FAKE NEWS

How can we recognize fake news?

There are many fake news stories about the coronavirus circulating in social media, especially about false cures. Learners sometimes share these stories uncritically, thinking they are true or just funny. This lesson looks at the consequences of sharing fake news, and how to tell real from fake.

Learners will be able to:

► Reflect on the consequences of sharing fake news;

► Analyse different types of fake news;

► Identify techniques for spotting fake news;

► Develop their analytical and critical thinking and sense of digital responsibility.

STIMULUS

True/False Quiz: https://fullfact.org/quiz/coronavirus/
News story: https://bit.ly/34lch8Z

You may need to find a similar quiz in your language or create one – but be careful the facts are up to date.

Is there a similar news story in your language?

DISCUSSION

After the Quiz:

► How did you score in the Quiz? Did any of the answers surprise you? If so, which? Why?

► Why do inaccurate stories about the coronavirus get passed round on social media?

► Does it do any harm? Why or why not?

After the News story:

► Why do people believe false cures like this?

► Are you aware of any other fake news stories about the coronavirus?

► How can you check whether a news story might be fake?

► Where can you go for help?

If learners won't believe something is fake, handle the issue sensitively.

Tell your learners about reputable or official websites e.g. WHO for Coronavirus.

CONCLUSION

Summarise main points of the lesson.

Remind of the importance of checking news stories and stopping to think before sharing them.

Rehearse main ways of checking for fake news.

Alternatively, ask the learners to summarise.

ASSIGNMENT

Learners further develop their skills of checking for fake news.

News story: https://newsliteracy.ca/fakeout/learning-the-skills/

In small groups learners select three or four news stories on Coronavirus check their reliability.

They prepare advice for their peers on this issue and make a presentation.

There are many videos available on this topic on the internet.

Encourage learners to use innovative forms of digital presentation, appealing to their peers.

FOLLOW-UP

Learners report back on the most important things they have learned from the assignment.

They explain what advice they would give to their peers on this issue.

They discuss who in society they think should be responsible for regulating fake news online.

Could also give learners another potentially fake story to check.

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