Media literacy

eMedia

eMEDIA · MEdia literacy and DIgital citizenship for All

ALL DIGITAL · ENHANCING DIGITAL SKILLS ACROSS EUROPE

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Scuola di Robotica

UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA · ANNO 1919

SOS ARRAZAKERIA

la ligue de l'enseignement · un avenir par l'éducation populaire

Contributors:

Martina AGNOLETTI
Arci

Daniele BIANCHINI
Arci

Linda DANIELA
University of Latvia

Santa DREIMANE
University of Latvia

Aurélie GAUDIN
Ligue de l'enseignement

Pia GROENEWOLT
ALL DIGITAL

Shandra LOURIDO
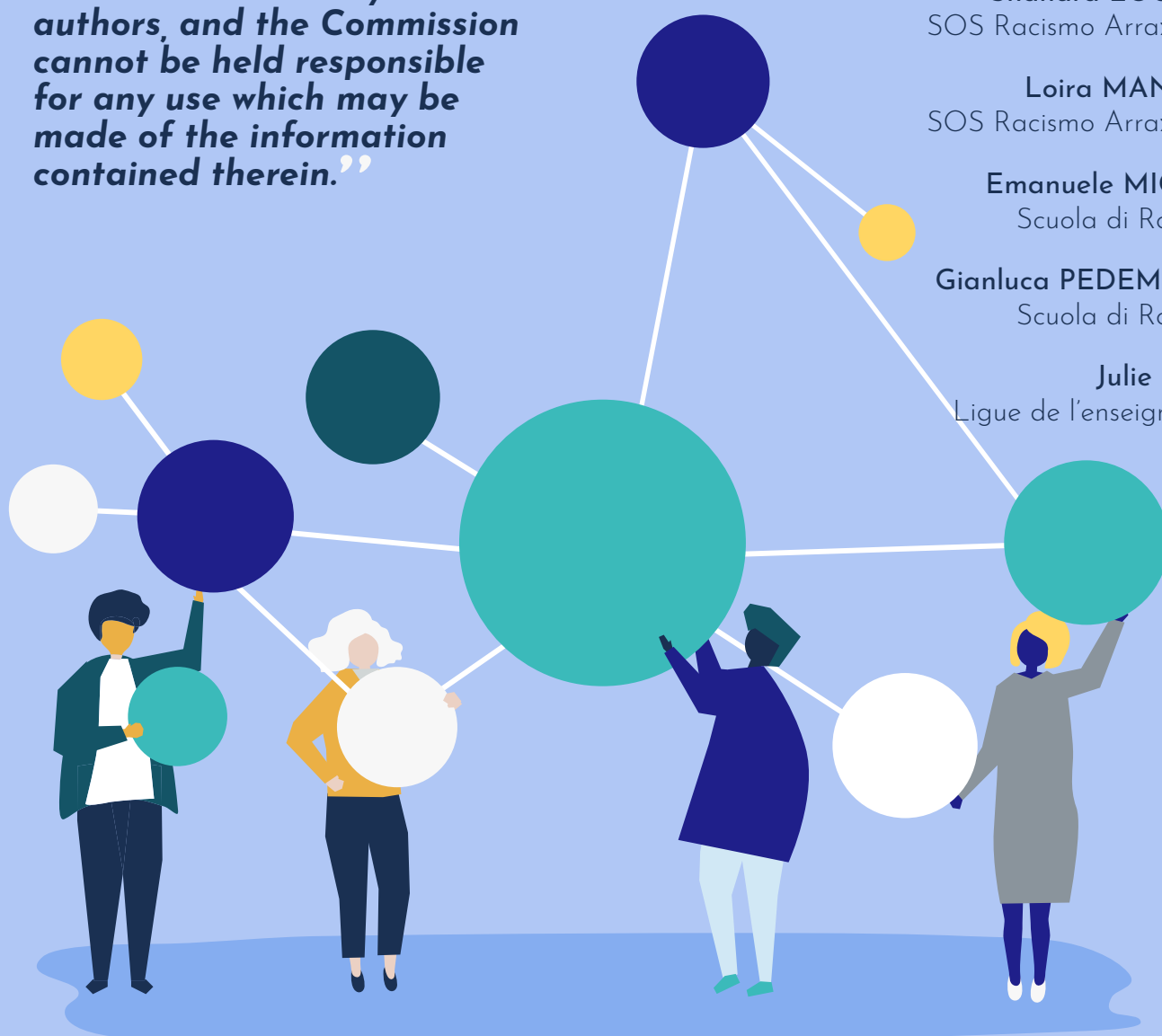SOS Racismo Arrazakeria

Loira MANZANI
SOS Racismo Arrazakeria

Emanuele MICHELI
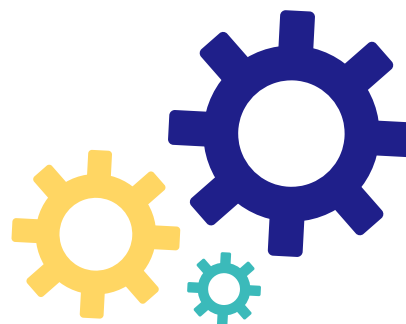Scuola di Robotica

Gianluca PEDEMONTE
Scuola di Robotica

Julie STEIN
Ligue de l'enseignement

SOMMAIRE

INTRODUCTION

Since the 21st century, the ever-growing stream of information and channels of information have changed how people do socialise. People increasingly use technology to communicate with each other. Nowadays, social media is one of the preferred streams for young people, and also for adults, to share information, communicate, get acquainted, to entertain themselves and to spend their free time. The internet and social media are the new public sphere.

News media organisations have also evolved quickly and now struggle to find new distribution and business models that adapt to digital media environments and practices (Notley, Dezuanni, 2019). Digital media environments provide a key source of traffic to the online websites of major news media organisations. Thus they receive a significant portion of income from the advertising, that news media organisations once would have received (Notley, Dezuanni, 2019). This results in a highly competitive media-sector and many media take the notion of profit into account when they prepare news content, sometimes neglecting media ethics. Even if media integrity and trust has risen as a global priority in recent years, online fake news are now considered as a major problem (Watkins, al., 2017). The digital era and social media have made verifying and trusting news content more complicated (Notley, Dezuanni, 2019). The role of education is thus very important, as it can help people to distinguish reliable news from fake news.

Young people are more easily affected through the internet because their environment is not controlled and there is no filtering of inappropriate content. According to the European average, children must not be left alone until the age of ten. Considering the function of the internet and social media, parents should not leave a child unattended on internet as well. All this guides a worldwide social debate about the need for digital media literacy education, both in schools and at home.

The term "literacy" was coined in the 19th century to describe the possession of general and necessary skills at that time, such as reading, writing and arithmetic (Pereira, Moura, 2019). But the digital era and the internet demand a new kind of literacy, where people need to be confident in their use of technology, the internet and social media as well. Essential component of this "new literacy" is online media, in which children need to be fluent and be able to distinguish fact from fiction.

The project **"eMedia: media literacy and digital citizenship for everyone"** aims to promote education for all by producing educational guidelines related to digital practices which consist of three handbooks. These handbooks are supporting possibilities for a new and innovative way of teaching different subjects at school. The handbooks are devoted to three aspects of digital competence:
1) **Educational robotics:** to develop computational thinking with hands-on activities
2) **Media literacy:** to understand the power and the risks of online media.
3) **Online expression:** to promote wiser use of social media, blogs, web radios and web TVs.

This handbook is addressed to teachers who are interested in developing their media literacy skills and transferring this knowledge to students, in order to enhance their critical thinking, improve their understanding of fake news, and also to give them practical examples of media literacy in the classroom.

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIAS ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT

Media influence on the youth:

cognitive, psychological and moral development of a person

During his/her teen years and also at the beginning of his/her adolescence, a person is still forming his/her personality, values, sense of morality and is developing his/her cognition. This is a time when a person is easily influenced by others and also by the media. Technologies and social media are an indispensable part of young peoples' lives, and because their critical thinking has not yet entirely developed, content creators may choose to deliberately influence them.

Young people may evaluate the content of online media based on their previous experience, level of knowledge and moral compass that is just developing for most of them. It is essential that parents and teachers understand what the cognitive, psychological and moral development of children and teenagers is, in order to know how to develop their media literacy, enhance their critical thinking and help them to improve their understanding of fake news.

Jean Piaget, the proponent of the theory of cognitive development as a basic function of life. He considered that human cognitive capacity lies in biological and psychological aspects, which were divided into 4 age stages (Kivnick, Wells, 2013; Newman etc., 2007):

1) the sensorimotor stage: birth to 2 years;
2) the preoperational stage: ages 2 to 7;
3) the concrete operational stage: ages 7 to 11;
4) the formal operational stage: ages 12 and up, that describes a period where, as a person grows, his/her mindset and perception of the world changes. The logical foundations of the various processes are seen. Man makes hypotheses to explain things and is able to look at the past, present and future dimensions. The final stage involves an increase in logic, the ability to use deductive reasoning, and an understanding of abstract ideas.

Erik Erikson's theory of Psychosocial development has been impacted by psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, but Erikson's theory centred on psychosocial development rather than psychosexual. Erikson proposed that psychosocial development is a predictable, sequential process through eight stages during a person lifetime. Each stage is characterized by the interaction between personality, developmental, and social processes. Culture and context can influence how individuals meet challenges related with each stage (Darling-Fisher, 2019; Chavez, 2016):
1) Infant-18 months – Infancy;
2) 18 months-3 years – Early childhood;
3) 3-5 years – Preschool or Childhood;

4) 6-13 years – School age;

5) 13-21 years – Adolescence. It is described as Identity vs. Confusion – this stage is marked with child's rapid physical and psychosocial changes and search for a new sense of mutual regulation. In this stage, a person is trying to find a sense of self by self-exploration, that may lead to insecurity about oneself and he/ she can become overly concerned with how they appear in the eyes of others and identify themselves with certain groups or crowds. At the end of this stage, children have reached the developmental level of an adult and develop only the mind and personality from there on. People who do not develop and reinforce their identity during this stage are likely to have unrealistic work goals and suffer depression. Erikson also describes stages from 22 – 39 years as Young adulthood, 40 – 65 years as Middle Adulthood and finally 65 years and older as Maturity.

Jean Piaget's Cognitive development theory inspired the American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg. In 1971 Kohlberg introduced the Moral development theory explaining the moral development of a person, dividing it into 3 levels: Pre-conventional, Conventional and Post-conventional. Each one of them include two distinct stages. The pre-conventional level explains that a person's morality is being controlled externally and expressed by a person obeying and following rules (Infancy with punishment and obedience orientation and preschool age that is self-interest stage). The conventional level extends a person's morality to personal and social relationships and the person obeys the rules to ensure positive relationships and public good (school age - conformity and interpersonal accordance stage and

school age - Authority and order orientation). In the post-conventional level, a person's morality lies in principles and values and in the belief that some rules are unjust (teenage - social contrast stage when a person learns that morally and legally right are not the same things and respect for rules and conventions in society as an adult).

Nowadays, in the era of information and communication technologies, it is important to reflect on how the online space influences young people's behaviour online. That is, theoretical approaches about development have to be interpreted in the online context that determines new ways to define ourselves, communicate and relate to other people. In this sense, interacting on the Internet mostly does not involve "physical" interactions with another person (i.e. face-to-face conversation), and therefore easily leads to a person feeling free to act differently online, as well as unrestrained in civility and minimisation of authority, etc.

People who are socially anxious are more likely to use electronic communication as their only means of communication. This, in turn, makes them more likely to disclose personal information to strangers online that they normally wouldn't give out face-to-face. The phenomenon is a likely cause for the prevalence of cyberbullying, especially for children who do not understand "social networking etiquette."

Internet anonymity can also lead to online disinhibition, in which people do and say things online that they normally wouldn't do or say in person.

Critical **thinking**

Critical thinking is a crucial aspect that every citizen needs to be able to do in order to take part in a democratic and pluralistic society. The current society, with its generalized access to information through Internet and with a constant bombardment of data, opinions and watchwords, demands new competences. Among them, we would choose one that relates to the capacity of critical thinking and to understand every kind of text to which it has had access and that are related to subjects (Oliveras, Sanmartí, 2013).

Achieving media literacy needs the development of critical thinking: the ability to analyse and evaluate critically with the aim to improve and engage in reflective and independent thinking.

According to the UNESCO's definition, critical thinking is a process that involves asking appropriate questions, gathering and creatively sorting through relevant information, relating new information to existing knowledge, re-examining beliefs and assumptions, reasoning logically, and drawing reliable and trustworthy conclusions. Critical thinking calls for a

persistent effort to apply theoretical constructs to understand the problem, consider evidence, and evaluate methods or techniques in order to coma to a judgement. The cognitive skills of analysis, interpretation, inference, explanation, evaluation, monitoring and correcting one's own reasoning are at the heart of critical thinking. (Seel, 2012). Attributes such as curiosity and flexibility and a questioning attitude are closely related to critical thinking, which is increasingly referred to as a key competence/competency and 21st century skill.

We live in a complex democratic society where the quality of our life and the one of what we produce, make, or build, depends precisely on the quality of our thought. Living and participating in a democratic society requires citizens able to think critically about social, political, economic issues in order to better understand what is happening around us, take into account other people's point of view and take part to a democratic and public debate on issues affecting ourselves and the hole society.

In fact, critical thinking allows us to reduce the effect of our egocentric, sociocentric and ethnocentric vision on our thinking and action, often biased, distorted, partial, uninformed or completely prejudiced.

It contributes to our own process of personal development and to take part with major freedom and autonomy to democratic society.

When our brain is processing internal and external information, its activity is influenced by cognitive bias, psychological effects that lead to mistakes in thoughts and actions. The term, coined by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in 1972, refers to a fast and intuitive way to judge or take decisions less laboriously than an analytical reasoning that takes into account all the relevant information. In fact, cognitive biases produce a deviation in mental processing that leads to distortion, incorrect judgements and illogical interpretations based on incomplete or illogical thoughts. This bias is a comfort zone which allows us to try and spend as little energy as possible and saves us the effort of a complex reflection. It arises as an evolutionary need for the immediate issuance of judgments to assume a rapid position towards certain problems or situations, due to the inability to process all the information that is filtered in a selective and subjective way. This is the reason why the mass increase of information on the internet and social networks have reinforced the use of cognitive bias. An example of cognitive bias is that it leads us to overestimate the value of information when it fits with our ideas and beliefs; on the other hand, this bias makes us underestimate and even ignore the information that does not match what we think or believe. It is a filter through which we see a reality that fits our expectations. That brings us to follow people, read newspapers and see programs that fit our ideas and ignore the rest. The influence of this biases is multiplied in the digital world, since the algorithms work like a cognitive bias, even replicating our offline biases in the online world. Digital advertisements and timelines offer personalized content which matches to our data, recommending content that fits us; if it fits better, we will click and invest time reading it.

Besides cognitive bias, social bias guides our selection of friends and indirectly affects the information we will see and manage. Social networks are efficient in the dissemination of information when they can polarize and assemble at the same time.

In light of post-truth and manipulation in social networks, one of the essential functions in both, formal and non-formal education, is literacy in the reading of the world in which we live. Media are strategic tools to foster conflict or coexistence. Although daily practice shows that they are going in the opposite direction to the desired one, they can be a magnificent resource in our favour. Therefore, it is essential to promote media literacy through critical thinking to vaccinate students of possible prejudices and confusions between facts and opinions.

Understanding that the ultimate goal must be social transformation, we identify six levels in the critical thinking process:

1) **Identify the topic.** It is the ability to raise vital questions and/or recognize a problem.
2) **Information thinking.** Searching for evidence, facts, or knowledge by identifying relevant sources and gathering objective, subjective, historical, and current data from those sources.
3) **Analysing.** Identify and understand the different arguments existing in relation to a particular issue and all the parts of a claim or problem, analyzing and assessing the different points of view.
4) **Logical reasoning (I deduce that…).** Provides structured reasoning and support for an argument that we support, overcoming prejudices we can have on the issue we are dealing with.
5) **Conclusion.** A conclusion must be reached generating the solution of a problem or a belief based on reasoned arguments and preparing for an action.
6) **Social transformation.** The skills displayed by critical thinking and the active paper critical thinkers have, should play an important role in realizing actions for social transformation from the perspective of human rights.

It is important to remember that **none of us think critically all the time**. Critical thinking takes time and energy; the mind, which has to save energy, has invented hundreds of "shortcuts", called cognitive biases, to avoid using critical thinking and arriving at a first solution. The important thing is to be aware of the fact that we usually think in a simplified and somewhat coarse way. We have to "activate" critical thinking in a conscious way, at all times in which thinking well is essential, for us or for the effects of our actions.

Once we activate it, we will have to **ask ourselves questions and look for answers, without taking anything for granted**. No questions, not even the most basic, should be neglected; we have to learn to answer them and develop **our own mode of thinking**. Critical thinking is a thought with a high degree of originality. It is not just a matter of comparing sources, but of reaching a personal conclusion, of which we are convinced and which we have also enriched with our ideas (naturally supported by sources).

Taking into account the importance of promoting critical thinking, the educational field is a privileged environment to foster this purpose.

Currently, in many school systems we face a closed, standardized and imposed curriculum that is based on a strong separation and hierarchical classification of subjects and knowledge areas, as well as on final exams. This traditional pedagogy, that emerged in the industrial era, is based on the paradigm of linearity and certainty, on memorization and selection of the right answer in which there is little space for creativity and that, nowadays, is quite far from students' complex reality and personal experiences.

We live in a chaotic world, in constant change, which poses continuous challenges to the existing knowledge. In this context, traditional, unidirectional, hierarchical and authoritative pedagogy doesn't help to understand this world. The digital world, with its new communicative, information and knowledge building practices, demands greater creativity to which an innovative pedagogy that promotes digital and media competences can help to respond.

Professionals of the formal and informal education fields have to contribute to provide students with skills and resources to develop critical thinking and to make it the basis of learning. We have to get stu-

dents to be critical, autonomous and free citizens in a democratic society and get them used to think about questions that don't have a single answer, so that they have to reflect not just on **what** the problem is but also, **why** this problem exists and **how** they can solve it. Freire (1970) introduced problematization as a technique or strategy for developing a critical consciousness, allowing students to analyze and be critical with taken-for-granted truths.

It is important to start from the close reality of students and help them to wear the "critical lenses" to look at the reality surrounding them without believing everything they are told.

In addition, promoting media literacy through critical thinking has the advantage of using a versatile methodology that can be applied and/or combined with many other active methods such as project-based learning, collaborative work or reverse pedagogy/ flipped classroom. Therefore, it adapts to different ways of teaching-learning and organizing the classroom, promoting active learning, in which it is the student who must build knowledge, which is much more motivating and effective, thus achieving deeper and more meaningful knowledge.

This method not only makes it easier for students to understand and assimilate the contents, but also teaches them to think, incites them to reflection and encourages them to engage in a dialogue and express their views collaboratively. In this process they implement different strategies and acquire a multitude of thinking skills and abilities that will be

useful throughout their student, work and personal career, such as:
• Searching, processing, analysing, classification and evaluation of information;
• Creativity, curiosity and innovation;
• Problem solving and approach;
• Decision making;
• Effort, perseverance and overcoming errors or challenges;
• Search for accuracy, truthfulness and precision;
• Autonomy and capacity for collaboration;
• Listening, understanding and empathy;
• Oral and written expression.

As mentioned above, one of the learning methods for promoting critical thinking is cooperative learning. **Cooperative learning** is a collective discipline which draws on the reflection of all team members and at the same time promotes the development of critical and creative thinking. Since this requires interaction, practice and reflection, it helps students to be autonomous, to express themselves, to socially mature and to learn based on results built by a social research process (Barkley, 2005).

Three critical dimensions of cooperative learning can be identified:
1) The need to think critically in complex situations. An open mind will be required to provide significant contributions to the team.
2) The need for innovative and coordinated action, where creative thinking is applied with new ideas.
3) Communication between teams, encouraging reflective thinking and tolerance to share criteria.

Cooperative learning is based on:
• Open discussion and participatory dialogue on different issues
• News analysis
• Team work
• Interactive exhibitions
• Dynamic development of activities. The theoretical explanations are introduced through participatory dynamics and techniques and they are complemented with practical work in groups.
• Guided reflections for students to reflect, analyse, think and reach their own conclusions and tell their own narrative from autonomy and criticism.
• Incorporation of subjectivity as part of the understanding, reality transformation and promotion of one's own (and others') emotional expression.
• Constructive mediation of possible conflicts and discrepancies of opinions during the development of the debate.

Therefore this methodology fosters the development of critical thinking as it allows learning from each other, taking a stand on the issue and arguing about it in a reasoned manner. In addition, mutual respect, active listening, empathy and freedom of expression are encouraged. Skills that are essential for media literacy.

Neus SanMartí proposes **cooperative reading** as a methodology to foster media literacy through cooperation among students. The classroom is organized in groups of 4 students, individual work and reflection are combined with sharing in the context of the small group and afterwards in a larger group. Students understand a text and retain information better when it has been analyzed in a group than when the text has been worked on only individually (Dansereau, 1987; Colomer, 2002).
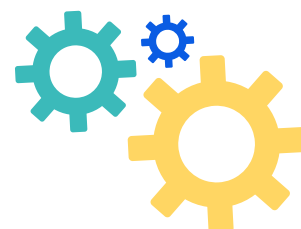
MEDIA LITERACY

What are we talking about?

For the UNESCO, media and information literacy "[…] enables citizens to understand the functions of the media and other information providers, critically evaluate their content and make informed decisions as users and producers of information and media content." It then includes the ability to recognize how information have been produced, understand the codes and languages of a message, have the ability to interpret a story and identify the values and views of a message and the construction of reality. It is about transforming information into knowledge.

Therefore, **media literacy** can be defined as a set of knowledge, attitudes and sum of the skills that are useful to know when and what information is needed; where and how to obtain that information; how to evaluate it critically and organize it once it is found; and how to use it in an ethical way. In general, media literacy is essential to reflect on society and its environment, understanding political, social, scientific, cultural phenomena, etc. that occur in society.

Today, digital and virtual world offers us the possibility of actively participating, disseminating and creating content. **DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY** is about media literacy applied to the digital sphere and the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). These **media digital competences** include different dimensions, taking into account virtual reality:

• Instrumental dimension: Knowing how to access and search for information in different types of media and technologies.
• Cognitive dimension: Knowing how to transform information into knowledge.
• Communicative dimension: Knowing how to express and communicate through multiple languages and technological means.
• Ethical dimension: Knowing how to use information ethically and democratically.
• Emotional dimension: Developing emotional empathy in virtual spaces. A media literate person is someone who understands the meaning behind the messages he/she encounters in the digital context

and who is also able to disseminate and create quality content and distribute it in a variety of ways to participate in a broader dialogue with society.

The following competencies are essential to digital and media literacy (Chu, Lau, Chu, Lee, Chan, 2014):

1) **Access:** it refers to finding and using media and technology tools skillfully and sharing appropriate and relevant information with others.

2) **Analyze and Evaluate:** it refers to the process of understanding messages in which a user critically analyzes the message quality, veracity, credibility, and point of view. It is done while considering potential effects or consequences of messages.

3) **Create:** It refers to composing or generating content using creativity and confidence in self-expression, keeping in view the purpose, audience, and composition techniques.

4) **Reflect:** it refers to application of social responsibility and ethical principles to one's own identity and lived experience, communication behaviour and conduct.

5) **Act:** It refers to individual and collaborative work by a person to share knowledge and solve problems and participate in the community. The problems to be solved can be in the family, the workplace and the community; participation in the community can be at a local, regional, national and international level.

We live in a context of infoxication[1], in the era of post-truth and fake news. This is why it's primordial to understand how and why media can have an effect on us. Understanding them is half the process. The other half comes from being critical and asserting our own thoughts, opinions and curiosities on how to view the media responsibility.

Therefore, from the educational field we have to take into account the importance of teaching young people to read critical analogical texts but also to use social networks and the information received and produced in an ethical, responsible and critical way.

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1. It refers to the excess of information to which we are subjected that brings to the difficulty or impossibility of taking a decision or keeping informed about a particular subject, due to the endless amount of data and content that exists on the web (Alfons Cornellá).

Fake news, conspiracy theory and post-truth era

False information, conspiracy theories and facts becoming opinions complicate media literacy approaches. Traditionally, attempts have been made to manipulate the truth, but nowadays, truth manipulation can be done easily and reach more people, due to the power of dissemination of internet and social networks.

Fake news are news created with false information and shared in a massive way to make content viral and spread disinformation. They can be created on purpose or by the dissemination of information that have not been checked before.

Social networks allow users to be producers and consumers of content at the same time, and have facilitated the dissemination of deceptive, false or manufactured content. This creates a vicious circle and fake news are replicated thousands of times within seconds.

Conspiracy theories are explanations of an event or situation that involve a conspiracy by sinister and powerful actors, often with political motives. They are often used in a context where other explanations are more viable. The expression has a pejorative connotation, implying that the appeal to a conspiracy is based on prejudice or insufficient evidence. Conspiracy theories resist falsification and are reinforced by circular reasoning: both evidence against the conspiracy and an absence of evidence for it are re-interpreted as evidence of its truth, whereby the conspiracy becomes a matter of faith rather than something that can be proved or disproved.

One of the technologies used to promote fake information is the **deep learning technique** that appeared in 2016: an artificial intelligence which makes it possible to create "Deepfake" (fake videos featuring famous characters). By using a multitude of photos and videos of a celebrity, it is possible to create a video in which the celebrity says things or acts in ways that she or he never said or did.

The authors of fake news take advantage of different factors to disseminate false information and manipulate public opinions, taking into account cognitive and emotional mechanisms and tools offered by new technologies.

According to Posner, Russell and Peterson, (2008), all **emotions** can be classified based on two axes: how much they push us into action and what reaction they produce. **Anger** is one of the emotions that most incites us to act, along with excitement. Fake news are often based on people's interests. Their creators often select popular topics and manipulate them so that the reader is invited to click, read and comment: they incite the reader to act. Readers' actions generate money for the creators of the news.

A social and emotional dimension is also involved in the construction of our beliefs and representations. We adhere, or often claim to subscribe to discourses of conspiracy because they are shared by those around us (family, friends...). The social environment in which an individual evolves, considerably influences his vision of the world and the way he thinks he should position himself ideologically and in society. Depending on his/ her background, and regardless of the social, cultural or educational level, any individual can subscribe to a conspiracy theory. The emotional and affective nature of a conspiracy theory or mis-information also influences our beliefs. A conspiracy theory which plays on an individual's sensitivity or imagination is more likely to be believed.

In addition to the social and emotional dimension, fake news and conspiracy theories use thought mechanisms such as cognitive biases. **Cognitive biases** (also called psychological biases) are forms of thinking that deviate from logical or rational thinking and tend to be systematically used in various situations. They are quick and intuitive ways of making judgments or decisions, and are less laborious than analytical reasoning, which would take into account all relevant information (definition from the Psychomedia site). The massive increase of information produced on the web has reinforced the expression of cognitive biases. Everyone has their own world view, depending on the beliefs to which they adhere. This digital reality worsens an already complex mental processing based on different cognitive biases, like confirmation bias, that leads us to take into account solely information that fits our ideas and confirms our preconceived ideas or hypotheses. It also leads us to give less weight to hypotheses and information that work against our ideas. Fake news exploit these biases we have, our brains use mental shortcuts to safe energy and simplify decision making.

We live in the era of **postruth**, a term named by the Oxford dictionary as the word of the year in 2016, that refers to information that appeals to people's emotions, beliefs or desires instead of objective facts.

Media and digital competences may help people to check information they receive, avoiding that emotion and manipulations end up dominating the truth.

The role of new technologies in distorting reality

Many people report being overwhelmed with the information found in today's media landscape: fake news, alt-media, truth, propaganda. Many terms are tossed around, and users have less and less grasp on how to view the media in a responsible and sobering perspective. Understanding how headlines are crafted, recognising the way headlines are designed to make you feel and your reactions to them can help one understand how to approach the media and social media landscape responsibly. But how is this done?

Various terms such as echo chambers, filter bubble and algorithm will be defined and explained so that users can get an idea of how media articles can influence our emotions, perspectives, and thoughts.

Filter bubbles

The concept of filter bubbles was first advanced by Eli Pariser who argued that filter bubbles create personalised experiences for internet users by suggesting content which reflects their own interests and opinions and, in this way, stops them from interacting with content that is new to them. It refers to the state of intellectual isolation provoked by a website algorithm that selectively guesses what information a user would like to see based on information about the user, such as location, past click-behaviour and search history. As a result, users become separated from information that disagrees with their viewpoints, effectively isolating them in their own cultural or ideological bubbles. It can be helpful for people to have an online experience which is tailored to their needs and interests but it does not reflect the plurality of everyday life and how people are usually exposed to a wide variety of views.

Social networks are neither a source nor a producer of information. They just disseminate the contents created by actors who are dealing with information (institutions, state agencies, press organizations, etc.) or other types of actors (users, commercial companies, personalities, etc.). We thus come across information "by accident" without having really searched for it. On the other hand, social networks encourage internet users to interact directly with information and to take a stand by "liking", sharing or commenting on it. These interactions allow algorithms to identify the contents that make the internet user react. That is why, as the internet user navigates, the **algorithm** will suggest similar contents. It is therefore our interactions, our data and the information we give to social networks and web search engines that constitute our "filter bubble".

Thus, the spaces where information can be found and produced on the Internet are often perceived as spaces of freedom and objective information, far from the influences and lobbies of which the media would be victims. Actually, nothing on the web can guarantee, just like in any other media, a total objectivity in the processing of information: the use of algorithms in digital media influences the construction of our opinions, leaving little room for openness to other points of view.

Echo Chambers

Echoes are the repetition of sound waves. Echo chambers are a metaphor where one's existing views, or beliefs are reinforced because they are expressed or exist in a closed system. One benefit of the internet and today's media landscape is that people have more access to hear, see and read a pluralistic set of view than ever before. However, there is a risk that many people and users have the chance to find more sources which just reinforce their views. Part of the phenomenon of echo chambers is created because of how one's online identities are created with accounts being linked to one's IP address and search history. Moreover cognitive bias help us unconsciously build our "echo chamber": we tend to follow people, read newspapers and see programs that fit our ideas and ignore the rest.

Many people feel comfortable in echo chambers because it is easy to agree with the views and perspectives presented. However, they are harmful because they reduce exposure to opposing views, alternative opinion, perspectives, people who disagree with you and would challenge them. Echo chambers can reduce the capacity of individuals to understand why people may hold the opposing view or even empathy for those who hold them, reinforcing the **"us vs them" mentality**. The term of "us versus them" is used quite often, even unconsciously. Many people may end up trying to speak or refer to their group as "us." While understanding a definition of "us" can be valuable for constructing our identities and creating a shared narrative, there is a darker side to this dichotomy. An "us vs them" is divisive. It divides the world into negatively viewed, stereotyped groups (them), and a positively viewed group (us). Divi-sions can be based across a wide range of identity characteristics such as race, religion, gender, class, nationality, and political views. It can also be created around sports, music preferences, modes of transportation or dietary preferences. It's easy to scapegoat and label others behind a computer screen a place where your opinions and beliefs can be reinforced by echo chambers and filter bubbles, rather than challenged and contradicted. It is important to take this into consideration when participating in online forums, groups, or when liking certain pages.

Fact checking

Fake news and fake media generate a strong confusion among users and foment a culture of dis-information that manipulates personal decisions and attacks democracy, interfering in people's right to look for and receive information, increasing hostility and hate against vulnerable groups in society.

As citizens we have to be aware that fake news affect democratic integrity and that they have to be approached in their political, social and cultural dimension.

This is the reason why it is important to detect dis-information and fake content.

How can we detect them?

Signature. Don't rely on news that are not signed, associated with an author. Fake news is usually anonymous.

Origin. It is important to verify the sources that the news has, analyze the "about" section of the page that disseminates the news, contrast the links and citations mentioned and perform an inverse search of images, to find out that no use has been made of photos out of context.

**Contrast**. If no other media reports the news, it is possibly false.

Errors. News containing spelling or writing errors may be false too.

Format. Be aware of unusual formats and large and capitalized titles, designed to appeal to emotion and arouse attention.

Date. Actual news comes right after the event while false news are written days later, undated or timeless. We often receive or forward news form months or years ago, thinking that they are new or fresh.

URL. Check the web address and contrast it with other media. Don't rely on URLs similar to known sites as fake news websites often simulate the web or media URL. It is a strategy used by websites that spread false news to confuse the reader.

Audiovisual resources. Fake news may contain images or videos manipulated or taken out of context. Current technologies make it easier to manipulate images and videos (deepfake). A photo or a video is not necessarily a proof and that is why its source and creation process must be questioned. The angle at which a photograph is taken can also give a different meaning or interpretation. Thus, even if a photo is real, it can be manipulated and then serve a specific discourse.
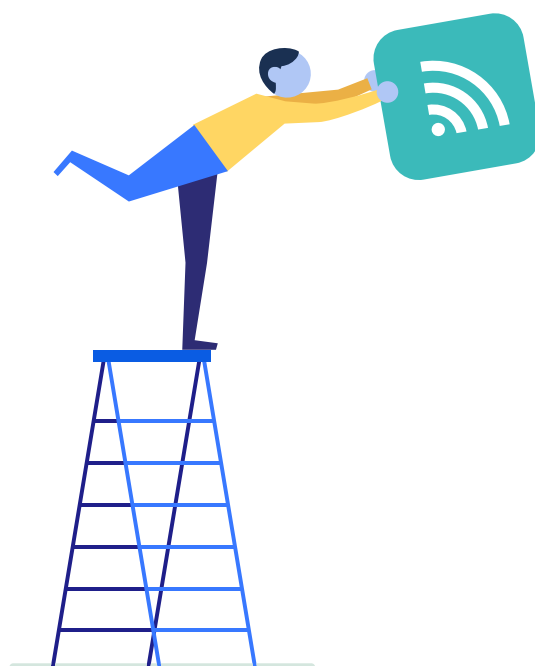
Critical view of medias

When we face media, the development of a critical perspective implies to wonder about the following questions in order to avoid manipulation, be critical and reach true information.

Who?

Who created the message? Media messages are always produced by someone.

Who is the author of the document? Who is the source of the information (website, blog...). Is he/she identified? Can we contact him/her? Is he/she an expert in the issue? Does he/she speak in the name of an institution? Or from a personal/ individual perspective?

What?

What is the message? Media messages are not a reflection of reality, they are constructions of reality. When someone communicates something, his message implies what that person thinks, believes, feels. In the same way, the messages reflect the interests of the media, often in an unclear way. That is why it is very important to identify the points of view, values, judgments and ideas that are reflected in this message.

What does the message mean? Is it different or similar to other messages dealing with the same issue? Which differences and similarities? Does it bring something new?

What values or ideas does it communicate?

What opinions and views appear? Which ones have been omitted?

How?

Which creative techniques are used to catch my attention? Messages are made with a creative language which has its own rules. In order to decipher the message, we have to understand how the content creators are trying to catch our attention.

Textual message. Look at the font size: what are they trying to highlight and how (bold, uppercase, attached photo)?

Image or video. Look at the colours, shape, sounds, the focus of the camera.

How is the story told? Through which elements do the content creators make us believe the story they are telling us? Are they trying to persuade us? Do they try to provoke any emotion, positive or negative?

Why?

Why this message has been sent? Most media messages are built to gain power. That is why it is important to ask:

What is being said in the message? Is it trying to convince us of something?

What do they want us to grasp or understand? Who benefits from it? (Individuals, institutions, private interests, citizenship). Who controls the production and transmission of the message?

To who?

What is the targeted audience? Different people can understand and perceive the same message differently, according to our knowledge, values, ideas, interests, age, gender, social and economic status, education.

In fact, we consume the messages that reaffirm our ideas and reject what questions them.

We have a central role in interpreting media content and not just being passive consumers.

Do I see what the other person sees?

When?

When was the information produced and published? In which context? It is important to understand and analyse in which context the information is produced and shared.

Does the information have the date? Which is the date? Does the document need to be updated?

A useful questionnaire used with this purpose is **C.R.I.T.I.C**., adapted from Bartz, 2002. This questionnaire tries to promote the students' ability to identify the main affirmations of the discourse, the interests that moved the author to create it and the point of view that he adopts. Moreover, students can assess the solidity, reliability and validity of the evidence and arguments provided and detect inconsistencies, inaccuracies, errors and / or contradictions in order to realize a meaningful and critical reading (Oliveras, Sanmarti, 2009).

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAME

Licences and media ownership

How can you share contents with your students and how can you help them to use materials with the right citations?

Why should teachers and students be concerned about copyright?

Copyright is a right that a creator gets when he creates an output. When a student or a teacher creates an output, they have the right to own it and profit from it. There is no formal registration procedure needed to get a copyright so long as the work you create counts on being an original. Legally, originality is developed when something is developed with ones' own skills, labour and judgement. There are copyright registration services which are available for a fee, but this is less and less necessary these days.

However, in education and in many projects, there is often a need to share and collaborate. Teachers often rely on previous or historical sources, or new OERs and it is important to know how you can use content from different sources in your classroom. Similarly, students should also know how to legally source, adapt and modify work so they can also include it in their classrooms.

There are cultural artefacts which can be freely used without worrying about the copyright assuming the author/original owner of the artefact has been deceased for over 70 years. The logic behind this is that artefacts are considered to be part of the public domain. There is also creative commons licensing. Such licensing allows for works to be distributed freely so long as attribution is given to the creator. It is possible to search in google for works licensed under creative commons, youtube also has a search filter that enable to identify videos which can be redistributed. Furthermore, there are websites like pixabay and europeana, collections where you will find reusable resources.

What about creating content that is meant to be shared?

Licenses are often used to protect intellectual property. Software developers, authors and teachers may often protect their outputs applying for a copyright license. However, while the use of copyright allows the creator to profit from his/her work, the burden on improving the outputs often lies on the creators and the holder of the copyright or license. Some creators choose to have open licenses when sharing their work with the intention of improving the work they have created, through open collaboration.

Licenses provide a lot of background to understand the basis of free software. One of the reasons why people use free software is that people have the freedom to use software the way they want to, not the way the owners of the copyright may wish for the user to use it. Examples to illustrate this are formatting and compatibility issues when sending a document from a windows device to a Mac, or the availability of some programmes on some online app stores with some devices. A license is an official permission or permit to do, use, or own something. Copyright is a legal right that grants the creator of original work exclusive rights for its use and distribution while copyleft is a strategy of utilizing copyright laws to pursue the policy goal of fostering and encouraging the equal and inalienable right to copy, share, modify and improve creative works of authorship.

Free software tries and makes use of copyleft, the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike License and the General Public License (GPL). Users can use the 4 freedoms:
• Freedom 0: the freedom to run the program for any purpose.
• Freedom 1: the freedom to study how the program works and change it to make it do what you wish.

• Freedom 2: the freedom to redistribute and make copies so you can help your neighbour.
• Freedom 3: the freedom to improve the program and release your improvements (and modified versions in general) to the public, so that the whole community benefits.

These freedoms and the licensing that grants these provide the foundation for software freedom, which is free not free of charge.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES OF MEDIA LITERACY IN CLASSROOM

The role of the educator in promoting media literacy shifts from teacher to project manager and moderator, helping the students to organize the work and to stay focused on the objective of the project. The educator will guide students in the learning process, and learn himself /herself about it at the same time.

Nowadays, we read new texts and in a different way: we read in new situations, with other formats and other discursive genres. We read images, videos and virtual diagrams, in addition to letters. We read texts from anywhere on the planet. Considering all these changes, it is really important to provide the teaching of reading with a more social and critical dimension, learning not just to understand a text but also to interpret that text.

Interpreting is being conscious of the type of text we read, the ways in which it is used, the effects it provokes on people; of the status that its author acquires with it, of opinions and attitudes it generates in us, the readers, etc.
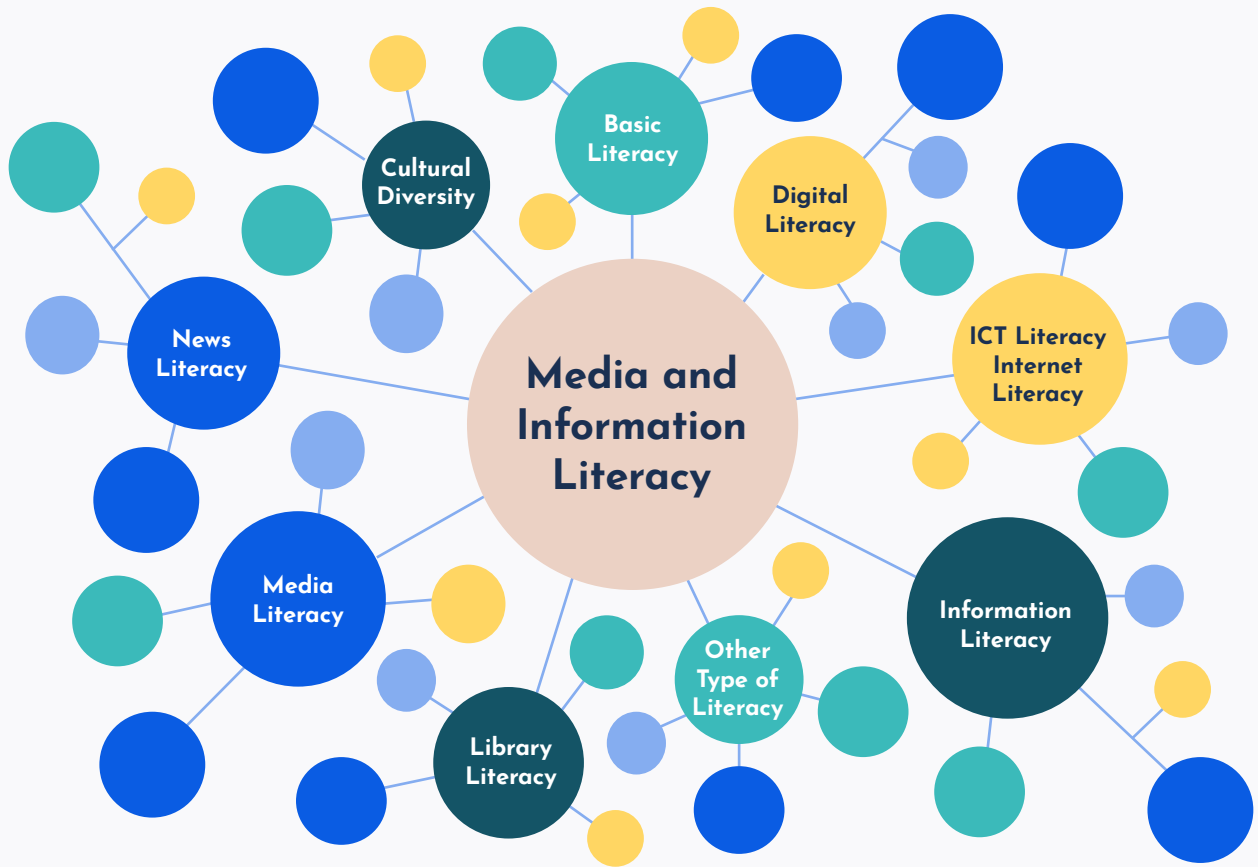
Daniel Cassany offers ten simple and exemplified guidelines that teachers can use to foster the practice and teaching of reading from a more critical dimension, promoting contextualized interpretation.

1) **Work the interpretation with all kinds of text.** In order to understand the author's point of view and to create our own opinion about it.
2) **Use authentic texts, from the learning environment or from the students topics of potential interest.**
3) **Use parallel, opposite or related texts on the same topic**, so that the students compare them, realize their relationships, similarities and differences, and they may experience the social effects of language.
4) **Include multimodal texts.**
5) **Take advantage of previous vernacular practices.** We call them vernacular (to distinguish them from academic ones) and we can use them to connect the class to the outside world and to encourage a more complete and useful teaching.
6) **Avoid single answer or convergent correction.** Reading assignments that pursue a single answer, correction or preset by the teacher (the book text or canonical tradition) kill personal interpretation and transfer the false assumption that there is a single meaning in the text, that we all read in the same way and whoever has understood something different is because he misread.
7) **Encourages dialogue between students**, exchanging points of view during the reading.
8) **Ask about the author's purpose and point of view.**
9) **Encourage rereading and analysis of relevant points.**
10) **Help students to relate reading to his world.**

This chapter includes 10 time-based activities to work on media literacy in classrooms. 10 hours of activities to challenge the students to reflect on information and medias. The activities are proposed in a progressive order, following the theoretical contents developed in this booklet.

In the classroom, every solution proposed by the students is evaluated positively. The main goal remains the development of critical thinking and digital media competences.

Media and Information Literacy

(Cultural Diversity · Basic Literacy · Digital Literacy · ICT Literacy Internet Literacy · News Literacy · Media Literacy · Library Literacy · Other Type of Literacy · Information Literacy)

According to the UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Assessment Framework activities proposed below will allow students to develop skills like:

MIL Component 1 Access

Recognizing the demand for, being able to search for, being able to access and retrieve information and media content.
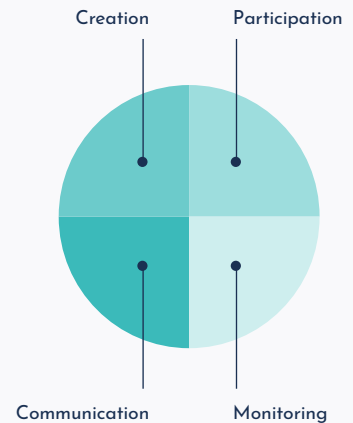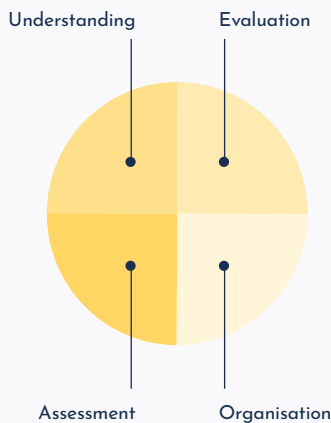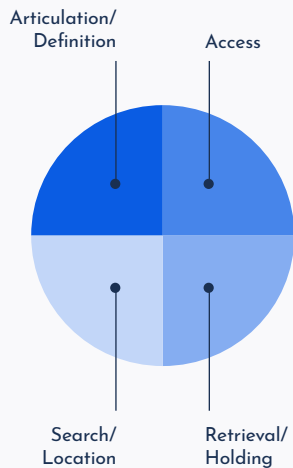
MIL Component 2 Evaluate

Understanding, assessing and evaluating information and media.

MIL Component3 Create

Creation, utilization and monitoring of information and media content.

Articulation/Definition · Access · Search/Location · Retrieval/Holding

Understanding · Evaluation · Assessment · Organisation

Creation · Participation · Communication · Monitoring

Activity 1
Critical Reading

Activity duration

1 hour

What do you need?

• A computer or another device connected to the internet.
or:
• Printed information, provided by the teacher.

Introduction

Critical reading is one of the ways to promote critical thinking. Indeed, it is not enough to read and understand a text, but it is necessary to be able to read it critically and interpret, for example, the credibility of the data and arguments it provides. From this perspective, reading means recognizing that the text is a cultural instrument, with values and located in a historical era. In other words, its author is not a neutral person, but has knowledge, a culture, and intentions that are reflected in the text and that the reader has to interpret. Thus, in a text it is necessary to recognize the ideology and the status and degree of certainty of the scientific arguments that appear in it, differentiating between affirmations, hypotheses, speculations, predictions… (Cassany, 2006).

The goals of this activity are:
• to develop critical reading and thinking.
• to compare different positions and arguments on the same topic.
• to create students' own opinion on the topic.

Activity progress

The teacher has to choose a topic to talk about (for example recycling). After that, he/ she has to look for two (or more) different positions on that topic, for example:
• Articles on the same topic from different sources. They can be different newspapers or sources of different register (a newspaper and a blog/ a newspaper and a facebook post).
• Radio program on the topic with different people interviewed…

The teacher, through the methodology of cooperative reading, has to guide students in the analysis of the texts following the tools provided in this booklet (3.5):
• Who is the author of each article? Where has it been published?
• Do you foresee the intention of the reading? (alarmist, pessimistic, sensationalist, informative…). Why?
• Which arguments does he provide to defend his position? Are they scientific arguments or are they opinions?
• Think about other arguments different from the author ones.
• What do you think about that topic? Provide arguments and discuss with your classmates.

Activity 2
Chronocards for Media

Activity duration

30 minutes

What do you need?

• 1 timeline with key dates for each group of students.
• Paper and pencil.

Introduction

Knowing how to be informed implies knowing how to find your way in the media field. First of all, the teacher can exchange with the students, define with them what a media is and which ones they use to inform and entertain themselves. He can then ask them about the evolution of information consumption practices, for example: in their parents' time? In their grandparents' time? Have these practices changed and if so how?

The goals of this activity are:
• to know how to identify different medias.
• to discover the evolution of the history of the press and media.

Activity progress

The teacher has a timeline (quite long) with the key dates of the game(in blue). Then, he forms groups of 4 people. Each group must, as soon as possible, arrange the cards in chronological order. Once the game is over, the teacher initiates a discussion with the young people, so they can justify their choices. Finally, the teacher presents the answers. He or she can then give more explanations on some of these historical facts (why the arrival of a female speaker on television came later than for men, for example) and put into perspective the rapid evolution of media development and information consumption patterns.

• Invention of the printed press: 1450 (Gutenberg)
• First illustration in a newspaper: 1843
• Invention of the telephone: 1876
• Invention of the cinema: 1895
• Invention of radio: 1895
• First radio broadcasts for the public: 1914
• First use of the radio in an election campaign: 1925
• Invention of television: 1926
• Invention of colour television: 1928
• First TV studio and start of the broadcasts: 1928
• First TV report: 1937
• First video game: 1947
• First TV news: 1949
• First presidential address
• First woman speaker in a TV news in Europe: 1961
• Start of the Eurovision network: 1964
• Creation of the arpanet (former internet): 1968
• Launch of personal computers: 1970
• First music show with clips: 1974
• Creation of the first blog: 1994
• Creation of the first search engine: 1990 (Netscape)
• Creation of Wikipedia: 2001
• Birth of the social web (Web 2.0): 2004
• Creation of facebook: 2004
• Creation of YouTube: 2005
• Creation of Twitter: 2006
• Creation of the replay: 2006
• Creation of Netflix: 2007
• Creation of Instagram: 2010
• Creation of Snapchat: 2011
• Creation of TikTok: 2017

Activity 3
Let's Go Surveying! (1/2)

Activity duration

45 minutes + extra time because students have to fill out the survey for the school.

What do you need?

• Sheets to fill in or a computer with internet connexion.
• Paper and pencil.

Introduction

The goals of this activity are:
• Discover the advantages and disadvantages of new media.
• Become aware of the importance of the good use of new technologies.
• Introduce the concept "media literacy".

The objective of the discussion should not focus on arguing which option is better or worse, but be aware that there are different ways of getting information, relating, communicating and each of them has its own advantages and disadvantages. The important thing is to know how to use them in an appropriate way

Activity progress

Step 1: Divide the class into groups of 3-4 people. Ask each group to fill out the survey sheet. To do this, they will have to do a small survey among their friends, relatives, neighbours…

If it is possible it would be interesting to create an online survey with the following template. Afterwards, students would be disseminating it among their contacts taking into account the age ranges we are interesting in (p.27).

Step 2: Compare the lists and debate about the differences between the different age groups.

Which are the advantages and disadvantages of different ways/medias? Why? Which is the impact of them on the social, economic and political life of users?

Some useful link:

www.surveymonkey.com

www.google.com/forms/about

Activity 3
Let's Go Surveying! (2/2)

Search for people between the different age groups that appear below and fill in their answers					
10-14	15-20	21-30	31-45	46-60	61-75
What do you use to wake up?					
Normally, where do you watch/ read the news?					
How do you get in touch with your friends?					
How do you book a trip?					
How do you pay for a purchase?					
Do you use e-books or paper books?					
What is your favourite social network?					
What is your favourite game?					
Where do you write down your plans/ appoint- ments...?					

Activity 4
Info Profiler Game

Activity duration

1 hour 30 minutes

What do you need?

• 1 facilitator.
• Ideal for 4 groups (up to 5 students and 2 documents per group).
• Sets of printed documents (1 set of documents + 1 questionnaire per person).
• For the "investigation" phase: Computer stations connected / use of Google reverse image.
• For the restitution, at the end of the animation: Video Projector or adhesive paste and magnets if hanging printed supports.

Introduction

This activity allows young people to realize that, once we face information, intuition alone may not be sufficient, and that sometimes it even misleads us. The game challenges young people to investigate and deconstruct some information from journalists' publications, putting themselves in the shoes of journalists who have been newly recruited by a website which releases unusual and anecdotal information.

The goals of this activity are:
• to realize that likelihood does not equal truth.
• to raise awareness about the different ways in which an image or photograph can be transformed for misinformation purposes.
• to learn to look for sources identification to confirm or invalidate our intuition.
• to acquire checking reflexes, cross-check information with different sources from a search engine.
• to reflect about fake news and why we believe them.

Activity progress

The young people are divided into 4 groups (composed of up to 5 young people each) who will have to evaluate whether the information is true or false. The documents distributed contain information mainly drawn from websites and social networks like Twitter. Each group has a sheet of paper on which they must specify their choices: publish or not

publish (and explain why!) The offered contents present astonishing, dramatic, scandalous or unusual information, which may cause disbelief or the desire to believe in it. This selection aims to favour the emotional or entertaining nature of information rather than its informative potential. These types of articles are therefore likely to be widely popular and shared on social networks. The information is delivered in raw form, without any advertising or other elements, just with title, picture and text. As for tweets, the profile of the author of the publication is mentioned.

Step 1: Our intuitions (5 minutes)
Each group has two documents. The first one is a real press article or a fake one; the second one is a tweet with false information.
During this step no digital media are used, the participants discuss about the documents in order to know whether they contain true or fake information. The teacher moves from group to group to get acquainted with the exchanges and debates. He/she does not intervene and lets the students reach a consensus. When the members of one group agree, they fill the "First choice" column, in which they indicate whether they want to publish the information or not and why they made this decision.

Step 2: A little further in the investigation (30 minutes)
The documents switch from one group to another. The rules of the game change. Each group has a digital tablet or a computer connected to the internet. Each group has 30 minutes to investigate online. The teacher moves from group to group to assess the dynamics of the research. He/she can make them discover search sites to find reverse images (Google Image reverse for example) and give them some sites specialized in source verification. At the end of the 30 minutes, each group specifies the result of its research by filling the "Second choice" column and arguing its choice again.

Step 3: Restitution (25 minutes)
For this restitution phase, the documents are all displayed or projected via a video projector. When facing each document, groups who have not seen it before, give their impression based on intuition. Then, groups who have investigated the news, present the results of their researches.

Activity 5
The Conspirator Game (1/2)

Activity duration

1h 30 minutes

What do you need?

- Board or paper board.
- Tables.
- Paper.
- Pens.
- Scissors.

Introduction

The conspiracy theory presented in this activity is intended for humorous purposes and should not be aimed at a specific category of the population. This activity must scrupulously observe the rules of respect defined by law (no incitement to racial hatred, no advocacy of war crimes, etc.).

This session is designed in the form of a role-playing game and a debate. Its goals are to make students realize how difficult it is to discuss seriously with people who are allowing themselves to be easily manipulated, don't comply with the principal of ethical searching for the truth and let themselves be mislead by cognitive biases. It shows that our ways of thinking play a fundamental role when it comes to trust and belief.

Activity progress

Step 1: The students develop a conspiracy theory. Each participant identifies a group of perpetrators by writing it on a piece of paper. The same process is used to designate one or more victims and a motive. The pieces of paper are then collected to form three categories: perpetrators, victims and motives.

The teacher then organizes several random draws to generate associations between the three items. These combinations of words generate conspiracy bases, most often absurd (example: garden gnomes plot to harm George Clooney). In consultation with the group, the teacher chooses the best associations. The parameters to be taken into account are related to the potential for creating a surrealist narrative. Groups of 5 students are then formed to create a conspiracy story. There is only one condition: to try to justify their unjustifiable story with conviction! A rapporteur appointed within each group is responsible for writing the story. The teacher moves from group to group to activate the imaginations if they break down. His role is essential in this first phase, he must encourage the young people to support their stories. During the last 15 minutes, each rapporteur reconstructs the story created by his or her group by adopting a determined tone and a total absence of doubt. Finally, each group votes for the plot that seems to them the funniest, the most elaborate and the best constructed.

Step 2: The group is divided into two teams: conspiracy fighters and journalists. They will have to work and debate according to different rules. Before preparing the debate, the teacher presents one by one the cognitive biases that may prove useful: reversal of the burden of proof, confirmation bias, negligence of the sample size, etc. All of which will make it difficult for journalists to find solid arguments to refute the theory defended by the other group. **>>>**

<<<
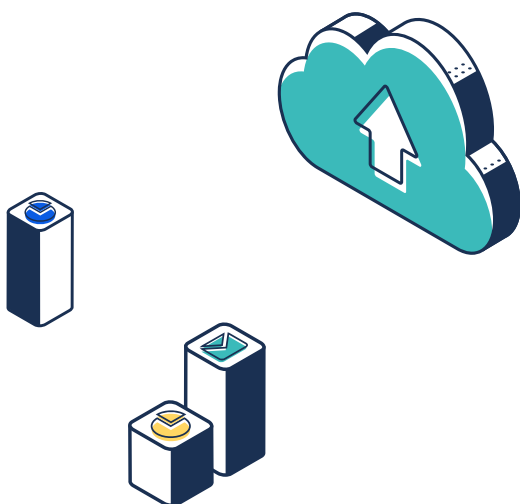
The "defenders" of the conspiracy theory must collect as much "evidence" and arguments as possible on the Internet. They have the right to lie and use false arguments and to manipulate photos. Their objective is to build an argumentative millefeuille and persuade the "undecided" (embodied by the teacher) of the plausibility of their theory. Journalists, for their part, must anticipate the arguments of the plotters, collect as many arguments as possible in order to counter them and use reliable sources and logical reasoning. Then comes the time for the debate (10 minutes maximum). Each group must convince the undecided facilitators.

The conspiracy team is the first to present an argument, which the "journalists" will then have to counter. The teacher takes a neutral position. When a conspiracy argument makes a strong impression on him, he can turn to the group of journalists and ask them what they think. Likewise, when journalists very clearly demonstrate the invalidity of a conspiracy argument, he can turn to the "defenders" and ask them to react. The teacher must adopt a subtle posture. He is also moderator and ensures that the word circulates (the bad faith of conspirators facing the probable frustration of journalists!).

The debate stops when all the arguments have been expressed and debated on both sides. Finally, an exchange time allows to draw a collective assessment of this experience and the overall journey (10 minutes). On this occasion, the teacher can explain several cognitive biases used by the students during the debate (inversion of the burden of proof, confirmation bias, argumentative millefeuille, paréidolie…). While often funny, this debate is frequently frustrating for "journalists". How can we argue against people whose objective of manipulation has taken over serious evidence? Based on the collective assessment and feelings of the young people, the facilitator can confirm the essential nature of an information ethics when it comes to building an understanding of the world around us.

Activity 6
Images in Social Networks

Activity duration

45 minutes

What do you need?

• A computer or another device connected to the internet.
• A projector.

Introduction

Many times in social networks and in the media in general, false, retouched, manipulated or erroneously interpreted images are disseminated. Images out of context can be misunderstood.

Each person, from his subjectivity and own interests, can interpret an image differently and can comment and share it on social networks based on that subjectivity and personas aims.

Therefore, it is necessary to go beyond the image itself and find true sources to understand it.

The goals of this activity are:
• To encourage a critical reading of images disseminated in social networks.
• To promote the responsible use of images in social networks.

Activity progress

Step 1: Teacher looks on the internet for an image that appeared on social networks after the terrorist attacks of London (2017). The image with the veiled woman passing next to an injured person after the London attack was very conflictive on the social network of Twitter. Many people judged the girl who appears in it generating a denigrating generalization about Muslim people.

Specifically, this photo was shared by the American tweeter Texas Lone Star in two different tweets in which he said that "the woman walked quietly next to a man who is dying while looking at her phone" and in another, he made a montage with two photos, comparing the attitude of "them" with "ours". The two tweets were shared about 3,000 times in less than a day by people who also commented with other islamophobic messages.

The teacher invites students to analyze the photo and to answer the questions raised.
1) What do we see in this photo?
2) What do you think is happening?
3) What do you think when you see the photo?
4) What do you feel?

Step 2: The teacher invites students to look on the internet for other similar images of the London terrorist attacks, where the person/persons standing up or walking is not racialized and the framing of the photo is different from the previous one.
1) What do you see in this photo?
2) What do you think when you see the photo?
3) What emotion does this image generate in you?
4) Is there any change from the previous photo?

Step 3: Teacher invites students to compare the two analyzed images.
1) Do the two analyzed photos transmit the same message to you?
2) Have you had different reactions?
3) Why was the first photo published and not the other?
4) Is there any intention to spread the photo of the veiled girl and not the other one?
5) Do you think there is any intention to manipulate the feelings of people who follow social networks?
6) What has been the attitude of the people who commented on the first photo? And the second?
7) Analyze and compare the framing of both image.

Activity 7
ADVs

Activity duration

30 minutes

What do you need?

• Projector.
• Computer connected.

Introduction

Advertising is a form of communication that tries to increase the consumption of a product, publicize a brand, improve an image or generate an idea about something. This is carried out through advertising campaigns that are disseminated through various media and that we can find daily on television, radio,, buses, social networks, in streets etc.

Advertising is a representation process, capable of generating images, narratives and discourses of the society in which we live.

Advertising captures the existing meanings in the collective imagination and adapts them to the products offered in the consumer market, and at the same time transmits ideas, values and reinforces stereotypes, managing to manipulate our opinions and thoughts.

The goals of this activity are:
• To develop a critical reading towards ADVs' proposals.
• To promote the understanding and analysis of messages and images transmitted through advertising.

Activity progress

Teacher invites students to look for some racist or sexist advertisement on internet. There a lot of examples above all in perfumes advertisement, clothes commercial spots.
1) What can we see in this advertisement?
2) Is there something that catches our attention? What?
3) What message or idea is it transmitting? Do you think that message reinforce stereotypes? Why?

Activity 8
Press

Activity duration

60 minutes

What do you need?

• Newspapers or one projector and computer connected to look for newspapers online edition.
• Script for analysis.
• Projector for sharing and debate.

Introduction

We are living in the information age, where the new information and communication technologies have multiplied the reach and impact of traditional media (radio, television and newspaper) , and news and information have thus become more widely available than ever before. In this context, journalists need to make sense of a vast amount of information and consider how to organize and present it in a way comprehensible to an audience that will have very different levels of understanding of the events in question. Inevitably the form of presentation will reflect the experience and outlook of the journalists themselves. Consequently it is important for an audience to understand these framings and to think critically about them, in order to facilitate citizen participation in good governance and open, democratic and stable societies.

The goals of this activity are:
• To analyze the importance of news or the value of events, people and ideas.
• To know and understand the basic principles used when making news judgments or shaping them.
• To evaluate critically the many sources.

Activity progress

Step 1: The tutor asks students to analyze in groups the newsworthiness of each of the front page stories of some major newspapers (or their online edition).

First they will examine the news value of a story taking in account these factors:
• Timeliness
• Impact and importance
• Prominence
• Proximity
• Conflict
• Unusual/human interest
• Currency
• Necessity

Step 2: Secondly, students analyze the stories based on the factors to be considered in making news judgements or in shaping the news. These are:
• Truthfulness: accuracy (getting the facts right) and coherence (making sense of the facts)
• Dedication to the public interest
• Informing, rather than manipulating, the public
• Completeness/comprehensiveness
• Diversity (inclusion of news of all communities, not just targeted audiences)

Attention should also be paid to the placement of articles, headlines, font size used, photographs and captions included.

A second option is that students are given two different pieces of news writing on the same subject and are asked to explain which piece is more informative and how the other news article could be improved. (for criteria to be used, refer to factor presented above).

Activity 9
Lyrics or Videoclip

Activity duration

120 minutes

What do you need?

• Song's lyrics.
• Paper, pencil and crayons.
• Digital version: If it is possible students could use digital tools to make the storyboard. They would need one computer with internet connexion per group.

Introduction

Songs are a vehicle, transmitting culture in the form of messages charged with the values, norms, beliefs, attitudes or ideologies of the socio-cultural context in which they are created. They are an essential part of the life of human beings as they accompany us at important moments, influence our state of mind or represent a sign of identity; and they act as a mediator, favouring social relations, understanding and global integration.

Nowadays, the video clip is one of the main means of transmission and musical dissemination where the music and the image intermingle. They are mostly consumed and directed towards a young audience and it is here that the need arises to educate the population in a responsible and critical consumption of the values it is receiving through this medium of communication and transmission cultural.

The purpose of this activity is to reflect on the importance of messages that people received everyday and how this can affect our way of understanding reality.

Activity progress

Students are divided into groups. The teacher selects some song lyrics and each student group prepares an original storyboard for a music video that will convey the message of the lyrics. Carefully consider the images that will represent the lyrics. Identify and select the technical elements that will enhance this representation.

When the storyboard is finished and if a video for this song already exists, compare both and note differences and similarities.

Some useful links:

www.storyboardthat.com/storyboard-creator

www.pixton.com

Activity 10
The Cropping Workshop

Activity duration

30 minutes

What do you need?

• Photo library.
• Camera (or phone, tablet…).
• Photos from the press or fraternity cards.
• Scissors + glue OR computer + image creation software (GIMP).

Introduction

Images have a power that is sometimes unexpected. Actually, they can send the reader a message that can be fake if the real context is not provided.

The goals of this activity are:
• To reflect on the importance and power of manipulation of images.
• To examine the different types of information we receive.

Activity progress

Based on an image driven from the press or shot by the students themselves, the facilitator suggests to the young people to reframe it and give it a new caption. Then, the teacher takes a moment to discuss the images they have created: what does the new framing produce? Does the photo have the same meaning? Can we be manipulated in that way by media? He can also introduce the notion of "off-screen". The off-screen is made up of all the elements which do not appear in an image (in the field of what we see) but they have an importance. Indeed, the elements of the off-field of the image can completely modify its context.

SOME EUROPEAN GOOD PRACTICES

Ersilia

France

Created by the BAL, Ersilia is a digital platform for image and citizenship education for young people, teachers, supervisors, librarians, artists, journalists... Its main purpose is to think in images about a world of images, to establish links between different types of images (art, press, science, advertising, etc.) driven from different contexts (press, Internet, museum, projection room, public space, etc.). ERSILIA puts young people and adults on an equal footing and offers new resources to understand the challenges and profound upheavals that are affecting our society. Why, for whom, in which contexts are images produced? How are they disseminated and received? How do they change the way we see the world?

Don't Be **Fooled**

Spain

(¡Que no te la cuelen!) is the slogan of the main Spanish project fighting against disinformation: www.maldita.es is an independent journalistic platform focused on the control of disinformation and public discourse through fact-checking and data journalism techniques. We are a non profit organization with three main objectives:
• Monitor and control political discourse and promote transparency in public and private institutions.
• Verify and fight against misinformation.
• Promote media literacy and technological tools in order to create an aware community that can defend itself from disinformation and lies in all areas.

#Komunikatu＿on

Spain

It is an intercultural and edu-comunicational project based on the use of media in the classroom, in order to promote their critical consumption and question stereotypes, prejudices and false rumors about diversity. It promotes the reflexive participation of young people, intercultural dialogue with a gender perspective, awareness in relation to diversity in our environment and participatory communication for social transformation.

www.mugak.eu/menores-jovenes-y-educacion/educacion-antirracista/talleres-en-el-aula

Detecting **Fake News**

Spain

(Detectando bulos) is an educational proposal by Manu Domenech to understand what fake news are and to learn how to detect them through different examples.

view.genial.ly/5ea018446cd2cd0d8d8d5d09/presentation-los-bulos-que-son-y-como-detectarlos

True or **False Test**

Spain

The True or false form is a form with fake job offers, confusing ads and headlines and controversial information with a feedback that they receive once it's completed. This activity has had a very positive feedback from users. This form generated very interesting results out of 500 participants across the region: While more than 80% think that fake news may have important consequences in their daily life, only 46% use fact checking websites.

docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdkxl-WzaKgA5VVm5mHop5TOjT3HJBrFs5PRhk_I5_L0USqrvg/viewform

Parole **Ostili**

Italy

Parole Ostili is a social awareness project against the use of hostile language. It does this with the Manifesto of Non-Hostile Communication, a commitment of shared responsibility to create a respectful and civilized Internet space that represents us and offers a sense of security. Written and adopted by a community of over 300 communicators, bloggers and influencers, it is a charter of 10 practical principles guiding online behaviour.

paroleostili.it/manifesto/?lang=en

Also available in spanish.

Re:**Baltica**

Latvia

The Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism Re:Baltica is a non-profit organization that produces investigative journalism content crucial to the public interest. The goal of this organization is to promote openness and positive change in the society. Re:Baltica focuses on in-depth investigations of socially important issues in the Baltic region, such as corruption, crime, finances, entrepreneurship, health, human rights and disinformation. Re:Baltica has been investigating fake news networks in Latvia for years, and has created a "Blacklist" where can be found pages and profiles that are most likely to distribute fake news.

en.rebaltica.lv

Ted Talk On How To Improve **Critical Thinking**

Every day, a sea of decisions stretches before us, and it's impossible to make a perfect choice every time. But there are many ways to improve our chances — and one particularly effective technique is critical thinking. Samantha Agoos describes a 5-step process that may help you with any number of problems.

Transcript available in 32 languages.

www.ted.com/talks/samantha_agoos_5_tips_to_improve_your_critical_thinking#t-232582

Be Internet **Citizens**

A partnership between Google, YouTube Creators for Change and Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), the project is designed to teach 13 to 15 year-olds about media literacy, critical thinking and digital citizenship, encouraging young people to be positive voices online while increasing their resilience to hate and extremism. Using an implicit approach to counter-extremism which focuses on popular culture and social issues, the project delivers positive secondary effects, helping participants become more informed citizens, critical consumers and empowered producers of content. The content from the website can be freely used in classrooms by educators

internetcitizens.withyoutube.com

Lie **Detectors**

Belgium

Helps teenagers learn how to spot and resist the manipulative media crowding their social media accounts as they start to forge an independent world view. It promotes positive and non-political contact between young people and journalists by sending working journalists into schools to deliver interactive classroom sessions. The sessions help children understand how mainstream media works and raise their awareness about misinformation.

lie-detectors.org
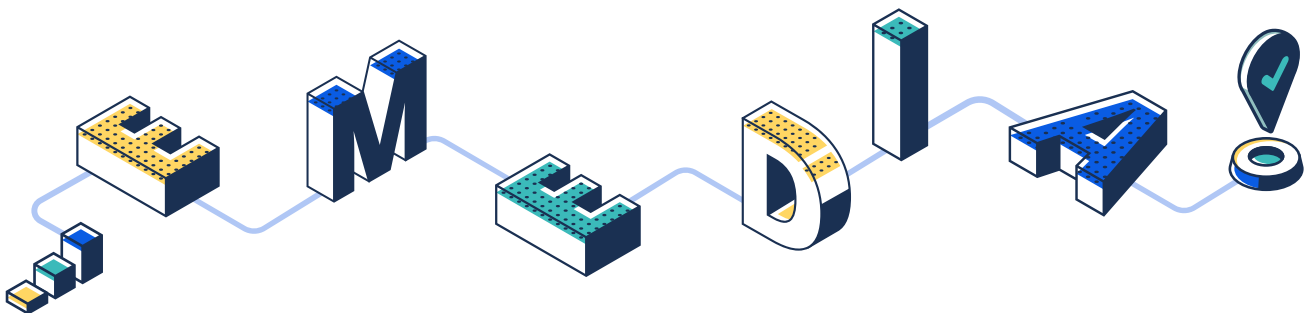
CONCLUSION

Democratic society requires an active participation in its social and political activities from its citizens. To do so, citizens need to be able to critically evaluate information provided by media about political, economic and social processes and to be able to react accordingly. But it's not only about traditional media. The digital era brings technology development and new kind of understanding of media and people must adapt to 21st century literacy, that isn't just reading and writing any more. They have to be fluent in using internet media and also social media that rapidly replaces traditional media.

Teen years bring both emotional and physical changes which lead tothe formation of cognition, values and personality. This is the time when a person is still easily influenced by authorities that are personally important to them, which aren't always parents or teachers. Technologies have changed the youth's perception of world and they can be easily influenced by celebrities that they see as their idols. And media actors understand their influence. Internet and social media faces fierce competition with each other and media content creators are forced to use all methods available to get ratings. Of course, the strategy can affect media reliability. And that is what media literacy is all about: To be able to distinguish genuine media content from fake.

Teachers who are interested in developing their media literacy and enhance the critical thinking and understanding of fake news of their students, should find this booklet useful not only in a theoretical framework but also in practical. It provides a guide on how to critically evaluate the content of the media and how to recognize fake news not only in written but also in image mode of media content.

We are hopeful that our society will develop as a critically minded one and will have a set of knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to critically evaluate when and what information is needed.

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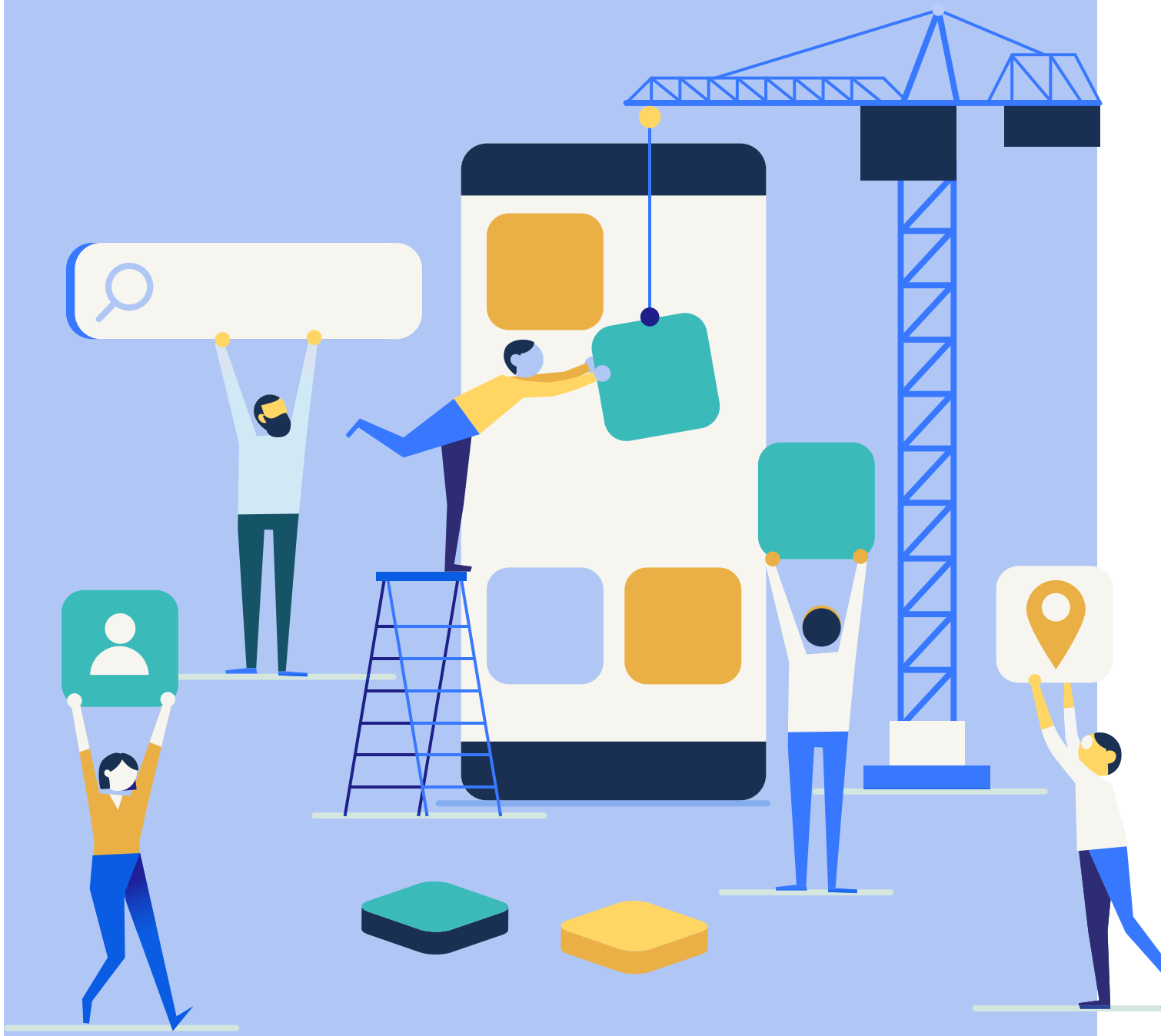
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Media literacy

eMedia