with others who have chosen the same corner why they have made that particular choice. If there are a large number of students in the same corner then they could split into pairs or threes. After a short while, you should invite a spokesperson from each group to explain their thinking. As each group does this, draw attention to the similarities and differences of the reasons given. Particularly highlight any contradictions or inconsistencies.

Questions to explore-

- Why do they like using that news source?
- How often do you access the source? Is it always intentional or do you just come across it?
- What are some of the limitations/negatives of that news source?

Have each corner group designate one person as the spokesperson to report back to the rest of the class what they discussed in their groups.

EXTENSION

Repeating the Choosing Corners activity again

- Which type of news source is most reliable?
- Which type of news source is most trustworthy? (e.g. Most people trust their families. Does trustworthy = reliable?)
- Which type of news source is most entertaining?
- Which news source has the greatest influence?
- Which news source has the greatest global reach?
- Which news source is most likely to be influenced by a person or group of people?
- Which news source is the most likely to be independent of any other influences?

PREVIEW

In so far as possible, involve your students in creating the Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. One effective way to do so within this lesson is allowing your students to preview new subject matter by asking them to bring in some examples of news articles from various sources; this could be cut from newspapers/magazines, printed from online sources or even transcripts, they can then use these resources within the next activity.

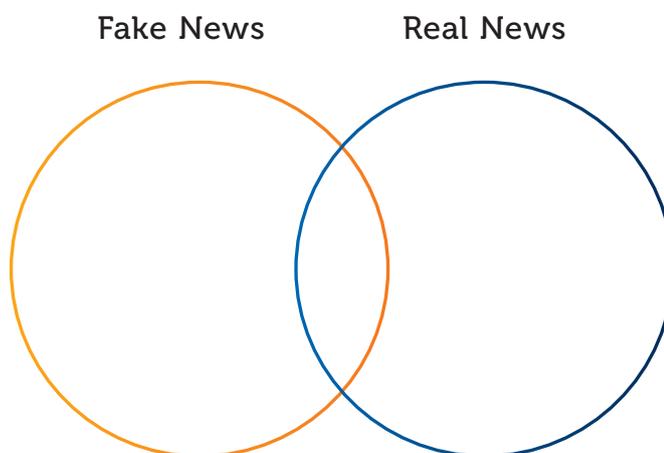
Activity 2: Venn diagram

The use of a visual tool such as the Venn diagram contributes to the engagement, depth and flow of dialogue. This is because Venn diagrams make thinking visible. They also help your students to be more aware of their thought processes, and shows you how much they have understood key features of a concept or idea.

Working in small groups using a Venn diagram will help students distinguish between two (or more) inter-related concepts. Here, you can use a Venn diagram to draw distinctions between **Fake News** and **Real News**. It is often useful to use hoops as the Venn diagram, this allows the activity to be kinaesthetic, visual and collaborative.

Using examples of news articles, from various sources, ask the students to consider where they may place them, if the cards fit into more than one hoop, demonstrate that the hoops can overlap to accommodate 'shared' cards and characteristics.

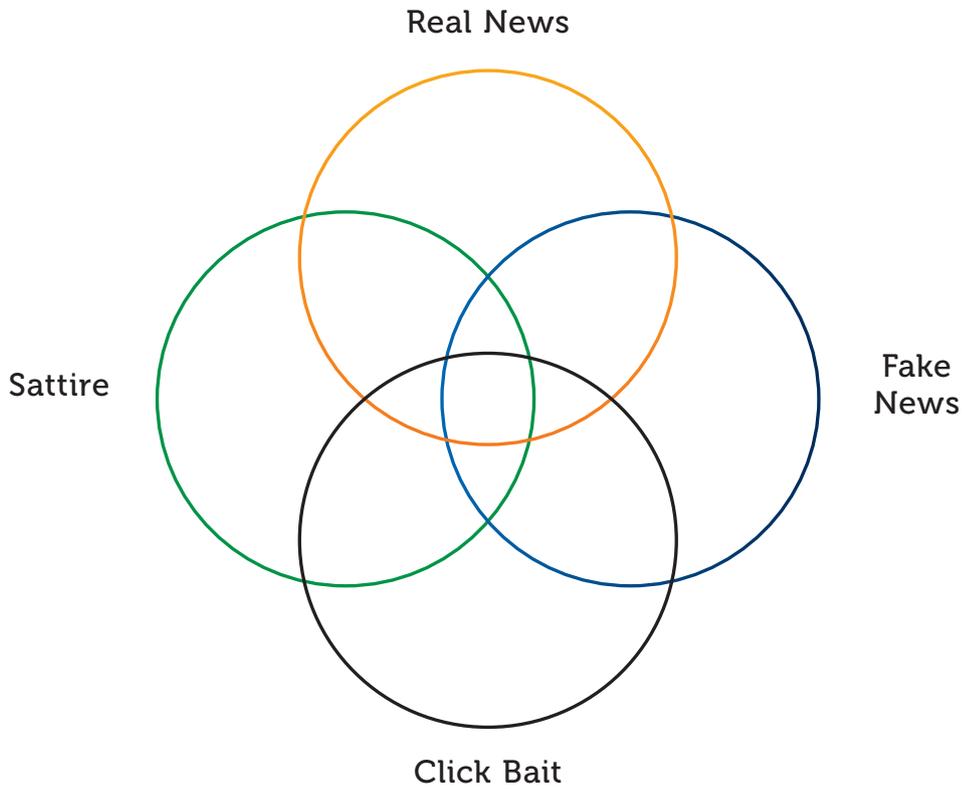
If your students disagree with a placement of a card/s encourage them to justify and give reasons for their choice.



SIMPLIFICATION / EXTENSION:

To extend the activity further you could give the students one or two more categories to sort the cards into- **Click Bait** and **Satire**.

For this extension activity add additional examples or news articles, which will provide more examples for the students to sort and classify.



Activity 3: Diamond ranking

The diamond ranking strategy encourages active participation. It will help your students to prioritise information, clarify their thoughts and create reasons and reflections.

Stimulus to create Criteria-

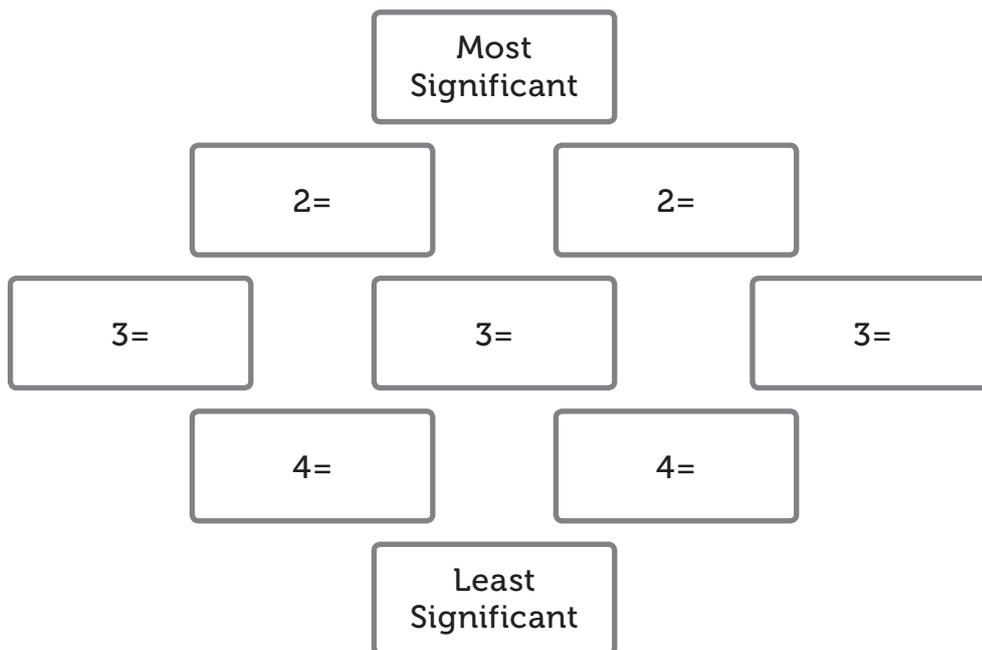
Strategies to help use detect fake news

Ask your students to generate some ideas of what they might look out for when assessing if a news article is fake. Make sure they write each idea onto a separate piece of paper. Generally speaking, there would be nine

slips of paper for a diamond rank although for some groups it might be more appropriate to go for just four slips.

Now ask your students to place the idea they think is most important at the top. In this scenario, that would be the strategy that is most likely going to help them distinguish a fake news article from a real one. The next two most important should be placed underneath the first one but side-by-side to each other to show they are thought of as 'second equal'. After that, there are three third-equals, two fourth-equals

and then the single least important one at the bottom, as shown in the Figure below.



SIMPLIFICATION / EXTENSION:

Alternatively, instead of your students creating their own ideas you could ask them to rank the orange Set 1 cards that can be found at the end of the lesson.

4. Consider The Learning Journey:

At the end of the activity it is worthwhile to encourage the students to review their learning journey and the thinking process they have participated in throughout the session.

This can consist of reflection on the thinking that has taken place by summarising and concluding on their new found understanding.

Explicit reference to Learning Intentions and Success Criteria is a good starting point for this reflection but it is also helpful to consider some of the following questions:

- What other information would you find useful?
- What aspects of the lesson deepened your understanding of fake news?
- What have you learnt from others in your class?
- Was there anything surprising in your conclusion?
- What are you likely to remember from this lesson?
- What strategies do you now know that you can use to better detect fake news?
- What will you do next time?
- What will you do every time?

By encouraging students through the learning pit it will increase their self-esteem.

Excessive
punctuation

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Photoshopped
pictures have
been used

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Your emotional
reaction to it is
strong

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You don't
recognise the
domain

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There is
no current
date on it

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There is a by-line
(the authors name)

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The information
is minimal and
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easy sharing

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known source

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It makes a
claim about
telling a secret

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There are no quotes, links or references

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