Post-Truth and Information Disorder

*Preparation time: **30'***   *Teaching time: **1 x 60'***

Abstract

This lesson explores the challenges posed by information disorder in the digital age. It examines how false and misleading information spreads and explores different categories of information disorder. It also goes into the notion of post truth Students will investigate real-world examples, explore different tools for verifying such content, and discuss the ethical and societal consequences behind misinformation. The goal of this lesson is to enhance critical thinking and media literacy skills to help students navigate a world of information disorder.

Online educational resources

- The Poynter Institute's *articles on online fact-checking*
- Arizona State University's *tools to identify fake images and videos*
- *FactCheck.org's debunking of false stories* on Facebook and other platforms
- *"Navigating a Post-Truth World",* TEDx Talk by Charles Sykes
- Online verification tools: *Snopes, FactCheck.org, Politifact, guides.vote*

Keywords

Misinformation, Disinformation, Malinformation, Post-Truth, Media Literacy, Critical Thinking

Lesson aim

The aim of this lesson is to help students develop a strong understanding of how information disorder operates and how does it effect public perception. Through this session, students will learn how misinformation spreads, how to identify different forms of misleading content, and what strategies can be employed to verify the accuracy of information. Through a critical thinking approach, this lesson aims to prepare students to engage with media responsibly and thoughtfully.

Lesson outcome

Students will be able to:
- Differentiate between misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.
- Identify techniques used in misleading content, such as manipulated and fabricated media.
- Recognize real-world examples of misinformation and analyze their impact.
- Utilize digital tools to verify information and counteract false narratives.
- Engage in discussions about the ethical implications of information disorder today.

Lesson implementation process

min. 1 - 10 : Warming Up

- Engage students with an interactive poll: "Have you ever engaged with information online that later turned out to be false? That includes sharing or believing and spreading that information"
- Discuss personal experiences with misinformation and introduce the key concepts of the lesson.
- Short thought-provoking video clip about viral misinformation (optional, depending on how long the discussion lasts).

min. 11 - 30: Interactive activity

- Explain the three main categories of information disorder: disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation.
- Provide real-world examples, such as election misinformation, deepfakes, and conspiracy theories.
- Discuss how emotions and biases contribute to post-truth politics.
- Break students into small groups to analyze different misinformation case studies.

min. 31 - 50: Practical Application

- Facilitate Teach students how to verify information using fact-checking tools.
- Compare real and fake media content, looking for inconsistencies in context and image manipulation.
- Facilitate a class debate on ethical dilemmas: "Should social media platforms regulate misinformation more strictly?"

min. 51 - 60: Conclusion

- Recap the key lessons learned, including the importance of media literacy.
- Conduct a Kahoot quiz to reinforce key concepts of information disorder.
- Encourage students to practice media verification techniques beyond the classroom.

Materials / Tools

Projector, laptop/desktop, internet connection; Examples of manipulated and fabricated content; Access to verification tools (Snopes, TinEye, FactCheck.org); Kahoot or a similar quiz.