



## YOUNG & eSAFE



**THEME - Critical Thinking**



**TARGET AGE GROUP - Years 9 and 10 (Level 6)**



**LESSON DURATION - 15 - 20mins**

**Activity purpose:** Develop students' critical thinking by evaluating the trustworthiness and reliability of three online articles.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Critical thinking is the ability to objectively examine a range of evidence, in order to make an informed judgement on an issue.

Every day, people are bombarded with hundreds of media messages. The internet allows anyone and everyone to share information. Information is highly accessible and people often use social media as an information/news source. Some online information is factual or helpful. Other information may be incorrect or biased. It's important for students to think critically and ask questions about things they see, read and hear online to determine if the information is trustworthy or not.

When considering trustworthiness, it's important to assess the relevance, accuracy and reliability of the information being presented. This can assist students in separating trustworthy information from misinformation (or 'fake news').

# Activity 1

TEACHING SEQUENCE / ACTIVITY	DURATION	RESOURCES REQUIRED
1. Divide the class into 3-6 groups. Each group will rate one of three online articles.	1-2 mins	Printed copies of the three articles (one per group) or student access to a device to view the article online. (see links on next page).
2. Provide each group with a printed or electronic copy of one of the three articles (links below).		
3. Instruct each group to read their article.	5 mins	
4. Provide each student or group with the worksheet 'Developing Online Critical Thinking Skills' that requires students to review the trustworthiness of an online article.	5 mins	'Developing Online Critical Thinking Skills' worksheet.
5. Teacher-led discussion to encourage comparison of the articles. Discussion focus questions: A. Based on the three articles reviewed, which article seems most trustworthy and why? B. Which article seems least trustworthy and why? C. If you are unsure about the trustworthiness of an article, what could you do to determine if the information is reliable or true?	5 mins	
<b>Optional extension:</b>		
1. Teacher-led discussion about 'fake news' with the following question: A. When reading information online, how can you tell 'fake news' from trustworthy news? Additional information on 'fake news' and why it's difficult to spot can be found in the external link provided on the next page.	5 mins	Optional: Smartboard/ screen to display the news article (link on the next page).

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## AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

### Health and Physical Education Learning Area:

- Health literacy: Critically analyse and apply health information from a range of sources to health decision and situation (ACPPS095)

### English Learning Area:

- Language for interaction: Understand that people's evaluations of texts are influenced by their value systems, the context and the purpose and mode of communication (ACELA1565)
- Text structure and organisation: Compare the purposes, text structures and language features of traditional and contemporary texts in different media (ACELA1566)
- Interpreting, analysing, evaluating: Identify and analyse implicit or explicit values, beliefs and assumptions in texts and how these are influenced by purposes and likely audiences (ACELY1752)
- Interpreting, analysing, evaluating: Use comprehension strategies to compare and contrast information within and between texts, identifying and analysing embedded perspectives, and evaluating supporting evidence (ACELY1754)

### Critical and Creative Thinking Capability:

- Poses questions: Poses questions to critically analyse complex issues and abstract ideas
- Organise and process information: critically analyse independently sourced information to determine bias and reliability

### Information and Communication Technology Capability:

- Select and evaluate data and information: Develop and use criteria systematically to evaluate the quality, suitability and credibility of located data or information and sources

## EXTERNAL LINKS INCLUDED IN THE ACTIVITY

### Articles to be used in the activity:

Article 1: [WWW.TAMU.EDU/NEWSINFO/7-08-10/ARTICLE5.SHTML](http://WWW.TAMU.EDU/NEWSINFO/7-08-10/ARTICLE5.SHTML)

Article 2: [WWW.SCIENCEDAILY.COM/RELEASES/2017/08/170808145524.HTM](http://WWW.SCIENCEDAILY.COM/RELEASES/2017/08/170808145524.HTM)

### Optional extension:

Fake News article: [WWW.ABC.NET.AU/NEWS/2017-06-27/WHY-DO-WE-FALL-FOR-FAKE-NEWS-STUDY/8653300](http://WWW.ABC.NET.AU/NEWS/2017-06-27/WHY-DO-WE-FALL-FOR-FAKE-NEWS-STUDY/8653300)

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**DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS LESSON PLAN:**

**Relevant:** Appropriate and recent (i.e. published/updated within the last two years).

**Accurate:** The information appears factual and objective, references reliable sources, and demonstrates a balanced perspective on the issue.

**Reliable:** Information is endorsed by a reputable source (e.g. government agencies, universities etc.)

**Biased:** Subjective information that presents only one viewpoint or tries to unduly influence the reader.

**Fake news:** False information that has been made up and created to look like trustworthy news reports.