

LESSON 21

Why misinformation and disinformation matter

40 minutes

Following My Interests Online

Outcome 2.5

Outcome 3.4

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

See how misinformation and disinformation move through digital spaces and why they affect readers and sharers. Trace an invented claim's spread and write questions to check before sharing emotive posts.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
2.5	develop a checklist for evaluating and verifying information from a range of digital sources
3.4	discuss why misinformation and disinformation are issues for consumers of digital media content

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Discuss why misinformation and disinformation are issues for consumers of digital media (LO 3.4)
- Trace how a false claim can spread and where an individual choice can change the path
- Write a three-question pause-before-you-share check for emotive content

BEFORE THE BELL

- Ensure students have writing materials ready for creating their pause questions.

Why misinformation and disinformation matter

HOW THE LESSON RUNS

3 min	introduction	Start
5 min	content	Examine and discuss
15 min	activity	Hands-on: Trace the spread
10 min	activity	Your turn: Pause before you share
5 min	content	Make sense
1 min	content	Reflect
1 min	summary	What you covered

TEACHING MOVES

- Cards 1 and 4 are deep (about 4 minutes each); cards 2 and 3 are quick whole-class choices (one voice each, about 2 minutes each, no feelings-check aloud); leave about 1 minute to name the pattern and 2 minutes spare for talk that runs over. If that spare time is gone after card 3, drop the separate minute on the pattern and name it inside card 4 instead.
- Circulate the room to push for specific questions in the writing task, and note two strong examples you can put on the board in Make sense if few students volunteer their own.
- Let speed, emotion and real-world effects emerge from the cards and be named together in Make sense, rather than pre-teaching them in Examine and discuss.
- If a student names a real person, brand, or incident, thank them for the example, explain that we will not investigate live cases in class, and steer back to SuperFizz.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students create vague questions like 'Is it true?' - Remind them to name the feeling and ask for a checkable source.
- Students focus only on intent rather than impact - Highlight that impact matters regardless of intent.
- Overlooking how emotion fuels faster sharing - Discuss examples of angry or scared content spreading quickly.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Put sentence starters on the board: 'What feeling is this post pushing me to act on?' / 'Where can I check this on something other than another chat?' / 'If this is wrong, who gets hurt if I pass it on?'
- Support: The trace activity is run from the board with the whole class, but on cards 1 and 4 pairs get 30 to 40 seconds to talk before you take options, so a student who finds it hard to speak to the room can try an answer out on a partner first.
- Extension: Challenge students to stress-test their three questions against a second invented emotive post you put on the board (for example a fake concert cancellation or a fake school closure notice), and tighten any question that would not actually slow a share.