Topic: Evaluating Online Information

When I am done this lesson, I will know:

- Why it is important to evaluate online information
- What fake news is
- Some questions I can ask to try and determine if information I find on the internet is true and comes from a reliable source

Pre and Post Self-Assessment

	Pre	Pre	Post	Post
	Yes, I know this	No, I want to learn this	Yes, I know this	I still need more practice to learn this
I know why it is important to evaluate online information				
I know what fake news is				
I know how to evaluate online information				

New Words and Terms

Googling
hits
fake news
biased
domain

Today we have tons of online information at our fingertips. You can search for almost anything online. It is important to make sure the information you get from the Internet is true. You also want to make sure it comes from a reliable source. Anyone can publish information on the Internet, so it is important to make sure the information is good.

Google is a web search engine on the Internet. The term "Google" is so widely recognized that it is now commonly used as a verb. You will often hear people talk about "googling" something on the Internet. Google is one of the most widely used search engines. When you search on Google, you put a search term in, and the engine will give you back "hits" or pages where your search term is found.

Discussion Questions

1. If you were going to do research about something, where do you think you would look first? On the Internet? In a book?
2. Do you use any other search engines besides Google?
3. What are the advantages of researching on the Internet instead of in books?
4. What are the disadvantages?

When you are deciding whether the information you find on the internet is reliable, you can start by asking yourself:

1. Who wrote or posted the information?
2. Are you familiar with the company or person who posted the information?
3. Can you contact the author?
4. Does the website have a date showing when it was last updated?

If you are suspicious when you read something online, you should trust your "gut" or your instinct and try to find your information from somewhere else!

What is Fake News?

Fake news is a pretty new term but one we hear all the time today. The term has become so popular that is was one of Collins Dictionary's Words of the Year in 2017. Fake news describes news that is false, made up, or not real. It is posted online so it looks real and is meant to try and trick people into thinking it is real. There are millions of fake news pages and websites on the internet and the problem keeps growing. It makes evaluating what you read even more important.

⤴ Try this/Practice

1. Think of a movie star.
2. Google or search for their name on the Internet.
3. What did you find out about them?
4. Do you think everything you read is true?

▶	**Watch** this to learn more about judging online info. Source: GCFGlobal.org Note: This video is part of a larger tutorial that you can complete it you would like to learn more.	https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/judging-online-information/1/

Key Questions to Ask When You Are Evaluating Online Information

1. What is the purpose of the website? A good place to start is the "About" page if the website has this.
2. Does the website seem like it might be biased? Does it have information that seems to be prejudiced against something or someone? Does it have a lot of advertisements?
3. What is the website's top level domain? In other words, what does the website address end in? For example .gov, .edu, .org, or .com? See the table below for more information about top level domains.
4. Is the author reliable? Have you heard of them? Have you read other things they have written?
5. Is the information current or up to date?

Source: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/judging-online-information/1/ (last accessed April 24, 2019)

Website Top Level Domains	
Top Level Domain	**What is stands for**
.com	Commercial. It is mostly used by commercial websites, but anyone who wants to register a domain can use this. This is where the term .com comes from.
.org	An organization
.edu	Higher level education institutions like colleges and universities
.gov	United States government sites
.us	The country code for USA sites
.us.govt	USA (provincial) government
.usa.gov	USA (federal) government

The most commonly used top-level domains in USA are .com and .org

Discussion Question

Why do you think having advertisements on a website can make it biased? Can you think of some examples?

Optional: I Want to Learn More

Complete the online tutorial "Digital Media Literacy" to learn more about how to interpret information online. Source: GCFGlobal.org	https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/

	Watch this TEDx talk – "How Real is Fake News?" – to learn more about fake news. Source: TEDx Talks	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQcCIzjz9_s

Bridge Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework Connection

Competency	Task Group(s)
Find and Use Information	• Read Continuous Text (L3 - Evaluation of persuasive texts, begins to recognize bias) • Interpret Documents • Extract Information from Films, Broadcasts and Presentations
Communicate Ideas and Information	• Interact with Others (L2 - specialized vocabulary, opinion about information/topics, brainstorm solutions to problems or queries) • Complete and Create Documents (L2 - pre/post assessment)

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