Developing Minds 2022

Toolkit for Educators

Books / Websites / TED-Ed resources / Podcasts & more …

Key Takeaways

Gaining knowledge requires trust in others to tell us the truth. This becomes challenging as we gain access to a wealth of information online because we become open to misinformation and disinformation.

Tips to keep in mind—

Algorithms favour negative content—anger, shock, turmoil

Consult multiple sources to verify accuracy. Use different search engines to see if results are different. However, searching creates a filter bubble based on your past search history.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) means that companies can pay to have their content reach the top of the searches. The top hits only indicate popularity rather than reliability or accuracy.

Linguistic characteristics of 'fake news'

1. Rhetorical questions
2. Negative words
3. Exaggeration
4. Pronouns, 'Othering'
5. Style mixing, length
6. Non-standard language

Practice lateral reading by opening up new tabs to verify the accuracy of claims as you are reading.

Allow students opportunities to create their own fake news, hoaxes, misinformation campaigns to foster a stronger critical awareness of what they are exposed to, and how information is used. Creating something new is an important part of critical thinking.

Classroom Resources

[Teaching critical digital literacy to combat fake news (bctf.ca)](#) (gr. 8-12, adult)

Civic Online Reasoning [Home | Civic Online Reasoning (stanford.edu)](#) "Free curriculum and assessments to help you teach students to evaluate online information"

Association for Media Literacy [Association for Media Literacy (AML) | Toronto, Ontario](#) Includes many lesson plans for teaching media literacy.

Media Smarts: Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy [Teacher Resources | MediaSmarts](#) Includes lesson plans for teaching media literacy.

Crash Course [Media Literacy - Crash Course (thecrashcourse.com)](#) (HS) Video series unpacking many aspects of media literacy.

Books

Fact vs Fiction: Teaching Critical Thinking Skills in the Age of Fake News (2018). Jennifer LaGarde and Darren Hudgins; ISTE. Jacket: Help students discern fact from fiction in the information they access not only at school but

in the devices they carry in their pockets and backpacks. (middle and HS)

Developing Digital Detectives: Essential Lessons for Discerning Fact from Fiction in the 'Fake News' Era (2021).   Jennifer LaGarde and Darren Hudgins; ISTE. Jacket: offers easy-to-implement lessons to engage students in becoming media literacy "digital detectives," looking for clues, questioning motives, uncovering patterns, developing theories and, ultimately, delivering a verdict. (middle and HS)

Fighting Fake News: Tools and Strategies for Teaching Media Literacy (2019). Jennifer LaGarde and Darren Hodgins; 6 pp Teacher's Guide based on Fact versus Fiction. ISTE. (middle and HS)

Teaching in the Age of Disinformation: Don't Confuse Me with the Data, My Mind Is Made Up! (2018) By Selma Wassermann; synopsis: This book gives teachers the tools and the teaching strategies to enable their students to become more discriminating consumers of information and misinformation coming at them from the Internet, social media, television and the tabloid press. It is an essential resource, rich in practical suggestions for classroom activities for every grade level. (primary, middle & HS)

Veils of Distortion: How the News Media Warps our Minds (2021); by John Zada; Terra Incognita; synopsis: A rare and insightful account by a former CBC and Al Jazeera newsroom insider of how the news skews our perceptions and disorients society (senior HS)

The Disinformation Age: Politics, Technology, and Disruptive Communication in the United States (2020). Edited by W. Lance Bennet and Steven Livingston; Cambridge Univ. Press. (senior HS); Open Access: The Disinformation Age (cambridge.org) (senior HS)

The Wave: The Classroom experiment that went too far (1981). Todd Strasser; Laurel Leaf; Synopsis: The powerful forces of group pressure that pervaded many historic movements such as Nazism are recreated in the classroom when history teacher Burt Ross introduces a "new" system to his students. And before long "The Wave," with its rules of "strength through discipline, community, and action," sweeps from the classroom through the entire school. And as most of the students join the movement, Laurie Saunders and David Collins recognize the frightening momentum of "The Wave" and realize they must stop it before it's too late.   (Gr. 10+; for classroom study and discussion)

Why learn history (When It's Already on Your Phone) (2018). Sam Wineburg; Univ. of Chicago Press; synopsis: focuses on the important contributions history education can make to helping students think critically about the readily available online information they are regularly confronted with.   (Educator-focused); see esp. Ch7 *Why Google Can't Save Us*

The Cure for Hate: A Former White Supremacist's Journey from Violent Extremism to Radical Compassion (2019). by Tony McAleer; Arsenal Pulp Press. Synopsis: Tony McAleer's transformational journey traces an inspiring arc. With personal narrative and gut-punching stories, Tony shares how deradicalization is possible in this fight against domestic terrorism. - Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO and national director, Anti-Defamation League. (senior HS)

Fake News: Understanding Media and Misinformation in the Digital Age (2020) edited by Melissa Zimdars and

Kembrew McLeod; The MIT Press. Open Access [Fake News: Understanding Media and Misinformation in the Digital Age | Books Gateway | MIT Press](#) (Educator focus) Range of perspectives and strategies.

Videos

The Me Research Search Engine. A satirical take on conducting your own research.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibN4lu5eh8I

BBC Spaghetti Tree hoax on April Fools' Day 1957

[Spaghetti-tree hoax - Wikipedia](#)

Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus

[Save The Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus (zapatopi.net)](#)

The Great Hack – Cambridge Analytica

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iX8GxLP1FHo&ab_channel=Netflix

Social Dilemma

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaaC57tcci0

The Social Dilemma - Influence of Social Media on Teen Depression and Behavior

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ui0UNXsEGJ8

The little-known origin of the term 'fake news'

https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p09d40rr/the-little-known-origin-of-the-term-fake-news-

University of Facebook—satirical take on how confident people are with their own research

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uREpls3sTyU&list=FLLbc0Uw6snyJtMEwwRDGC6A&index=3

Games

[Play GO VIRAL! | Stop Covid-19 misinformation spreading (goviralgame.com)](#) recommended 15+ It shows students how quickly something goes viral online by taking them through a simulated event.

[Fakey (iu.edu)](#) "aims to teach media literacy and study how people interact with misinformation."

TedEd

[How to navigate questionable information | TED Talks](#) (TED-Ed Talk Series)

[How to tell fake news from real news | (ted.com)](#) (TED-Ed blog)

[Fact-checking 101 | (ted.com)](#) (TED-Ed blog)

Websites

Reliable sources for digital publishing:

https://medium.com/

[The Conversation: In-depth analysis, research, news and ideas from leading academics and researchers.](#)

First Draft News

"To understand the misinformation ecosystem, here's a break down of the types of fake content, content creators motivations and how it's being disseminated" by Claire Wardle Identifies 7 types of mis- and disinformation and how it is shared. [Fake news. It's complicated. (firstdraftnews.org)](#)

"A list of non-academic readings related to different aspects of the "fake news" debate, covering the impact of advertising, its role in the US election, the growing awareness of disinformation campaigns aimed at upcoming European elections, and some of the psychological theories that help explain why our brains can be so easily fooled. By Claire Wardle [[M|D]isinformation Reading List (firstdraftnews.org)](#) Offers sources on the history of fake news, the role of advertising, psychological explanations, solutions, elections in US and Europe, the future and global case studies.

[News Literacy Project](#): An encyclopedic repository of helpful info and links for educators; newslit.org (primary, middle, HS)

[Project Information Literacy (projectinfolit.org)](#) Numerous readable essays on how different educators have tackled misinformation and encouraged research skills in their students. (HS)

How to spot fake news: Identifying propaganda, satire, and false information | SFU Library (HS)

Artificial intelligence may not actually be the solution for stopping the spread of fake news (theconversation.com) (senior HS)

Media Bias Chart [Media-Bias-Chart-5.1_Jan_2020_Ed_-Unlicensed-Social-Media-1-scaled.jpg (2560×1631) (adfontesmedia.com)](#) There are several examples available. The chart ranks the most popular news outlets for their political bias and quality of reporting.

Before it's News is an example of low reliability and high political bias[. Before It's News | People Powered News (beforeitsnews.com)](#) as is Truthbrary [HOME | truthbrary](#)

National Literacy Trust [https://literacytrust.org.uk](#)

Networked Learning, Open Education, and Online Digital Literacy [https://hapgood.us/](#)

The Disinformation Project at SFU, Dr. Ahmed Al-Rawi [https://www.sfu.ca/communication/research/projects/the-disinformation-project.html](#)

Open Access Journal articles on [Internet Policy Review](#) It looks at critical data literacy and how to regulate the internet.

Fact-checking

[Fake News Detection (sfu.ca)](#) Helps detect identity bias and misinformation in news articles. You can enter an excerpt of text to get the results.

Fact Check: [factcheck.afp.com](#) (journalists checking and verifying global news stories)

Media Bias Fact Check: mediabiasfactcheck.com (an independent website that rates the bias, factual accuracy, and credibility of media sources)

Snopes: snopes.com (self-declared: "We are the internet's go-to source for discerning what is true and what is total nonsense.")

Skeptical Inquirer: skepticalinquirer.org (The mission of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry is to promote scientific inquiry, critical investigation, and the use of reason in examining controversial and extraordinary claims) ... nb: biased to scientific reasoning, sometimes to a fault

Health Information: Quackwatch.org (focus on health frauds, myths, fads, fallacies, and medical misconduct)

Deconstructing Plandemic: This is a detailed breakdown of a video, 'Plandemic', released in spring 2020, that proved to very effective in seeding misinformation about the Covid-19 pandemic. (HS)

PolitiFact: politifact.com

Fact Check: factcheck.org/

BBC Reality Check: bbc.com/news/reality-check

Channel 4 Fact Check: channel4.com/news/factcheck

Reverse image search from Google: google.com/reverse-image-search

WHOIS—allows you to check the domain registry of any website to verify its legitimacy.

Bellingcat.com an organization based in the Netherlands that offers open-source and geo-political investigative journalism.

Podcasts

Stanford Study Finds Most Students Vulnerable To Fake News : NPR (4 min.) (gr. 8-12)

Out There

Adbusters: **adbusters.org;** Vancouver-based magazine and online presence drawing attention to consumer culture & more! Sometimes in-your-face; sometimes bang on (Senior HS)

"Whenever your conscious mind tells you something is unworthy of your attention, stop and take another look. Always question your questions and, above all, your answers." Marshal McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (1964)