



Lesson 7

Fact Checking and Verification Tools

Preparation time: 30'

Teaching time: 1 x 60'

Abstract

In today's digital age, misinformation and disinformation spread quickly. It's vital to have the ability to critically analyze and verify information, especially for journalists, educators, and everyday media users. This lesson will focus on tools and techniques for effective fact-checking and verification, along with common pitfalls to avoid. Participants will gain hands-on experience using resources to verify claims, images, videos, and sources, fostering informed and responsible media consumption.

Online educational resources

- **Lesson** on Fact Checking and Verification Tools from the *Sorting Facts from Fiction* online Moodle course
- **Quiz** on Fact Checking and Verification Tools from the *Sorting Facts from Fiction* online Moodle course

Keywords

*Fact-checking,
Verification tools,
Media literacy,
Disinformation,
Misinformation*

Lesson aim

The aim of this lesson is to equip participants with the skills and knowledge to use fact-checking and verification tools, employ critical techniques to assess sources, and identify common pitfalls in the process of verifying information.

Lesson outcome

By the end of the lesson, participants will develop a critical understanding of the importance of fact-checking and its role in combating misinformation. They will gain familiarity with key fact-checking tools and techniques, enabling them to verify news, images, videos, and other forms of media effectively. Additionally, they will learn to assess source credibility, recognize and avoid common pitfalls such as confirmation bias and misinterpreting satire, and apply these skills to become more discerning media consumers

Lesson implementation process

min. 1 - 5: Introduction

- **Discussion:** Ask participants about their experiences with misinformation and how they verify information when they come across something suspicious.
- **Present the topic:** Briefly explain the significance of fact-checking and the risks of misinformation and disinformation.
- **Define key terms:** Introduce concepts such as fact-checking, disinformation, and misinformation

min. 6 - 15: Minutes: Overview of Fact-Checking Tools

- **Present a list of tools:** Introduce tools like *Google Fact Check Explorer*, *Snopes*, *PolitiFact*, *FactCheck.org*, *TinEye*, and *InVID*. Provide a brief overview of each tool and demonstrate their use with examples.
- **Group discussion:** Have participants share which tools they find most useful and why.

min. 16 - 30: Activity 2 - Techniques for Verifying Information

- **Cross-referencing sources:** Show how to cross-reference claims with reputable sources. Use an example of a health claim or news story, and demonstrate how to consult trusted websites (e.g., *WHO*, *PubMed*).
- **Reverse image search and metadata:** Show participants how to use *Google Reverse Image Search* and other tools like *FotoForensics* to check the authenticity of images.
- **Assessing source bias:** Briefly demonstrate how to check a source's bias using tools like *Media Bias/Fact Check*.

min. 31 - 50: Activity 3 - Identifying Common Pitfalls

- **Present common pitfalls:** Discuss confirmation bias, over-reliance on one source, misinterpreting satire, and ignoring context.
- **Interactive discussion:** Provide examples of each pitfall and ask participants how they would address each scenario.

min. 51 - 60: Minutes: Wrap-Up and Q&A

- **Recap the main points:** Summarize the tools, techniques, and pitfalls discussed.
- **Q&A session:** Allow participants to ask any questions or share thoughts on the lesson.

Materials / Tools

Video projector, computer or smartphone, internet connection, *Google Fact Check Explorer*, *Snopes*, *PolitiFact*, *FactCheck.org*, *TinEye*, handouts for summarizing and examples, *Prezi* or *Power Point* Presentation