Lesson 5
Effective Search Strategies

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

Abstract

This lesson explores how to navigate the vast world of online information using effective search strategies. Participants will learn to use keywords and operators, advanced search tools, and cross-checking techniques to locate accurate and relevant information efficiently. The session emphasizes the importance of verifying sources, understanding bias, and employing precision tools to transform the search process into a valuable skill for personal and professional contexts.

Online educational resources

- Lesson on Effective Search Strategies from the Sorting Facts from Fiction online Moodle course
- Quiz on Effective Search Strategies from the Sorting Facts from Fiction online Moodle course
- Library of Search Strategy Resources

Keywords

Search Strategies, Keywords, Search Operators, Advanced Tools, Cross-Checking, Information Credibility

Lesson aim

This lesson's objective is to enhance participants' ability to effectively search for information online by teaching them strategies to refine their searches, verify credibility, and identify biases. By mastering these skills, participants will be better equipped to find reliable information, save time, and avoid misinformation.

Lesson outcome

- Understand the importance of effective search strategies in navigating online information.
- Learn to use keywords and search operators to refine search results.
- Apply advanced search tools for precise and targeted searches.
- Develop cross-checking techniques to verify the credibility of sources.
- Recognize the role of reliable information in making informed decisions.

Lesson implementation process

min. 1 - 10 : Warming Up

- Begin with an engaging question: *"What challenges do you face when searching for information online?"*
- Provide an overview of the lesson, emphasizing the value of *efficient and accurate* searches.
- Share an example of a common search challenge, such as finding credible sources on a trending topic.

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min. 11 - 30: Collaborative Learning

- Discuss the role of keywords and search operators in refining search results. Introduce operators such as quotation marks (" "), minus sign (-), OR, and wildcard (*).
- Provide examples of how specific searches can give more accurate results.
- Explore the benefits of advanced search tools, such as filters for date, language, and file type.
- Facilitate a group discussion on common pitfalls in online searches and how to overcome them.

min. 30 - 50: Practical Application

- Conduct a hands-on activity where participants practice using search operators and advanced tools to find specific information.
- Guide participants in analysing a search to verify for trustworthiness and neutrality. Introduce cross-checking techniques by comparing information from multiple reputable sources.
- Encourage students to share their experiences and discuss strategies for improving their search habits.

min. 51 - 60: Conclusion

- Summarize the key strategies discussed, highlighting the importance of precision and credibility in online searches.
- Pose reflective questions such as:
  - *"How can these strategies improve your research process?"*
  - *"What steps will you take to ensure the information you find is accurate?"*
- Provide resources for further practice, including tools and guides on advanced search techniques.

Materials / Tools

Video projector; laptop/desktop; Internet connection; access to Moodle; examples of useful websites for effective research; handouts or digital links to advanced search tools; PowerPoint/Prezi presentation.