

Module Four - Topic 1

Knowledge on the web: disinformation, fake news, fact checking and critical thinking

Duration	Approximately 30-45 minutes
Subjects	Social Science, Computer Science, Civic Education, Ethics
Summary	This topic focuses on the role of AI technologies in the creation and dissemination of knowledge and information on the web. It addresses issues like information vs disinformation, reliable sources, fake news, fact checking and critical thinking. Its aim is to foster students' ability to identify fake news and disinformation mechanisms and to respond to those adequately, i.e. according to the ethical principles explored in Module 3, in their current and future use of the internet and social media.

Learning objectives

The aim of this Topic is to train students to identify and react to online fake news and other forms of misinformation. The teachers will support students in recognising reliable vs unreliable sources of information and will provide fact-checking methodologies.

Topic 1 also addresses potential and reported harmful consequences of online misinformation, as well as strategies and tools to counter the spread of fake news, e.g. through reporting mechanisms and by avoiding sharing untrustworthy content.

Activity overview

Activities	Modality	Level
Activity 4.1.1 Identifying fake news	In class / Online / at home	Basic

Activity 4.1.1 - Identifying fake news

Estimated duration	30-45 minutes (in class/online) + time at home
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Requirements	None
Hardware and Software tools used	In class: - Pen and paper - Mentimeter (optional) - Computer for the teacher (optional) Online: - Online meeting platform - Shared document (e.g. Google Docs) - Mentimeter (optional) - Digital device for all
Type of assessment	Oral presentation
Glossary	AI ethics, Hate speech

Procedure

1. **Anticipatory Set:** The lesson starts with an introduction to key terms in knowledge production and sharing of information on the web (fact checking; fake news; reliable/trustworthy resources; trolling etc.). The teacher shares examples of fake news and/or instances where fake news have sparked debate or had consequences in the real world (see resources for teachers).
2. **Independent Practice:** Students are asked to identify examples of fake news and ways to fact check them - i.e. to assess whether they are fake news or not - as homework for the next meeting. Every student prepares a short written description of the example, with a link to an online resource that can be accessed in class during the following discussion. If the students have very limited or do not have access to social media and/or the internet, the teacher provides examples of real and fake news and asks them to identify which are fake news and to analyse those. The examples can be memes, videos (e.g. TikTok videos) and pictures, which they are more likely to encounter when they (will) use social media.
3. **Guided practice and understanding:** The teacher provides an example of how to do the homework and how to present it in the next meeting. Students are encouraged to focus on instances of fake news they have encountered in their daily use of social media.
4. **Check for Understanding:** the class gets back together so that each student (or a restricted number of students, based on time availability) can present their example of

fake news. After the presentations, the teacher moderates a discussion around how to identify and react to fake news online.

5. **Closing:** The discussion can be closed with a conclusion, e.g. a shared definition of what fake news are and recommendations to add to the code of conduct regarding how to identify fake news and how to respond to them (reporting mechanisms, not sharing...)

Troubleshooting

Possible issue	Possible solution
Students take too much time to find materials / information overload	Students can be asked to focus on specific types of fake news in order to avoid information overload during their research.
The discussion could be very chaotic or very silent	The teacher has an important role as the discussion moderator.
Suggestions on how to identify and respond to fake news (code of conduct) could take up too much time	Part of this activity (code of conduct) could also be moved to Topic 4.4

Resources for students

Resources that can be used for introducing and discussing fake-news identification and misinformation

Title	Type	Description	Link	Languages
Happy on-life	Web-page / Game	Game for digital citizenship and wellbeing	https://visitors-centre.jrc.ec.europa.eu/tools/HappyOnLife/	ENGLISH, ITALIAN, ROMANIAN and GREEK
8 инструмент а за откриване на фалшиви новини и дезинформация	Web-page	8 Tools to Identify Fake News and Disinformation	https://aej-bulgaria.org/8-tools-for-detecting-fake-news/	BULGARIAN
5 прости правила при четенето на новини	Web-page	5 simple rules for reading news	https://azcheta.com/5-prosti-pravila-pri-cheteneto-na-novini/	BULGARIAN

Как да различа фалшивите новини от истинските?	Web-page	How to distinguish fake news from real news?	https://azcheta.com/kak-da-razlicha-falshivite-novini-ot-istinskite/	BULGARIAN
Познавам ли медиите?	Video	A short demo of online lesson on fake news	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nblXlqF6KDs&t=5s	BULGARIAN
Как да различиш фалшивите новини?	Video	Video lesson "How to identify fake news"	https://www.facebook.com/Ucha.se/videos/2862044930697096/	BULGARIAN
Как да бъдем детективи в дигиталния свят?	Video	Video "How to be detectives in the digital world"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQ0m2J6uWw	BULGARIAN
Фалшивите новини и как да ги разпознаваме	Video	Video "How to identify fake news"	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1439010986245029	BULGARIAN
ФАЛШИВИ И НОВИНИ	Other	Fake news created by the Bulgarian students	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ir61YEwgLhnr7-OKasbOFzuANy4M0LOi/edit	BULGARIAN
Фалшиви новини и ИИ	Document	Articles in Bulgarian on fake news	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RzyBb_We-uQLTi77dYAgQ9GG-37nA_rg/view?usp=sharing	BULGARIAN
Fake News: cosa sono e come riconoscerle	Video	Video describing what fake news are, how to identify them, how do they spread and what is their purpose.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FROGYnhxGU	ITALIAN

Information Disorder, la nuova "patologia" dell'era digitale	Web-page	The article describes the "Information Disorder", that is the repeated act of sharing or developing false information with or without the intent of harming.	https://www.agendadigitale.eu/cultura-digitale/information-disorder-la-nuova-patologia-dellera-digitale/	ITALIAN
Basta bufale	Document	Manual on how to defeat fake news	https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/_file/documenti/Comunicazione/Fake_news/Dispensa_Docenti_decalogo_bastabufale.pdf	ITALIAN
The information tower	Web-page / Game	Video-game for teaching how to identify fake news	https://theinformationtower.skuola.net/	ITALIAN

Resources for teachers

- SOMA, Social Observatory for Disinformation and Social Media Analysis. <https://www.disinfobservatory.org/>.
Including tool several resources and tools, e.g. to examine fake news: <https://www.disinfobservatory.org/investigations/>
And Policy Brief on AI and extreme speech: <https://www.disinfobservatory.org/artificial-intelligence-extreme-speech-and-the-challenges-of-online-content-moderation/>
- Foundation European Institute Outsourcing - FEIO, [Combating Fake News: Handbook for Youth Workers](#) (2019).
- [Resources on Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news](#) (Council of Europe) E.g. Council of Europe, [Digital Citizenship Education](#) (2017)
- The Conversation. How to spot fake news: an Expert Guide for Young People <https://theconversation.com/how-to-spot-fake-news-an-experts-guide-for-young-people-88887>
- "The Future of Free Speech, Trolls, Anonymity and Fake News Online", <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/03/29/the-future-of-free-speech-trolls-anonymity-and-fake-news-online/>
- Sefirot: Free tool to fight fake news <https://sefirot.it/nebula> (available in English, Italian, Spanish, French)

Country-specific resources on fake news:

Italy

- <https://www.savethechildren.it/cosa-facciamo/pubblicazioni/una-rilevazione-sulla-poverta-educativa-digitale>

- <https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/it/0000/00/00/le-fakenews/>
(fake news)
- <https://www.pagellapolitica.it/>
Includes tool to check news via WhatsApp
- <https://datalab.luiss.it/aletheia-2/>
- <https://www.libreriauniversitaria.it/specchio-aletheia-fake-news-politica/libro/9788868129354>

Bulgaria

- Video for children on the topic "How to recognize fake news" -
<https://www.facebook.com/Ucha.se/videos/2862044930697096/>
- Infographics on how to recognize fake news -
<https://www.libsz.org/novini/1557-kak-da-razlichavame-falshivite-novini>
- "How to search and select information on the web" by Google Safety Center -
<https://safety.google/intl/bg/families/families-tips/>

Greece

- <https://saferinternet4kids.gr/fake-news/>
- <https://www.ellinikahoaxes.gr/>