

CRITICAL THINKING

DEVELOP STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING BY EVALUATING THE TRUSTWORTHINESS AND RELIABILITY OF THREE ONLINE ARTICLES.

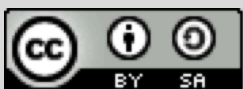


DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING SCENARIO

PREPARED BY VILNIUS TECH

Critical thinking is the ability to objectively examine a range of evidence, in order to make an informed judgement on an issue. Every day, people are bombarded with hundreds of media messages. The internet allows anyone and everyone to share information. Information is highly accessible and people often use social media as an information/news source. Some online information is factual or helpful. Other information may be incorrect or biased. It's important for students to think critically and ask questions about things they see, read and hear online to determine if the information is trustworthy or not. When considering trustworthiness, it's important to assess the relevance, accuracy and reliability of the information being presented. This can assist students in separating trustworthy information from misinformation (or 'fake news').

Learning scenario prepared utilizing the materials of [eSafety.gov](https://www.esafety.gov.au/) initiative



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LEARNING ACTIVITY 1

Divide the class into 3-6 groups. Each group will rate one of three online articles:

**Video games are too
bad**

**Playing with your brain:
Negative impact of some
action video games**

**Why do we fall for fake
news?**

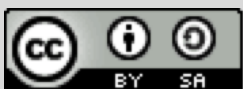
Instruct each group to read their article.



LEARNING ACTIVITY 2

Provide each student or group with the worksheet 'Developing Online Critical Thinking Skills' that requires students to review the trustworthiness of an online article.

(found on next page)



ARTICLE TITLE:

WHO - Who wrote this article?

- The author is qualified on the topic of the article ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
(An author may be qualified if they have a university degree or experience relevant to the article topic)
- The author has included a bibliography ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

WHAT - What is this article about?

What makes this article trustworthy or untrustworthy?

- This article provides links to research to back up its argument ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
- This article has a balanced opinion and presents **both** sides of the argument ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

WHERE - Where does this information come from?

What website/organisation is it from?

- This article is from a reliable person/organisation (e.g. newspaper, university, etc.) ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
- This article is from a reliable website (such as one ending in .gov or .edu) ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

WHEN - When was this article written? When was this article last updated?

- This article provides dates of when it was published/updated ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
- This article is recent (within the last 2 years) ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

WHY - Why was this article written?

Why is this article more or less trustworthy than others?

- The author's primary motive is to inform the reader ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
(rather than influence or sell the reader something)
- This article encourages debate and allows me to make up my own mind ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

HOW - How do I feel about this article? How can I find out more?

- The article is written in a way that is easy to understand ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No
(rather than confusing and emotive)
- I could find more research on the claims in this article ☐ Yes ☐ Don't know ☐ No

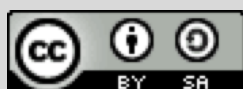
TOTALS: **Yes:** **Don't know:** **No:**

SCORING KEY

A score of 9 or more 'yes' answers = more likely to be trustworthy

A score of 4 - 8 'yes' answers = more information is needed to determine trustworthiness

A score of 3 or less 'yes' answers = likely to be untrustworthy





LEARNING ACTIVITY 3

Teacher-led discussion to encourage comparison of the articles. Discussion focus questions:

A. Based on the three articles reviewed, which article seems most trustworthy and why?

B. Which article seems least trustworthy and why?

C. If you are unsure about the trustworthiness of an article, what could you do to determine if the information is reliable or true?

DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS LEARNING SCENARIO:

Relevant: Appropriate and recent (i.e. published/updated within the last two years).

Accurate: The information appears factual and objective, references reliable sources, and demonstrates a balanced perspective on the issue.

Reliable: Information is endorsed by a reputable source (e.g. government agencies, universities etc.)

Biased: Subjective information that presents only one viewpoint or tries to unduly influence the reader.

Fake news: False information that has been made up and created to look like trustworthy news reports.

