TEACHING citizenship

Information Disorder:
Teaching critical media literacy and citizenship in a digital age

Do you REVIEW?

ACT

Blachford & Joy, 2019

R Reputation
Have you heard of the source?
Have they been reliable before?

E Evidence
What facts are cited in the story?
Are there holes in the story?

V Verify
Compare to other sources
Does everything match up?

I Intent
Why was the story published?
Is it factual and impartial?

E Emotions
How do you feel about the story?
Are you swayed by your feelings?

W Weigh it up
Think about what you know
Does the story sound plausible?

Welcome to Teaching Citizenship

Welcome to this special 51st edition of the ACT journal which has a theme dedicated to teaching critical media literacy through citizenship. The past few months have highlighted just how important the task of countering misinformation is with young and older citizens alike. The role of citizenship as a national curriculum subject is central to this. The citizenship curriculum develops pupils' curiosity about what is going on in the world and how to critically engage with news and information. We teach pupils to discern what is verifiable, authentic, independent journalism from other kinds of information. We build their resilience and capacity for critical thinking, to make good decisions about how to act on the information they encounter, and how to be news creators when they are taking action themselves, on issues of concern, as active citizens.

We want to say a huge thank you to colleagues at the US Embassy in London for their incredible support that allows us to send a copy of this journal into every secondary school in England. We also thank our guest editor, Helen Blachford from Priory School and all our contributors from the USA, Finland and the UK.. We hope as you read this edition you find inspiration and interest in the articles that are intended to support you in developing excellent citizenship teaching in your school. And we hope to see you at one of our CPD events, teacher meetings or conferences, all of which are currently running online, very soon.

U.S. Embassy Partners with UK Organizations to Provide Media Literacy Training and Resources to Educators

UK and U.S. teens share more than pop culture. Our school-aged generation, interconnected via online platforms and emerging technologies, have unprecedented access to information and freedom to share their opinions and values instantaneously.

However, our youth face obstacles inconceivable to many adult professionals. They must discern what is true, credible information before having yet developed foundational critical reasoning skills. Additionally, social media platforms still lack sufficient accountability mechanisms, making attribution of sources difficult or impossible to identify. Indeed, even the most sophisticated adult users have difficulty discerning between credible and malign sources.

The U.S. Embassy to the United Kingdom is proud to support the Association for Citizenship Teaching and other civic organizations to improve media literacy and the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media. Our shared goal is to identify the challenges youth face when navigating today's media environment and to provide them with skills needed to be critical consumers of information. Activities to promote media literacy supported by the U.S. Embassy include:

- "Train the trainer" workshops in Cardiff, Glasgow, London, and Manchester with experts from journalism and academia to provide educators and youth workers with teaching points, concepts, activities, examples – for bringing media literacy into the classroom.
- Articles and programs run by U.S. exchange program alumni on media literacy, including one that produced a myth-busting glossary on terms such as fake news, misinformation, disinformation.

The U.S. Embassy also sponsored an exchange programme last year that sent 10 UK educators to the United States to observe and learn teaching strategies from leading U.S. centers and universities. Those teachers returned to the UK inspired and motivated and have been working with the Association for Citizenship Teaching to share their learning with the wider education community.
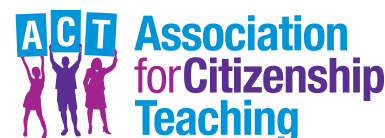
We look forward to working together with the Association for Citizenship Teaching again on new initiatives that will strengthen our transatlantic relationship through effective citizenship education.

Anna Arambulo Martz
Acting Cultural Affairs Officer
Embassy of the United States of America

Contents Summer 2020

Editorial notes

We would like thank the US Embassy for sponsoring the journal to reach every secondary school in England. This is the perfect time to join ACT to ensure you receive future editions of the journal, which is normally just sent to members.

Our theme of media literacy and tackling fake news has become even more important as we have all become focused on one significant story of life and death. Surprisingly, Ofcom surveys indicate only 1 in 5 young people have discussed COVID-19 with their teachers and in this edition (and on the ACT website) readers will find lots of practical resources and advice to support them in this role.

Our non-themed material includes an update from the most recent Five Nations Conference and an overview of the work of Protection Approaches. Our review section has Emily Mitchell exploring BBC Bitesize media literacy videos and a book about anti-capitalist fashion. Sera Shortland reviews two resources for peace education. Our review section is becoming increasingly popular. Do get in touch if you would like to review something.

Lee Jerome, Hans Svennevig and David Kerr (co-editors)
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Cover image courtesy of Bryden Joy and Helen Blachford

Critical Media Literacy and Citizenship Education

Helen Blachford

I feel very privileged to have been invited to be the guest editor of such a vibrant, practical and thought-provoking ACT Journal.

It is just over a year since I had the incredible opportunity to take part in a teacher exchange programme to the USA. I would not be overexaggerating if I said this was a life changing trip – not least because it was my first long-haul flight! This amazing opportunity was funded by the US Embassy in London and supported by ACT. It enabled group of teachers to develop our understanding of the evolving media and information environment; advance our teaching skills in media and information literacy; identify, access and use global media literacy resources; and build networks while in the United States. We were hosted throughout the trip by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), a non-profit organisation committed to global development and education. Katya Vogt, Global Lead for Media and Information Literacy Initiatives at IREX, has written one of the articles in this journal explaining their media literacy programme called 'Learn to Discern' which helps people of all ages develop healthy habits for engaging with information, online and offline.

During the trip we visited a wide range of media literacy organisations in Washington, New York and Boston. These ranged from organisations, such as IREX and Common Sense Media, offering media literacy programmes, to a TV broadcaster (PBS in Washington), a very special museum dedicated to the media (the Newseum in Washington), a University with the first ever news literacy course (Stonybrook University in New York)

and an organisation using music to develop media literacy skills (The Message Movement in Boston) to name a few. I am delighted that participants from the teacher exchange, Angie Bevan, Sera Shortland and Bryden Joy, have been able to contribute examples of the media literacy work they have undertaken since the trip and write about some of these organisations.

One of the many highlights of the trip for me was a visit to the Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University. This led to some deep learning which challenged me to re-evaluate my previous thinking and consider carefully how I could take the lessons learned back to my own setting in the UK and share this with others. I'm particularly pleased that Jonathan Anzalone has also written a piece for our journal outlining some of their ideas and approaches.

It's difficult to try and sum up all we learned but I would like to try and capture some of the salient points here:

• We need a transformative intervention not just a list of 'top tips' – if news literacy education is going to be transformative and part of our student's DNA then it can't wait until they are 18. Every 11-year-old needs to 'inoculated' with the skills to help them think critically about the information presented to them! It's not as simple as having a checklist to go through – every piece of information, every story has to be evaluated.

• Lines are blurring between what is reliable information and what is not – when you look at something you want young people, and adults for that matter, to look for 'warning signs' before deciding on whether to act on the information e.g. believe it, post it, re-post it. Asking the right questions

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serves you on whatever platform you are getting your information from – teaching us to be 'active' news consumers is essential.

• Having a common, agreed vocabulary is essential. We explored a number of foundational concepts – unpicking each of these in relation to news literacy: truth, verification, fairness, balance and bias. These were words I thought I could clearly define but I soon realised, in the context of work on developing news literacy, I had only scratched the surface previously!

So passionate am I that this is such an essential part of my role as a Citizenship teacher that, since returning from the US, I have continued to develop my own knowledge and understanding of media literacy. For example, I purchased David Buckingham's book, 'The Media Education Manifesto' which helped provide me with clarity on the approach I wanted to take in developing media literate citizens. It is fantastic, therefore, that David was able share some of those key ideas in his article on media and citizenship education in a digital age. I have also undertaken my own CPD via an on online course with Stonybrook University and the University of Hong Kong, attended the Five Nations Network Conference in Belfast on 'Building Democratic Culture in Schools' and participated in the Council of Europe's Online Master Class on 'Media and Information Disorder'. I feel honoured to have been invited to deliver workshops on media literacy at the Five Nations Network Conference in Belfast. It was here I also had the pleasure of meeting Kari Kivinen, Head of the French Finnish school of Helsinki, who writes for us on how we protect ourselves from the 'infodemic'. I attended his brilliant, practical, workshop on information literacy

and I was able to use some of his ideas in a workshop with PGCE Citizenship Students at the Institute of Education at University College London earlier this year.

Guest editing the journal has not only given me the chance to engage with articles from a wide range of media literacy educators and programmes, both internationally and those who are based closer to home, such as the BBC Young Reporter media literacy project, the Department of Media and Communication at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Cumberland Lodge; but the permanent editors of the journal have also given me the space to share how I have applied my learning to my own school and the media literacy curriculum I have developed for my students. They have indulged me in allowing me to include references to the work of Bruce Springsteen and Billy Bragg, two huge influences on me, in my article on protest songs and their place in a comprehensive, coherent media literacy curriculum. We also hear the impact protest songs have had on a remarkable lady, Eileen Smith, a retired nurse and campaigner for 'Keep our NHS Public' and 'CND'.

I am excited to be currently working with ACT on a project, funded by the US Embassy, to develop a series of lessons (the first of which has been published) and a CPD programme on media literacy. This has enabled me to work with a fellow participant from the teacher exchange, Bryden Joy, to develop resources based on the best practice we saw on our visit and disseminate them more widely with the support of ACT – perhaps fittingly via a digital platform thanks to Covid-19!

I have no doubt that you will enjoy this special edition of the journal as much as I enjoyed being a guest editor and contributing to the narrative on media literacy education within a Citizenship context.

ACT Update

News Roundup

ACT support the surge in demand for Citizenship resources and advice from teachers and schools

At the start of lockdown, ACT moved our events, advice, and resources online. We offered teachers who are new to ACT a complimentary membership and more than 150 new teachers have joined so far. ACT teachers and Ambassadors generously shared over 90 resources covering KS2 to KS4 to support home learning. We also updated our ACTive Citizenship Award Scheme pupil toolkit to become a new guide, ACTive Citizenship@home, to help encourage pupils to keep going with active citizenship wherever they are.

For resources see www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/citizenship-teaching-resources-distance-learning

Virtual Staffroom

We also launched our 'virtual staffroom' Friday coffee and chats; a relaxed lunchtime session for colleagues to drop in and out of as needed. It provides a space to ask specific questions to ACT staff and Ambassadors, and chat about Citizenship teaching. We have discussed struggles of online engagement, leading a Citizenship department, GCSE ranking and more. This will remain in place for as long as is useful.

Media Literacy Education project

In April ACT began a new media literacy project that seeks to counter misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the longer term. All the materials and resources produced will be flexible so that they can be used at home by students and in citizenship classes once more pupils return to school. These include free lessons and a 3-part certificated Media Literacy course. The project is supported by the US Embassy in London and is being undertaken in association with Shout Out UK. We hope to run the CPD course again in the Autumn term.

See www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/media-literacy

Oak National Academy launch weekly ACT Citizenship lessons

We are delighted that eight ACT teachers have been leading the development of new video lessons for Oak National Academy. Matt Hood, Principal at Oak National Academy, said: "We're thrilled to be launching our Citizenship lessons at Oak National Academy for Key Stages 3 and 4. I'm fully aware of how valuable these lessons are in providing young people with essential knowledge to thrive in society… Helping the younger generation understand how to be responsible and engaged as citizens is so important as we face this global Covid-19 crisis, together."

See www.thenational.academy/online-classroom

ACT Quality Standard for schools

The revised ACT Quality Standard will help you to evaluate the quality and provision of citizenship teaching in your school and improve your curriculum planning and implementation. It includes new tools to help you design plan and evaluate the quality of your citizenship provision and move forward as a school and is in line with the new Ofsted Inspection framework.

To find out more see www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-quality-standard
To register your interest email us at info@teachingcitizenship.org.uk

Diary dates

Find all on our events page
www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/
events-cpd-training

10 July 2020
ACT national CPD online conference
on teaching critical media literacy, citizenship, and curriculum planning. Guest speakers include Josie Verghese of BBC Young Reporter and Michael Olatokun from the British Institute of International and Comparative Law. ACT Ambassador teachers will be leading sessions on teaching critical media literacy, curriculum planning and addressing the new RSE requirements in your Citizenship teaching.

2 November 2020
International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists
www.un.org/en/events/journalists/

3 November 2020
US Presidential Elections
Always an important date but, in the context of the debate about 'fake news', the role of journalism, media freedom and the political impact of COVID-19, your students are likely to be very interested in this for the first part of the new term.

10 December 2020
UN Human Rights Day
This day (sponsored by the UN) is always accompanied by useful resources and interesting campaigns. The theme for 2019 was 'Youth Standing Up for Human Rights'.

Liz Moorse is ACT's Chief Executive.

Teaching media literacy through citizenship

Liz Moorse

This article from Liz Moorse is helpful in framing the discussion in this special edition and emphasising the importance of media literacy for citizenship teachers. Liz demonstrates how access to media (and media literacy) is a right of all children and then illustrates how this has featured within the Citizenship curriculum, from its inception in 2002 to current Citizenship curriculum, GCSE specifications and RSE and Health Education requirements.

The opening sentences of the current national curriculum set out the purpose of studying the subject.

'A high quality citizenship education helps to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society…and an understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching should equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.'

There is a lot packed into this apparently simple statement. Logically, if we want pupils to be 'informed', politically literate citizens, then they need the knowledge and skills to think critically about issues and engage with the information and news they read, see, and hear every day, wherever that comes from. They need the knowledge to know which sources they can trust, to build their understanding of what is going on in the world and to decide on their viewpoints and which issues matter to them and why. And of course it is established in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, that children should have access to information from the media in a form they can understand.

> **Our understanding of information and news shapes our views on the political and social issues affecting our lives and those around us, as well as, our sense of agency and community, and how we feel about politics and society more widely.**

Article 17 (access to information from the media)
Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them. (Summary of UNCRC, UNICEF)

Our understanding of information and news shapes our views on the political and social issues affecting our lives and those around us, as well as, our sense of agency and community, and how we feel about politics and society more widely. In turn this is going to affect our propensity to act – to respond and do something about those issues as 'active citizens'.

The relationship between citizenship and media literacy was established at the outset, in the 1998 Crick report – the seminal document which helped to establish and define citizenship as a curriculum subject in England – media literacy was seen as 'an area for greater emphasis' given the expanding role of 'new media technologies' in society. The report recognised the need to equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to discuss controversial issues, be resilient to coercion and manipulation, develop their capacity to discern fact from opinion in the mass media, unpick bias and challenge stereotypes. The report stated:

'Education should not attempt to shelter our nation's children from even the harsher controversies of adult life but should prepare

them to deal with such controversies, knowledgably, sensibly, tolerantly and morally'.

The report continued,

'When dealing with controversial issues teachers should adopt strategies that teach pupils how to recognise bias, how to evaluate evidence put before them and how to look for alternative interpretations, viewpoints and sources of evidence; above all to give good reasons for everything they say and do, and to expect good reasons to be given by others.' (page 58)

The recommendations of the Crick report were used as the basis from which to develop the 2002 national curriculum for citizenship which required pupils to be taught knowledge and understanding about:
- the importance of a free press, and the media's role in society, including the internet, in providing information and affecting opinion

and the skills to:
- research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social, or cultural issue, problem, or event by analysing information from different sources, including ICT based sources, showing an awareness of the use and abuse of statistics
- express, justify and defend orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems, or events; and
- use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express, explain and critically evaluate views that are not their own.

In the 2008 national curriculum the teaching requirements relating to media literacy were more detailed in both the content and skills. These included:
- freedom of speech and diversity of views, and the role of the media in informing and influencing public opinion and holding those in power to account
- use and interpretation of different media and ICT both as sources of information and as a means of communicating ideas
- critical thinking and enquiry to engage with and reflect on different ideas, opinions, beliefs, and values when exploring topical and controversial issues and problems
- research, plan and undertake enquiries into issues and problems using a range of information and sources to analyse; and
- evaluate sources used, questioning different values, ideas and viewpoints and recognising bias.

The purpose of revisiting the origins of the citizenship curriculum and the previous iterations of the national curriculum, are simply to help us understand more about the role the subject has in teaching media literacy effectively today. The current key stage 3 and 4 citizenship national curriculum continues the tradition of teaching media literacy and taken together includes requirements to teach about:
- democracy including the power of government, the role

of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account and the different roles of the executive, legislature and judiciary and a free press

and skills to:
- use a range of research strategies, interrogate, and weigh up evidence, debate and evaluate viewpoints, present reasoned, persuasive arguments, substantiate conclusions and take informed action.

The current national curriculum programmes of study are less explicit about these objectives than previous versions and if we were re-writing them today, I am sure they would say more about this area. This means teachers need to work harder at interpreting the requirements and developing a citizenship curriculum that achieves its core purposes and helps every child benefit from high quality citizenship teaching including media literacy.

The language we now use has moved on, but the spirit of those original subject aims, and intentions remain present. Today we want pupils to understand key terms mis, dis and mal information and to have the skills to critically engage with the many types of information and news sources they encounter online and offline. We build their knowledge of political and social issues and problems using information and news sources, and their understanding of related concepts. For example, the need to balance rights and responsibilities in relation to freedom of speech and protection from harm and hate; or in relation to data rights, personal data, the law, and consent. We teach about the roles of the media and a free press and develop their journalistic skills to fact check and source check as they develop their views and build resilience to extremist narratives. We want them to develop as informed, responsible, and active citizens. All this means citizenship also has a key role in delivering large parts of the new Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education requirements which includes 'online and media' and 'internet safety and harms'. More on this is set out in the table below.

The role of citizenship in teaching media literacy is paramount. Today more than ever, the politically literate citizen must be a media literate citizen too.

**Media literacy in Citizenship -
Curriculum planning questions:**
The following content is taken from the DFE GCSE Citizenship Studies required subject content and provides a useful framework for planning what to teach about media literacy in citizenship.
1) What opportunities do we provide in citizenship for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of:
- the rights, responsibilities and role of the media and a free press in informing and influencing public opinion, providing a forum for the communication and exchange of ideas and opinions, and in holding those in power to account
- the right of the media to investigate and report on issues of

public interest subject to the need for accuracy and respect for people's privacy and dignity
- the operation of press regulation and examples of where censorship is used
- the use of the media by groups wishing to influence public opinion and those in power
- how digital democracy, social media and other measures are being developed as a means to improve voter engagement and the political participation of citizens

2) What opportunities do we provide in citizenship for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills to:
- critically analyse sources of information including real sources and news
- form their own hypotheses, create sustained and reasoned arguments, and reach substantiated conclusions
- understand the range of methods and approaches that can be used by governments, organisations, groups and individuals to address citizenship issues in society
- present their own and other viewpoints and represent the views of others, in relation to citizenship issues, causes, situations and concepts

- plan practical citizenship actions aimed at delivering a benefit or change for others in society
- critically evaluate the effectiveness of citizenship actions to assess progress towards the intended aims and impact for the individuals, groups and communities affected.

Useful reading:
Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools. Final Report, 1998
https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/advisory-group-citizenship-report-crick-report
National Curriculum for Citizenship from 2002, 2008 and the current version 2014
https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/national-curriculum-programmes-study-citizenship
DFE subject content for GCSE Citizenship Studies
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-citizenship-studies
Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education. DFE Statutory Guidance
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

COVID-19 STRATEGY ROOM
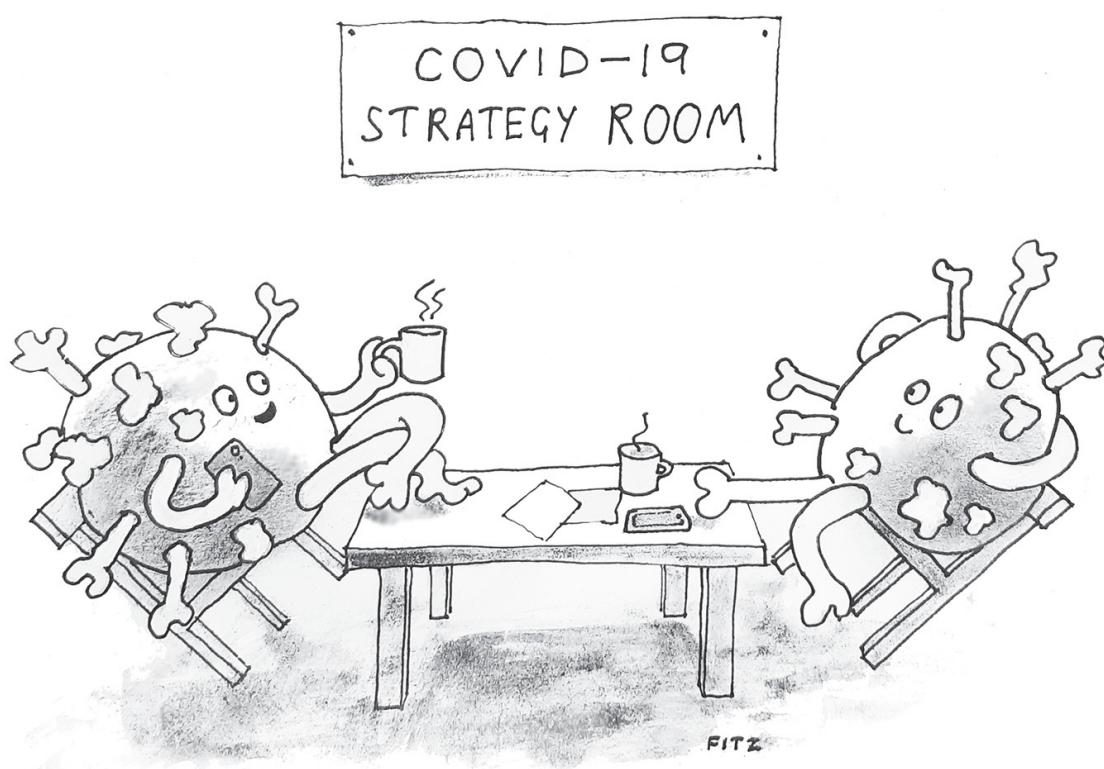
"The rise of social media has made the job of a virus easier than ever!"

Cartoon: James Fitzgerald

Theme

Teaching media literacy through citizenship

. . . .

How citizenship delivers Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education: online, media, internet safety and harms.

National Curriculum Citizenship	RSE and Health Education Statutory Guidance
Pupils must be taught: *Rights, responsibilities, freedom, diversity and equality* • Rights and responsibilities of citizens (KS3&4) • democracy and a free press (KS4) • diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding (KS4)	**By the end of school pupils should know:** *Respectful relationship (p28)* • the impact of bullying and responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and where to get help *Online and media (p28)* • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • about online risks • not to provide materials to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them *Internet safety and harms (p33)* • how to consider the effect of online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
Rules, law and justice • nature of rules and laws and the justice system including the role of the police and the operation of the courts and tribunals (KS3) • human rights and international law (KS4) • the legal system in the UK, different sources of law and how the law helps society deal with complex problems (KS4)	*Respectful relationship (p28)* • that some forms of behaviour within relationships are criminal including violent behaviour and coercive control • what constitutes sexual harassment • the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) *Online and media (p28)* • that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail *Being safe* • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence, FGM *Internet safety and harms (p33)* • why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
• skills to research and interrogate evidence, debate, and evaluate viewpoints, present reasoned arguments and take informed action (KS3) • skills to be able to use a range of research strategies, weigh up evidence, make persuasive arguments and substantiate their conclusions (KS4) • evaluate different ways that citizens can act together to solve problems and contribute to society (KS4)	*Online and media (p28)* • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online *Internet safety and harms (p33)* • that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits • how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information such as from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted • where and how to report concerns and get support with online issues

David Buckingham is an Emeritus Professor at Loughborough University, and a Visiting Professor at Kings College London.

Media and citizenship education in the digital age

David Buckingham

David Buckingham's book '*The Media Education Manifesto'* offers a framework for thinking about how to embed media across the curriculum. He argues for a coherent and comprehensive approach to media education, rather than a 'half baked' approach that will lead nowhere. In this article he explores some of the themes from the book and invites teachers to think more deeply about the relationship between citizenship and media education.

In the contemporary world, citizenship is overwhelmingly mediated. Since the beginnings of modernity, the media have become ever more central to our political system, our economy, and our arts and culture. With the advent of digital and social media, this has steadily extended not just to our working lives, but also to our social and intimate relationships. Media are now ubiquitous. The ways in which we understand and participate in the wider society – and hence what it means to be a citizen – are fundamentally dependent upon our ability to use and critically engage with media.

Education about the media has always been an element of citizenship education; and conversely, media educators have frequently invoked arguments about citizenship. Media education is relevant here in two main ways. The ability to critically evaluate media – to analyse media forms and messages, and to understand the broader systems of social communication – is a prerequisite for informed citizenship. Yet the media also increasingly provide opportunities for people to create and convey their own messages, as producers in their own right.

Media education seeks to develop young people's competencies in both these respects; and indeed it depends upon a dynamic relationship between critical analysis and creative practice.

> **The ability to critically evaluate media – to analyse media forms and messages, and to understand the broader systems of social communication – is a prerequisite for informed citizenship.**

'Media literacy', meanwhile, is a rather more contested idea, which can easily be seen in somewhat bland and functional terms. Yet literacy in the broader sense is not just a matter of individual skill, but of critical understanding, and of social practice.

Beyond the digital dream

The dissemination of digital and social media presents new opportunities in this respect, but it also poses significant challenges. It's now sixty years since the first message was sent over the ARPANET, the precursor of today's internet; and thirty years since the origin of the World Wide Web. Much of this technology was initially developed for military purposes; but it quickly became surrounded by some very different ideas about how it might be used.

According to early enthusiasts, networked digital technology was a revolutionary force, a way of giving power to the people. The internet, they argued, would provide access to an infinite world of knowledge; it would promote new forms of creativity, and encourage small-scale, artisanal businesses; and it would revive civic life and democratic politics. Over time, these early countercultural ideas gradually merged with a new kind of entrepreneurial thinking. After the dot-com crash, the internet was rebranded as a 'participatory' medium (Web 2.0), and these seemingly libertarian arguments became part of the new business model of 'digital capitalism'.

We can see some of the same ideas in education as well. Technology companies like Apple have been particularly skillful in targeting the education market with a similar kind of 'cyber-utopianism'. Technology, they tell us, will transform learning, empower students, and liberate teachers. It will automatically bring about more active, creative, student-centred forms of education: anybody who opposes it is simply a dinosaur.

Even the most optimistic advocates would have to acknowledge that the reality has been very different from the rhetoric. The democratic dream of the networked society has a very bitter taste today: far from promoting deliberation and informed debate, social media are frequently accused of contributing to their demise; and the digital world is increasingly dominated by a small number of commercial companies that are accountable to nobody but their shareholders.

When it comes to education, we have seen a similar history of failed promises about the transformative effects of technology. In fact, it's possible to trace similar arguments being made about television, or video, or film, many decades earlier. According to their advocates (and their marketers) each of these technologies was also going to liberate teachers and students. Yet when we look at how digital technology is mostly taken up in education, we find that it is often used in quite narrow and reductive ways – for testing rather than teaching, for gathering data, and for improving management efficiency.

Furthermore, the use of technology in school often fails to connect with what children are doing with technology outside school. These days, most young people are walking around with powerful computers ('smartphones') in their pockets: they use them to access information, but also for communication and for entertainment. Yet in many cases, these devices are actually banned in schools. Students aren't invited to study and critically reflect upon the wider digital culture in which they live: they are only allowed to use computers for instrumental purposes.

> **The use of technology in school often fails to connect with what children are doing with technology outside school.**

The advent of the tech-lash

In the past couple of years, the debate on these issues has changed quite significantly. The dream of technological liberation is giving way to a nightmare. Newspapers and TV news are full of stories about the dangers of social media; almost every month we have new books that are telling us how technology will take us all to hell.

There is a long litany of concerns here. For many years, there has been anxiety about pornography and paedophiles online. But now the issues seem much larger: they are about social and personal well-being – about the kind of society we want to live in, the kind of people we want to be, and what we want our children to become. These concerns are very diverse: they are about fake news and disinformation, and the so-called 'post-truth' society; about young people being radicalized and incited to terrorism online; about abuse, hate speech and cyberbullying; about surveillance and the invasion of privacy, and the buying and selling of personal data; and about mental health – about narcissism, addiction, depression and self-harm. And the list goes on…

Media scholars know there is a long history of these kinds of anxieties, and we are sometimes inclined to dismiss them as 'moral panics'. Certainly, the evidence for many of these concerns is very limited; and they are often exaggerated by people with other axes to grind. Terms like 'addiction' and 'fake news' tend to oversimplify the issues. Much of the debate is framed in terms of simple cause-and-effect relationships; and these simplistic questions then lead to some very limited forms of evidence. When it comes to young people, we also suffer from a chronic sentimentality: we see them either as innocent, passive victims or as 'digital natives' who possess some kind of natural wisdom or affinity with technology.

In education, we seek to give young people 'digital skills'; but we often define those skills in very narrow, instrumental ways. Meanwhile, in seeking to address the problems posed by digital media, policy-makers and commentators continue to look for quick fix

solutions – advising children on the basics of internet safety, teaching them the difference between 'fake news' and 'truth', telling them how it's bad to bully other people. Yet these kinds of bans and warnings are rarely effective. They tend to address the symptoms rather than the deeper causes of what concerns us. And in reality, the bad and the good – the risks and the opportunities of digital media – come together: preventing risks also means restricting opportunities.

Nevertheless, these concerns cannot be dismissed as merely irrational 'panics'. They reflect broader changes that are going on, not just in the media themselves, but also in the wider social, economic and political sphere. In the case of media and technology, the global landscape is now dominated by a small number of very large companies: Google, Facebook, Amazon and others are effectively monopolies in their respective markets. These companies operate, not in the traditional way of media companies, by selling content (although they are doing that as well), but by gathering and selling data about their users. This was made dramatically clear by the scandal of Cambridge Analytica – although this was by no means an isolated example. This new business model operates by maximizing traffic, using algorithms that for most of us are completely invisible. The aim is to keep us clicking, because clicks mean data, and data means income. This is the new world of digital capitalism.

The place of media education
If we are to understand what is happening here, we need a bigger, more coherent picture. This is what media education provides. In the UK, media education has a long history, going back at least eighty years. Teachers of English have been teaching about media in systematic ways since the 1960s; and the earliest specialized courses in Media Studies for secondary school students date back to the 1970s. Media educators in the UK typically use a set of four critical concepts, for looking at film, television,

newspapers, computer games, and so on:
- Teaching about media language means analysing how media create meaning, or how we create meanings from media.
- Representation is about how media claim to represent reality, and how reliable and credible they are.
- In considering production, we're asking who makes these media, how they make them and why, and the economic forces involved.
- Considering audiences means reflecting on how and why we use these media in our daily lives, and the broader social, ethical and psychological consequences of this.

We can use these concepts very easily to teach about digital and social media as well. Just one example will have to suffice here, which should be of particular interest to citizenship teachers.

The case of 'fake news'
Media literacy has been seen as one potential solution to the problem of 'fake news'. Yet it's often assumed that this is a straightforward matter of learning to distinguish between truth and falsehood. In reality, the issue is much more complex, and difficult to teach about. What we need here is more than a checklist or a set of handy tips: we need critical thinking.

In media education, we have a long history of teaching about news - about bias, objectivity, fairness, balance, and so forth. We know that these are complicated issues, which are not simply about truth versus lies. We look at how the news sets an agenda, how it frames a given topic, how language defines and constructs issues, and how journalists and readers interpret a story. We are also aware that news isn't just about rational processes of understanding: there are also emotional and symbolic dimensions, and engaging with news is not something we can make into a completely rational process through education.

The four concepts that we have used to analyse 'old' news - newspapers, television – can be productively applied to digital

> **This approach is not a quick fix: it is intellectually rigorous, and can prove challenging both for students and teachers. It offers a comprehensive and critical approach that takes us well beyond narrow ideas of digital skills and internet safety.**

news. We can look at the language of news, including both the verbal and visual dimensions, as well as the role of hyperlinks and aspects of digital 'language'. We can look at representation: how news is selected, how stories are put together, how we are given particular interpretations of events. We can look at production, at the sources and producers of digital news, and how they are (or are not) regulated. And we can look at audiences, at how people use and circulate such material, how and why they participate, and how far they trust what they read.

Experience shows that it's possible for quite young children to engage with these difficult conceptual issues in a very practical way, involving creative media-making as well as critical analysis. This approach is not a quick fix: it is intellectually rigorous, and can prove challenging both for students and teachers. Yet it offers a comprehensive and critical approach to the rise of 'digital capitalism', and to the ubiquity of digital media in everyday life, that takes us well beyond narrow ideas of digital skills and internet safety.

Where can it happen?
It's not easy to be optimistic about this in the current climate of educational policy-making. In the past couple of years, media education has effectively been deleted from the curriculum for English, where it used to play a vital role; while Media Studies, as a separate optional subject, has come under sustained attack. Technology education has been reduced to a form of instrumental training, focused largely on operating hardware and software, and spurious claims about the value of coding.

> **Media education should not be seen as a kind of alternative to regulation: we also urgently need fundamental reforms of our media system.**

There is a distinct irony here: as politicians and commentators increasingly pontificate about the problems caused by digital media, they have steadily restricted opportunities for young people to study their broader social, political and cultural dimensions.

Citizenship education obviously provides another potential arena in this respect, although vthe numbers of students taking a full course in the area remain very small. There are plenty of ways for citizenship teachers to take advantage of the creative, participatory dimensions of media; and critical analysis of media can provide an engaging and challenging way of addressing topics that might otherwise appear dry and irrelevant. Attention should focus on the playful and dissenting possibilities of using media; and here teachers can learn much from informal youth cultures.

Ultimately, the aim of teaching media in this context should not be to produce well-behaved 'little citizens', or 'responsible' media users – an approach that is implicit in many regulatory initiatives around media literacy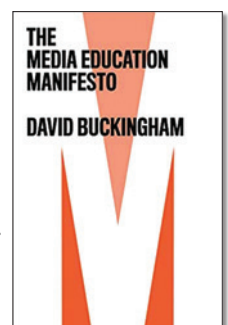. Media education should not be seen as a kind of alternative to regulation: we also urgently need fundamental reforms of our media system.

These ideas are developed further in David Buckingham's book *The Media Education Manifesto* (Polity, 2019), and on his blog: www.davidbuckingham.net.

THE MEDIA EDUCATION MANIFESTO

DAVID BUCKINGHAM

Theme

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Democracy and citizenship in the digital age rely on teaching digital literacy

Gianfranco Polizzi, Mariya Stoilova and Sonia Livingstone

The authors make some salient points here for Citizenship teachers about the vital role they have in designing a curriculum which develops critical digital skills. The significance of this shift for educators, and perhaps democracy itself, cannot be underestimated.

"How we define citizenship is inseparable from how we define democracy and the good society."
(Dahlgren, 2000)

In the context of liberal democracies, we are used to thinking about citizenship as a set of rights and responsibilities that prescribe the nature of people's relation to the state. Spanning civil, political and social aspects, citizenship involves active participation through rights such as voting, welfare protection or access to education. More recently, we have witnessed a 'cultural turn' in citizenship with a stronger focus on norms, identities and belonging in relation to the state and civil society, and greater recognition of the forms of exclusion that undermine citizenship, for example in relation to gender, ethnicity and sexuality.

But what does it mean to be a citizen in an age that is increasingly mediated by digital technologies? Is it time for a 'digital turn'?
The internet has become an integral part of how citizens participate in society, whether to read the news, seek information about political parties, discuss politics on social media, participate in local initiatives online, or organise protest events. This is often most true of young citizens, who are among the keenest users.

Alongside its benefits, the internet presents some challenges (Livingstone et al., 2019a):

- How to ensure that we live in a healthy information environment? Recent elections have shown that digital technologies can be used to spread misinformation making it hard for citizens to make informed decisions (Wardle &

Derakhshan, 2017).
- The internet can be used by governments to repress political action through forms of surveillance based on data tracking (McChesney, 2013).
- Economic surveillance by big corporations undermines citizens' privacy and can have political implications (as shown by the Cambridge Analytica scandal).
- Finally, because of the algorithms of search engines and social media, the problem of the filter bubble, can exacerbate the polarisation of political debate (Vaidhyanathan, 2018).

> **But the increasingly digital nature of society suggests that civic literacy is no longer enough. Children must – and want to – learn how to use digital technologies critically and creatively as well as safely and responsibly.**

What is the mission, then, of citizenship education in the digital age?
As ever, educators today are presented with the task of promoting citizenship by equipping children with the skills and knowledge they need to understand the socio-political system and participate in civic life. These skills and knowledge fall under civic literacy. But the increasingly digital nature of society suggests that civic literacy is no longer enough. Children must – and want to – learn how to use digital technologies critically and creatively as well as safely and responsibly.

This means that citizenship should be taught in tandem with digital (or media) literacy. Understanding and exercising citizenship rights in a digital world should go hand-in-hand with an understanding of the internet itself – its affordances, modes of communication, rules for social interaction, its data worlds, digital traces and data flows (Livingstone, 2014; Stoilova et al., 2019)

Digital literacy goes beyond the functional skills necessary to use the internet. It incorporates critical dimensions, such as the ability to evaluate online content, to understand how digital technologies the broader internet environment function, and be aware

Theme

Democracy and citizenship in the digital age rely on teaching digital literacy

of its models of governance, regulation, ownership and commerce (Polizzi, 2020). Digital citizenship also means the ability to demand and act upon one's rights online, such as the right to privacy.

What are the pedagogical challenges?

Learning the critical aspects is the area which poses particular challenges to education. The evidence suggests that most children manage to master functional skills, even in contexts where their online access is restricted, their devices are basic, and support is limited (Kardefelt et al., 2019). Many fewer climb the "ladder of participation," often because they lack the chance to develop the more advanced skills and literacies which allow them to take advantage of the existing opportunities and exercise their rights (Livingstone et al., 2019b).

In a complex networked data economy, it is hardly surprising that children struggle to fully comprehend the digital environment – so do their parents and educators. So improving children's digital literacy is a demanding education task. This is made even more complex by the fact that children are trying to apply their knowledge from 'offline' situations to the internet and from interpersonal to institutional and commercial contexts. This often results in misunderstandings and false expectations about their rights as citizens. However, in our discussions with UK children aged 11-16 years, we found that once children realise the extent to which their personal information is subject to commodification, they feel outraged and demand companies to grant them more rights over their own data (Stoilova et al., 2019).

Overcoming the challenges

Digital literacy should be taught across the UK school curriculum and subjects like Computing and Citizenship have a lot to offer. It is vital to broaden the focus to encompass not only functional but also critical digital skills, and to attend to the potential and limitations that the internet affords for civic engagement and democracy (Polizzi & Taylor, 2019).

Current resources tend to focus on traditional media ownership, bias and representations of controversial topics, in relation, for example, to democracy, religion, and terrorism. However, we now need also to prioritise the critical analysis of misinformation, digital business models and society's reliance on a digital infrastructure. The format of the educational material could be designed in ways that offer a dynamic, hands-on learning environment for students and encourage them to use digital technologies in synergy with their wider knowledge to engage as citizens in the digital environment. There's a growing number of

> **Most children manage to master functional skills, even in contexts where their online access is restricted, their devices are basic, and support is limited. Fewer climb the 'ladder of participation'… to take advantage of the existing opportunities and exercise their rights.**

public and civil society organisations willing to contribute their energy and ideas.

In conclusion, we believe that digital literacy education should be part of a comprehensive approach to learning about the digital, which involves out-of-school environments and public dialogue about citizenship rights and the role of different stakeholders in creating a digital environment which respects and supports children's rights to participation, protection, and provision. Of course such responsibility does not lie exclusively with educators: it requires involvement from parents and carers, educational organisations and charities, policymakers and the media industry and internet corporations. Children, educators and parents alike need to be supported in their quest for digital literacy and citizenship knowledge. And this matters for everybody, for citizenship in the digital age can only be fully promoted as long as we promote digital literacy.

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Designing a Curriculum for Media Literacy

Helen Blachford

Following the teacher exchange to the US it was crystal clear that media literacy education should be taught as an integral part of a coherent, well-planned Citizenship curriculum. All media shares one thing: someone created it. It was created for with an intent, understanding that intent is the basis of media literacy. The digital age has made it easy for anyone to become a creator of media. It is not always obvious who created something, why they made it, and whether it's credible, making it essential for every child to have access to high quality media literacy education.

School Context

Priory School is a larger than average secondary school with 1250 students on roll. There are more boys than girls and the proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore eligible for pupil premium funding is well above the national average. The proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is also above the national average and the entry profile of pupils is significantly below the national average. As a school our focus is on high expectations and raising aspirations.

In that context I have been interested by the discussion of cultural capital in relation to the National Curriculum and Ofsted Framework. There cultural capital is defined as 'the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.' Whilst I recognise there are arguments about how that definition connects (or rather doesn't) to more established uses of the term, the ideas in that quotation are fundamental to my curriculum and the students I teach. But for me that 'essential knowledge' is not a singular defined canon, I want to ensure that the students I teach have been exposed to a range of experiences and sources of information and opinions on a variety of topics – and that they are challenged to think critically about the information/views/

> **Like many schools, in the wake of the new Ofsted framework we have been reviewing and refreshing our long and medium term planning. We adopted Dylan Wiliam's four pillars of curriculum design.**

opinions that they may be presented with in school and beyond from the media they access and from home in some cases.

The space I have in the curriculum looks like this: **PSCRE core** lesson for all year groups: 1 lesson per week combining PSHE/Citizenship/RE with the same teacher. All the PSHE & Citizenship lessons are written by myself and delivered mostly by a team of non-specialists. The RE lessons are written by another Curriculum Leader. **Citizenship GCSE Option:** This core content provides an optional top-up for groups in Year 9, 10 & 11 who have opted to take the full GCSE Citizenship Studies.

Revisiting Our Planning

Like many schools, in the wake of the new Ofsted framework we have been reviewing and refreshing our long and medium term planning. We adopted Dylan Wiliam's four pillars of curriculum design:

1. Intent: What is your curriculum intent/vision? What principles underpin your approach to curriculum?
2. Content: Who makes the decisions about content/specifications? On what basis are decisions made?
3. Delivery: How does your pedagogy support your curriculum intent?
4. Experience: How far is your curriculum intent lived out in students' experiences? How do you know? Do you review this?

In thinking about these issues we have been juggling a number of priorities and trying to balance the following considerations:

- What Ofsted wants, or at least, how we need to present ourselves to Ofsted.
- The vision and priorities of the school and Academy Trust.
- Our own curriculum audit.
- The local context of the school – what do we need to include to meet the needs of our students?
- Consultations with students about their own priorities and preferences.
- The national curriculum for Citizenship and locally agreed syllabus for RE.
- Other statutory guidance, such as the Fundamental British Values.
- How to develop complementary connections with the GCSE options without creating repetition for those in years 9-11 opting for Citizenship or RE.
- What are the non-negotiables? What MUST our students all have had the opportunity to study, experience or learn about before they leave us?

> **Year 8 develop a shared language so we are clear what we mean by 'misinformation', 'disinformation', 'malinformation', 'flawed news', and 'biased news'.**

Intent – Why have I included media literacy in my curriculum?

Having been incredibly fortunate to have applied and been successful in undertaking a teacher exchange to the US I have developed my own knowledge and understanding of media literacy and the importance of this area of the curriculum to the young people I teach, and the staff in my school for that matter! This combined with the focus on curriculum within the new Ofsted framework has felt like a really exciting opportunity to re-visit my curriculum and evaluate what I have included and why, and make changes to the content to refresh the curriculum and make it more relevant to my students and their needs. I also consulted with groups of students to ask them what they felt should be included within the PSCRE curriculum – what was missing or what needed changing, along with staff teaching PSCRE.

In a world where young people are bombarded with information 24/7 it is our role as educators to help them develop the critical thinking skills in order to be able to be more discerning and engage effectively with media (as consumers and creators).

The Vision

Enjoy
Wide subject content.
Real world examples.
Active engagement.

Respect
Knowledge of real issues, diversity and global politics.
Mutual respect and Tolerance.

Achieve
Active and informed citizens – locally, nationally, globally.
Facilitation of future choices.

Gamechangers

Through the highest expectations, an ethos of Enjoy Respect, Achieve and unparalleled opportunities we aim to create students that are *gamechangers*.

In Citizenship that means: developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enable them to drive change and to make a positive contribution to their society in which differences and diversity are celebrated.

In PSHE that means: developing the tools to manage many of the most critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face growing up in such rapidly changing and challenging times.

In RE that means: providing students with the skills required to become reflective and critical thinkers.

One key idea underpinning the revised curriculum is that it doesn't matter what platform young people and adults are using to get their information, the skills/tools needed to think critically and evaluate that information are the same and are transferrable. In order to be transformative these skills need to developed as a habit and so stand-alone lessons on media literacy are not enough. These skills need to be 'baked in' and, to do that, need to be practiced regularly. That means we have planned a spiral curriculum, with units where we focus primarily on media literacy in every year. We also work it through as a theme across other units, for example in relation to extremism and discrimination.

An overview of the spiral curriculum
Year 7 – focus on internet safety within a unit on bullying in PSCRE and within ICT lessons.

Year 8 – developing a shared language so we are clear what we mean by 'misinformation', 'disinformation', 'malinformation', 'flawed news', and 'biased news'. Developing critical thinking in relation to information from the media students access and decision making with regard to that information. We introduce students to the REVIEW model developed by Bryden Joy and myself; you can find the model outlined in Bryden's article.

Year 10 Core – revisiting the year 8 unit key concepts and deepening the learning by exploring strategies for fighting misinformation. This unit also includes a detailed examination of false stories, and a consideration of 'information neighbourhoods' to clarify the different norms and expectations around accountability and validity in different forms of media and how we can recognise good journalism. This compliments the content of the GCSE Citizenship Studies, where students will have the opportunity to think more deeply about the impact good journalism, and dis/mis/malinformtion can have on a democracy.

Year 10 GCSE – this is a relatively straightforward process in terms of curriculum planning as it is dictated by the exam board specification, including the role of the free press in democracy, the role of the media in relation to accountability, and the nature of regulation.

Challenges and Opportunities
One of the exciting opportunities for further development is the community of practitioners that has emerged from the US trip. This group of teachers has been sharing experience and co-developing resources to extend and deepen our work. I've also been sharing best practice within my MAT and beyond, for example through the Citizenship Hubs run by ACT's Teaching Ambassadors) and CPD sessions which Bryden and I are leading for ACT. In terms of my own professional development I've also continued to learn more about media literacy through an online course with State University New York and the University of Hong Kong.
www.coursera.org/learn/news-literacy

The challenges will be familiar to many colleagues. Although I am enthusiastic about developing my own expertise and practice, the curriculum is still largely taught through a large team of non-specialists delivering Core PSCRE, and so I have to take care not to run ahead too fast. And we are limited by the time available, both to the whole area of PSCRE and to citizenship and media literacy within that.

With these issues in mind, my priorities for the year ahead are:
- Development of new curriculum resources (focusing on News Literacy).
- CPD for all staff – so we develop a shared language around media literacy, and CPD for the non-specialists delivering PSCRE to help deepen their understanding.
- Pupil Voice – making sure we follow up with students to see how these lessons are being received and what more they want.
- Collaboration with English and History colleagues on how we can embed skills and a shared language needed for impactful media literacy, so we can really build the spiral curriculum beyond PSCRE.

> **In a world where young people are bombarded with information 24/7 it is our role as educators to help them develop the critical thinking skills in order to be able to be more discerning and engage effectively with media (as consumers and creators).**

Citizenship and News Literacy

Jonathan Anzalone

The news literacy work at Stony Brook University was particularly helpful for those of us on the trip to the US. It introduced a range of key concepts and thinking tools that could be used with students. One useful idea is 'information neighbourhoods' which helps to distinguish between different types of information. This highlights the distinctive nature of journalism in relation to accountability, independence and verification (you can see how these have been developed in practice in Bryden Joy's article on p.43). In this article Jonathan shares some of those key ideas and discusses how they work with school students.

n a recent poll of Americans conducted by PBS News Hour, National Public Radio, and Marist College, 35 percent of respondents identified "misleading information" as the "biggest threat" to a safe and accurate 2020 election. The public's alarm over misinformation outweighed all other causes of unease, including voter fraud (24 percent) and voter suppression (16 percent). Fifty-nine percent of participants in the same poll said it's difficult to distinguish between facts and misleading information, compared to 37 percent who said it's easy. Clearly, a significant number of Americans worry about the effect that the rapid spread of misinformation has had on their ability to sort fact from fiction. They are not alone. Every day and in every part of the globe, new developments remind us of how important trustworthy information is to our collective health and safety, and to our ability to make informed judgments and decisions about our political leaders. News is the oxygen of democracy—essential to the health and survival of a political system in which citizens require reliable information to inform their votes and activism. Though the public's concerns are well founded, we are not powerless amidst the deluge of falsehoods that often drown out the truth and leave concerned citizens stranded at sea.

> **News is the oxygen of democracy – essential to the health and survival of a political system in which citizens require reliable information to inform their votes and activism.**

Since 2007, the Center for News Literacy, which is housed in Stony Brook University's School of Journalism, has empowered students to take control of their media diets and embrace their roles as consumers, distributors, and producers of news. The News Literacy curriculum we have devised, taught, revised, and tested for more than a decade cultivates in students the ability to use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television, the internet, or social media. Being news literate means being able to find reliable news that consumers can act on with confidence, and share responsibly with others. By developing and applying News Literacy skills, students take significant steps toward becoming well-informed, active citizens.

An early lesson in our News Literacy curriculum aids students in determining whether the information they consume is in fact journalism. This is a greater challenge than it may seem. Recently, I was scanning the homepage of Yahoo! News and found an example that illustrates a problem we call "the blurring of the lines" between information neighborhoods. I saw, mixed in with stories on the ambitions of private spaceflight companies and public health officials' missteps in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the headline "Lindsey Graham Approval Poll." It would have been easy for someone who was quickly scanning the page to miss the faint label

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above the headline: "Ad Jaime Harrison for U.S. Senate." Harrison is running for Graham's Senate seat in South Carolina, and his campaign is responsible for this sponsored content. If the website's visitors clicked on that headline, without noticing the label, they likely would have thought they were consuming journalism when, in fact, they had inadvertently wandered into the advertising neighborhood.

The key to navigating the confusing information landscape we all inhabit is to know your neighborhood. We teach students to look for three key characteristics of journalism: Verification, Independence, and Accountability (VIA, for short).

VIA characteristics of journalism

- Verification: The news provider should employ a transparent process of verification, whereby its reporters collect evidence and interview sources to confirm the accuracy of the facts in the story.
- Independence: The outlet should also practice independence and publish information that's in the public interest, even in the face of resistance from outside political and economic interests.
- Accountability: Journalists should be accountable, taking responsibility for their work and correcting errors—unlike the countless anonymous accounts on YouTube and social media.

To be considered journalism, all three <u>must</u> be present. Verification, Independence, Accountability — VIA
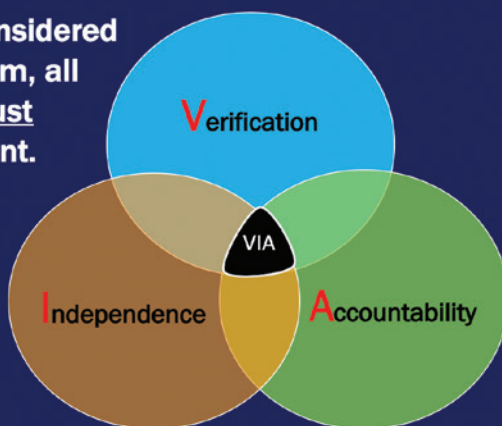
Together, VIA defines journalism, and any information that lacks one of these attributes, such as a campaign ad for Jaime Harrison, belongs in a different information neighborhood. Determining what information neighborhood we are in is an important early

> **Determining what information neighborhood we are in is an important early step toward becoming a well-informed news consumer and citizen.**

step toward becoming a well-informed news consumer and citizen.

Once students determine that they are in the journalism neighborhood, they must then evaluate the news report itself, paying close attention to the quality of the evidence. Three simple questions guide them: What do I know? How do I know it? What don't I know? We encourage students to categorize the evidence of what they know into two categories: direct and indirect. Direct is first-hand information, captured in real time, such as an audio recording or an official time-stamped email. Indirect evidence is second-hand or worse, like the game of telephone, in which a story changes substantially as it passes from one teller to the next.

While analyzing the evidence in news reports, we ask students, "did the reporter open the freezer"? The origins of "open the freezer" are rooted in the early days of the News Literacy course and the insights of students. In 2005, Hurricane Katrine struck New Orleans, Louisiana, and the surrounding areas, causing massive flooding, property destruction, and loss of life. In the chaos that ensued, it was difficult for reporters to verify the available information. Brian Thevenot, a reporter in New Orleans, went to a convention center where refugees from the storm had gathered, and he heard from a number of sources that between thirty and forty bodies of murder victims were stacked in a freezer there. Thevenot included this detail in his report. It turned out not to be true. As an accountable journalist dedicated to verification, he interviewed his sources again and discovered that they did not have first-hand evidence of the bodies. In other words, Thevenot relied on indirect evidence rather than direct, and, as our News Literacy students observed, he did not open the freezer. "Open the freezer" is a profound reminder of the importance of verification in news reporting, and the need for news consumers to find reliable information as they draw conclusions and make decisions.

As the Hurricane Katrina example shows us, a news report is only as good as the sources who provide information to journalists. Sources, like evidence, require careful evaluation. To judge the reliability of sources, we've devised a five-step process we call IMVAIN. Is the source *Independent*? Sources who have clear emotional, financial, or political stakes in the story have greater motivation to withhold and spin information, or to lie. Is the source one

of *Multiple* sources? It's best when additional people and evidence corroborate the word of the source. Does the source provide *Verifiable* information? It's best when a source provides facts rather than opinions and unsubstantiated assertions. Is the source *Authoritative* and/or *Informed*? Sources should have relevant knowledge on the subject of the story. And lastly, is the source *Named*? Though many excellent reporters have relied on anonymous sources to break important stories, ideally, sources would take responsibility for the information they share.

As our students identify the journalism neighborhood and evaluate the evidence and sources in news reports, they take critical steps toward becoming news literate consumers and sharers of information.

Center for News Literacy instructors have taught these and other lessons to more than 11,000 Stony Brook undergraduates, across all disciplines, in both face-to-face and online courses. During the academic year, we distribute our updated lessons to 230 subscribers in our weekly email feed. More than two dozen colleges and universities in the United States have adopted parts of our curriculum, and schools in fifteen countries, including Hong Kong University and Liverpool John Moores University, have adapted our curriculum for their students. We've trained dozens of middle school and high school teachers in New York state, and we're working closely with select school districts to embed News Literacy into their social studies and English curricula. Beyond the classroom, we have developed Making Sense of the News, a free online course available on Coursera.

> **An independent assessment in 2012 demonstrated that Stony Brook undergraduates who had taken News Literacy were more likely to consume news regularly and to appreciate the role of the press in democratic politics and society.**

Evidence of impact

It's necessary, when assessing the impact of News Literacy in the classroom, to have students apply the course concepts to real examples and regularly practice their critical-thinking skills. For example, in our "Know Your Neighborhood" lesson groups of students analyze and discuss a series of examples drawn from every corner of the media landscape. In what neighborhood does the *Washington Post's* Super Bowl commercial belong? What neighborhood are we in when we watch a late-night CNN program that's hosted by a comedian? How should we categorize *The Corps Report*, a news show produced by active-duty U.S. Marines for YouTube? What matters most in such activities is the students' explanations of their methods and conclusions. Do they show an understanding of the foundational concepts? Do they interrogate the information rather than passively consume it? Do they ask critical questions of information rather than quickly accepting it or dismissing it? Do they effectively articulate the steps in their analysis and support their conclusions? Equipped with a common vocabulary and set of concepts, from VIA to IMVAIN, and armed with simple questions to guide their searches, social media activity, and news consumption, News Literacy students prepare themselves to navigate a confusing information landscape in search of reliable information.

In broader assessments of its impact, we have found compelling evidence that students who take News Literacy go on to become more engaged citizens. An independent assessment in 2012 demonstrated that Stony Brook undergraduates who had taken News Literacy were more likely to consume news regularly and to appreciate the role of the press in democratic politics and society. A separate study, published in 2017, by the media scholars Adam Maksl, Stephanie Craft, and Seth Ashley, found that undergraduates "who had taken a news literacy course had significantly higher levels of news media literacy, greater knowledge of current events, and higher motivation to consume news, compared with students who had not taken the course." The next step, as the Center expands its partnerships with school districts in New York, is to test how durable News Literacy skills are, using some of the assessment methods pioneered by the Stanford History Education Group.

Anecdotally, former students often inform me and my colleagues that News Literacy continues to drive them crazy because they can't follow the news without thinking about the course concepts. Visions of open freezers dance in their heads. Some former students also have advocated for a broader News Literacy initiative that reaches a wider audience. For example, James Bowen, a Journalism major who took News Literacy in 2019, wrote an opinion piece in the student newspaper *The Statesman*. In his article, Bowen reflected on the lessons he learned in News Literacy and concluded, "We live in a world where it is common to distrust the media…. By taking the time to incorporate the verification processes mentioned before in everyday lives, all news consumers can adapt to the changing times and appreciate the fast-paced world of digital media."

Taking the programme to schools

Students and consumers of all ages would benefit from some form of News Literacy education. Research by Erica Hodgin and Joe Kahne suggests that early media literacy and civic education can benefit middle school students, buoying our efforts to bring our lessons to a young audience that's just beginning to engage with this community and, through the internet and social media, the wider world.

Some of the most exciting and promising work done by the Center for News Literacy and its partners is occurring at the middle school and high school levels. Students at Herbert S. Eisenberg Intermediate School 303 in Coney Island, Brooklyn, take an hour of News Literacy every week for three years. They do community projects as part of their class, including writing letters to city politicians and working with civic groups. As these students are learning, News Literacy is more than an academic exercise—it has real-world applications and implications. Will our children grow up to become adults who, like the participants in the poll cited at the beginning of this piece, are overwhelmed and bewildered by the flood of misleading information? Perhaps the younger generations can offer a glimmer of hope. One I.S. 303 student told *Time for Kids* in 2016, "In fifth grade I always used to believe everything I read on the internet and now I'm very careful when

> **In fifth grade I always used to believe everything I read on the internet and now I'm very careful when I read news off the internet because now I've learned not to believe everything." (Student at Herbert S. Eisenberg Intermediate School 303)**

I read news off the internet because now I've learned not to believe everything." It may be difficult, given the challenges we face today, to picture a future society of news literate citizens, but hearing an eleven-year-old student reflect on how naïve she was as an information consumer on the internet and social media when she was ten-years-old reminds us that, with skill-building and hard work, we are capable of overcoming the challenges that confront us as news consumers and citizens.

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Learn to Discern: integrating critical information engagement skills into the curriculum

Katya Vogt

IREX hosted the Citizenship teachers during their visit to the USA and in this article Katya Vogt shows that media literacy is an issue of concern to teachers around the world. In this case study of work in the Ukraine she shows how a deliberately planned programme can lead to changes. Her programme demonstrates how important it is to acknowledge the emotional dimension to how we engage with the media, as well as the need for knowledge and skills. Bryden Joy's article (p.43) shows how this approach has informed the model developed in England.

he COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to equip citizens with critical thinking and media engagement skills to navigate the flood of health-related information, and protect themselves from deadly diseases. Miracle cures, hate speech directed at individuals of Asian descent, and conspiracy theories about the disease's spread constitute an "infodemic" that threatens to make the pandemic worse. Malign actors propagate this misinformation by exploiting human vulnerabilities, including emotional and cognitive biases, limited attention spans in the context of over-saturated information environment, and media sector incentives (algorithms prioritizing engagement, 24-hour news cycle, etc.). The need for critical information engagement – suppressing immediate intuitive and emotional reactions, assessing the credibility of information, and recognizing one's own "gatekeeping" role on social media – has never been more important. IREX's Learn to Discern in Education (L2D-Ed) programme in Ukraine empowers the country's school system to build these abilities their students.

> **Only one in twenty students cross check information they find on social media, only 39% of them can correctly differentiate between opinion and facts, and half claimed to have never encountered a piece of false information online.**

Intent

Ukraine experiences high volumes of disinformation from foreign and domestic sources, and youth are vulnerable to its influence. An assessment of young Ukrainians' information engagement and media literacy skills demonstrated that only one in twenty students cross check information they find on social media, only 39% of them can correctly differentiate between opinion and facts, and half claimed to have never encountered a piece of false information online. These and other findings from youth focus groups and assessment of their vulnerabilities to mis- and disinformation have informed the development of L2D-Ed as a nation-wide programme to integrate critical information engagement skills into instruction, infusing modern media literacy into existing history, literature, art, and language courses.

L2D-Ed started in 2018 with a pilot at 52 schools from four geographically diverse regions of the country to ensure that the integration model would work for all students, regardless of their native language (Russian or Ukrainian) and would effectively address the types of manipulative information that targets them.

L2D-Ed competencies are organized into eight categories: media literacy, information literacy,

Katya Vogt, Global Lead for Media and
Information Literacy Initiatives, IREX

visual literacy, critical and analytic thinking, social tolerance, digital safety, innovation and creativity, and resilience to manipulation. Illustratively, the category on social tolerance seeks to build competencies of ethical communication online and offline, identifying and countering hate speech, and identifying and resisting stereotypes. The category on resilience to manipulation includes strategies to curb emotional responses to provocative content. Cognitive reflection, the ability to override an incorrect "gut" response and engage in further reflection to find a correct answer.

Implementation

From the original 52-school pilot, L2D-Ed is now being rolled out across 650 schools to 46,000 students with Ukrainian educators and colleagues from the Ministry of Education and Science. The programme is infused into existing subjects, such as World History, Ukrainian History, Ukrainian Language and Literature, and the Arts. Simultaneously, in-service and pre-service teacher training institutions will begin equipping all teachers in Ukraine to teach these integrated lessons.

IREX has deliberately advised the Ministry to choose an integration model as opposed to creating a stand-alone course or extracurricular activity. While that might be easier to do, it would be potentially expensive and easy for teachers to ignore. The integration model is not only sustainable once the methodological guidance and teacher training capacity is developed to carry it on, it is also beneficial because it demonstrates the wide applicability of critical information engagement competencies. Students learn how to apply their cognitive reflection when facing a provocative news headline or sharing their own posts on social media and can use their ability to differentiate between opinion and fact when structuring an argument or reading a news story.

The ways the L2D-Ed competencies are taught in Ukrainian schools are also what makes this curricula enhancement so valuable: Teachers, in addition to becoming "subject-matter experts" on Learn to Discern, are also trained on interactive teaching methods, such as group work, project-based learning, and using technologies in the classroom. These makes the infused lessons more fun and memorable according to students' feedback.

An example of a skill that is easy to teach and practice and that has a great impact on ability to avoid being manipulated is something called "Label to Disable" (modelled after Dr. Dan Siegel's "Name

it to Tame it"), which teaches students to pause and name their emotions when confronted with a piece of emotionally manipulative content – something that provokes fear, anger, or disgust. The process of naming the emotion helps redirect brain resources away from basal regions responsible for fight, flight or freeze responses where our biases reign supreme, towards the frontal lobes which are responsible for critical thinking.

Impact

The programme's evaluation questions asked whether students who received the L2D-enhanced curricula have higher media literacy skills and healthier media consumption habits at the end of the semester compared to students in a control group.

The assessment showed that students who received L2D lessons performed better on all assessment tasks: identifying facts and opinions (16% better), false stories (18% better), and demonstrated deeper knowledge of the news media sector (14% more knowledgeable). They were also twice as likely to identify and reject hate speech. L2D students reported healthier media consumption habits and behaviour and viewed critical information engagement skills as more useful in their lives. Girls performed better than boys in most survey tasks, reported greater appreciation of critical information engagement skills, and reported better critical information engagement practices. Students who had more L2D lessons had higher scores in several areas, particularly media analysis skill and ability to identify hate speech.

These outcomes could have significant long-term impact on Ukrainian society as these students graduate and become more informed voters, future leaders, policymakers, and citizens. They will have higher ability to resist manipulation, have higher levels of empathy and tolerance, and will make personal and community decisions based on facts and not mis- and disinformation. As more and more of them leave schools prepared for life, civic participation, and work in the digital and interconnected world, Ukraine will benefit from this early investment infusing critical information engagement into its education system.

Learn to Discern in Education in Ukraine is co-funded by the UK government - UK Foreign Commonwealth Office and the US government - US Embassy Ukraine. It is implemented by IREX – a global development and education organization with a mission of more just, prosperous, and inclusive world.

> **The assessment showed that students who received L2D lessons performed better on all assessment tasks: identifying facts and opinions, false stories, and demonstrated deeper knowledge of the news media sector. They were also twice as likely to identify and reject hate speech.**

Developing a news reading culture in key stage 2 and 3

Nicolette Smallshaw

First News is a newspaper aimed at young children and in this article Nicolette Smallshaw shares some practical suggestions from her experience working with schools to promote a culture of reading the news.

Embedding critical news literacy skills into the school culture

Introducing regular, reliable sources of news in primary schools, empowers children to become informed citizens from an early age, to question news sources and to understand the vital role journalists play democratic societies in holding power to account.

For several years I have been working with Dr Frances Bodger on the challenges of comprehending non-fiction news and the nature of 'critical literacy. We have adapted Hilary Janks's Four Interrelated Roles of the Critical Reader (2014) to provide some practical starting points for introducing critical news reading into the classroom and we have devised this model of the critically literate newspaper reader.

1) Developing a news-reading community

Find a short, regular time to discuss news. In this session, support students to share news stories from a children's news source, such as First News. Suggest they share news they think is interesting, important or that they have a connection with. You may need to model this at beginning.

Adapted by F Bodger, IoE-UCL and N Smallshaw (2018) from the Four Interrelated Roles of the Critical Reader (Janks, H (2014), based on Freebody and Luke.Freebody and Luke (2007)

Nicolette Smallshaw is Education Content Production Editor at First News.
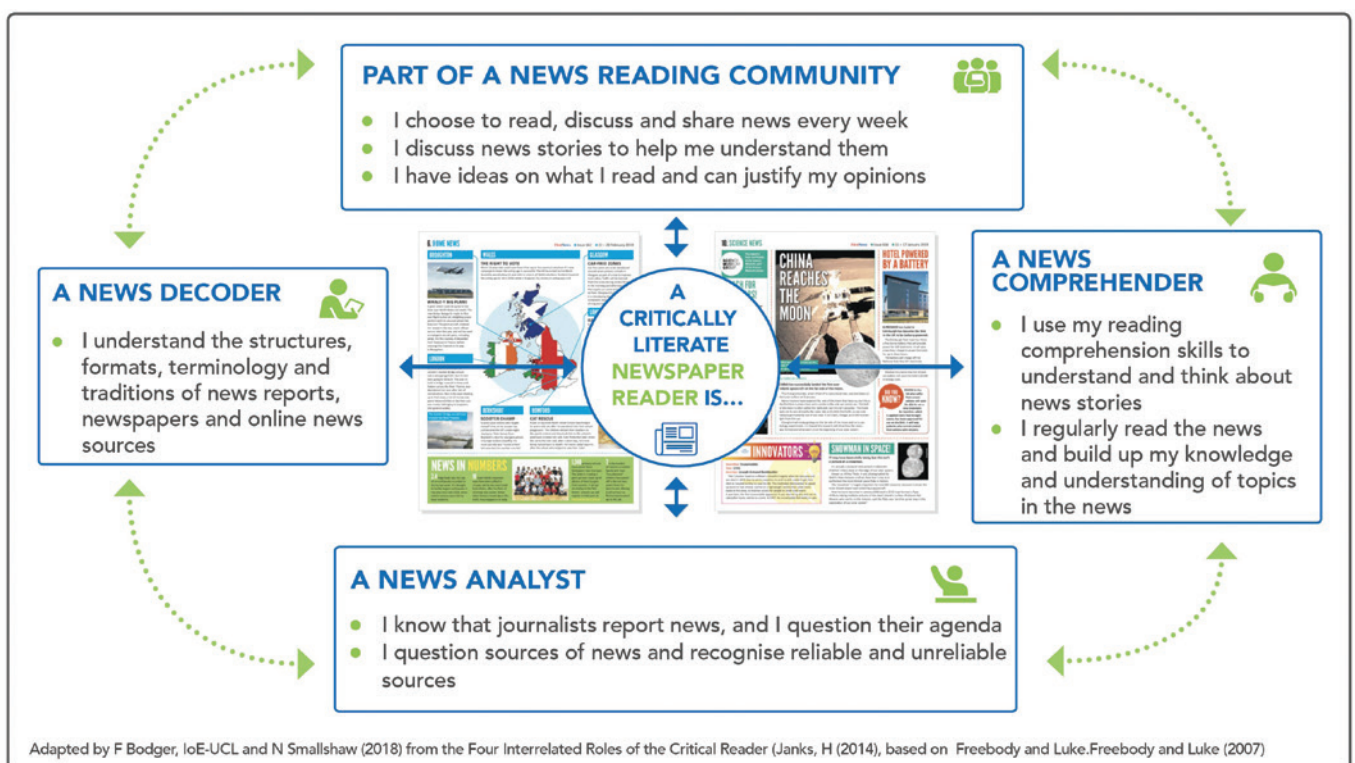
From the beginning, reference the source precisely, you are then able to find the source of the story to share with everyone else and double-check the understanding of the facts, there and then.

In this discussion include fascinating, serious, worrying and silly news stories. Also, encourage discussion of news stories students aren't sure they understand, or are confused by. This will create an open forum where there is opportunity to talk through complex issues that are often in the news. Ideally, discuss more positive news than negative.

Provide time for children to offer news they have heard from other sources such as friends, parents and social media. But, it is vital they reference their source and encourage pupils to only share stories they think come from reliable sources.

Discuss topical dilemmas in this session. Pupils relish the opportunity to have their voice heard on real life issues and the First News weekly poll is a very quick way of doing this.

2) Teach the news code

When you first Introduce news reading, teach the structures, formats, terminology and traditions of written news reports, newspapers and online news websites. Students need to recognise the different text types found here. That means being able to differentiate between news reports, interviews and reviews, and to recognise adverts and advertorial features, from editorial content.

Teach students to navigate their way around newspaper pages too. When they scan pages, they make choices about which stories to read. They need to be aware that the headlines and photographs compete to make you focus on a particular story. If you know that the lead (first) paragraph of a news report usually summarises the story, you can read this first and then decide whether you want to keep reading to find out more details of this particular story, or move on to the next story. This understanding will provide your students with the first steps to later understand the skills employed by more dubious sources of clickbait to lure their readers.

When exploring how news is organised both in newspapers and online, encourage students to have favourite sections – most adults will have an order they choose to read and explore news in. Support students to actively seek out news they are interested in, rather than just reacting to what is delivered to them in their social media.

3) Support pupils to develop their comprehension of news stories

Understanding news reports has been found to be more difficult for pupils than fiction. This may be because these text types, along with non-fiction in general, are less familiar to them. On top of that, journalists tend to pack several concepts into one sentence as they are often restricted for space. And, news stories will naturally contain specialist vocabulary that students maybe encountering for the first time.

From a student's perspective, their ability to access a news story will depend on their previous knowledge of the topic and personal connections to it. It is important to teach strategies to identify the facts, infer information, recognise the use of quotes, ask questions to develop their understanding, identify opinions etc. These skills are required for comprehension and support children to understand the news.

4) Enable students to analyse and evaluate news

Pupils need to know that journalists report the news and make choices on what features in 'the news'. The simplest activity here is to ask students if they agree with the editor's choice of story for the front-page story and to understand that this lead story is a choice.

The next step is to introduce the idea of a newspaper's editorial team all discussing and debating the choices of the stories that will feature in their newspaper. When I hold news projects and events with schools, I divide students into editorial teams and give each group a selection of real news stories that may to feature in the week's First News. Each group has a flat-plan, and has to decide what they want to feature on their front cover and which stories will be covered in the three news stories on the main headlines page. Editorial teams must agree and be able to justify their choices. In the plenary, each team share their choices, nearly all the time, everyone's news is different.

Once students understand this process, the idea of journalists and news organisations having particular agendas and bias, and the effects this will have on how news is presented to the public can be explored.

A view from the classroom

Richard Long, Head of English at St Michaels High School, High Wycombe described his experience of using the approach:

"Like a number of schools, we have started to explore what it really means to develop a culture of reading. Our news reading community is supporting the development of its members as global citizens with a growing knowledge and understanding of the wider world. They are becoming more responsible, active citizens who are more respectful of others' points of view and they understand the problems caused by misinformation and fake news."

Is It Real?
BBC Young Reporter

Rachel Schraer

In this article Rachel Schraer shares an example of an established UK-based approach to media literacy. This builds on some very well-established BBC work in schools and demonstrates the value of a student-centred approach. This builds on the high levels of trust that young people and adults have in the BBC. In this article Rachel shares some insights into programmes where BBC content is made accessible to young people, as well as resources that enable young people to understand the process of news production. Emily Mitchell reviews some of these resources on p.54 of the journal.

As a journalist and a fact-checker for the BBC, I'm always having to question what I hear and see both online and off. These are the skills BBC Young Reporter aims to demonstrate to the young people we work with, to help them think about the information they're seeing online and to arm them with the tools to evaluate it.

In 2018 the project launched an initiative to specifically support young people to identify real news and filter out fake or false information, delivered primarily by BBC News staff, like myself, who are doing this constantly as part of our day jobs. We don't say this is the BBC way, but rather aim to reinforce some of the critical thinking skills we know they are already equipped with and empower them to ask the questions, search different sources and consider their unconscious bias, just as we do every day in the newsrooms to provide accurate, impartial and trusted news.

Misinformation and disinformation (where someone is intentionally trying to mislead) are a particular problem online. Misleading information comes about and gets shared for a wide range of reasons. Some people want to push a particular message for political or financial reasons, often aiming to sway others politically and how they vote. Others want to be helpful and inform their loved ones, but end up passing on incorrect

> **Some people want to push a particular message for political or financial reasons, often aiming to sway others politically and how they vote. Others want to be helpful and inform their loved ones, but end up passing on incorrect information unwittingly. Others still want to satirise, prank or troll.**

information unwittingly. Others still want to satirise, prank or "troll".

Whatever the reason, there are a few key things you can look out for. And then there are the steps you can take to check that information.

Spotting bad information

When I deliver the 'Real News' news literacy workshop, I advise young people to ask certain questions about information they see online - the things that I would look out for myself at work.

Can you tell where this information has originally come from? Does the article or post make it clear what the source is? Who's telling you the information, are they likely to be in a position to know this and might they have an agenda?

Does it make sense when you fit it together with other bits of information you know? Does it seem too surprising or too good to be true? That doesn't mean it isn't true - but it's an alarm bell to do some extra checks.

Does it provoke a strong emotional reaction in you - fear, anxiety, anger, hatred or on the flipside, satisfaction, triumph, a feeling that this aligns really well with your world-view? Either of these extremes are good reasons to double check the facts.

Next steps

Those are our warning signs. So what do we do next?

Rachel Schraer is a BBC News journalist, working for BBC Reality Check and delivering news literacy workshops for BBC Young Reporter, a media literacy project for 11-18 year olds.

Hunt down the original source. If it's not clear what it is, ask yourself who might be in a position to know that information who can independently verify it.

Look around. A quick Google search will tell you if lots of respected media outlets have covered it - or maybe a fact-checker has already debunked it. Or, depending what it is, you might be able to find non-media information like academic research or government guidelines.

Ask yourself - what's the evidence that something is true?

If it's a picture, do a reverse image search on Google and see if it's appeared before in a different context.

If you can't get to the bottom of something, don't share it online - it might be true but the consequences if it's not could be serious.

Misinformation in action

The 2020 coronavirus pandemic has unfortunately provided fertile ground for misinformation – we are amidst an information epidemic, in particular digitally with so much of it delivered directly into our phones, emails and social media feeds.

For example, here's a post I was forwarded on WhatsApp by a family member - and a quick search on Facebook revealed the message was spreading across platforms:

> If you can't get to the bottom of something, don't share it online - it might be true but the consequences if it's not could be serious.

From a colleague's mother from Austria

"The latest information from the University of Vienna, Research Department, today March 14, 2020: Please tell all people who have symptoms or fear of corona when they get headache, severe headache, throat infections coughing or heat occurs. Do not take Ibuprofen because it has been discovered that it increases the speed of reproduction of the coronavirus covid-19 in the body and this is the reason why people in Italy have reached the current bad stage and rapid spread - the best in this case paracetamol or aspirin - please distribute the message to all those you know to save them from this disease/crisis.

At the university hospital in Toulouse, France, there are four very critical cases of coronavirus in people of young age 18 / 24 and 32 who do not have any health problem. Their problem is that when they all appeared to have symptoms, they all took painkillers like (… ibuprofen, voltaren, profenid) and other relievers containing cortisone. As a precaution, you should avoid these medications for anyone who develops symptoms. You should always consult a doctor. The French authorities began to spread this information widely.

It was forwarded on WhatsApp, so I couldn't tell the original source. But it was made to sound like it was someone close to me - a family member sent it so you might assume it was their colleague's mother. Or maybe their friend's colleague's mother. But certainly, you'd think they're someone closely enough connected to you that you wouldn't feel suspicious.

These kinds of posts immediately ring alarm bells for me. I don't know how many times it's been forwarded so in fact I have no idea of the source.

And on a split second of reflection it sounds surprising that something as common as ibuprofen would put young people into a critical condition in hospital when they were previously healthy. And it provokes strong feelings of alarm and anxiety.

So what did I do next? Well, first I looked around to see if anyone else was covering it. I couldn't see any news reports on the young people in hospital or the University of Vienna research - this seemed surprising. But I did find a news report of a French health minister telling people with coronavirus symptoms not to take ibuprofen.

Theme

Helpfully, the forwarded post mentions specific institutions, so I looked at the social media accounts of both of these institutions - the University of Vienna and the university hospital in Toulouse - to see if they'd said anything about these claims. Both had published statements confirming that the research wasn't real and neither were the young people.

Of course as a journalist I was also able to go an extra step. I wanted to know why there were reports that a French health minister was warning against ibuprofen. So I spoke to infectious diseases doctors and scientists who were able to explain to me that there was some research linking ibuprofen to more severe respiratory symptoms, especially in people in high risk groups. But there was no strong evidence around coronavirus and ibuprofen yet. But simple Google, Twitter and Facebook searches allowed me to get enough information to know not to share the post (and to warn my family member too!).

And in a non-work context and merely as a receiver of the information that is what I could and would do. Simple fact-checking is something we are all able to do if we just take a moment to pause and ask ourselves: 'is it real?'

Overall, the young people we meet through BBC Young Reporter are pretty savvy. They're probably better at managing multiple media sources and evaluating suspicious
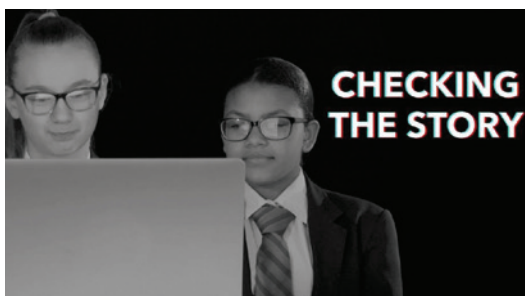
information than their parents. But we hope that delivering news literacy workshops, and providing online resources for use in classrooms, just gives them a bit of additional insight into what we do and some food for thought and extra tools in their arsenal to navigate the news and wider media landscape.

> **Overall, the young people we meet through BBC Young Reporter are pretty savvy. They're probably better at managing multiple media sources and evaluating suspicious information than their parents.**

For more information

Visit: www.bbc.co.uk/realnews for a range of free online materials including video tutorials, classroom activities and the BBC iReporter interactive game, where the player experiences being a BBC journalist in the heart of the newsroom.

BBC Young Reporter works in partnership with schools, colleges and youth organisations to provide 11-18 year olds with the skills they need to create and understand the media. Educational establishments and youth organisations taking part will benefit from access to exclusive events, training and resources, as well as mentoring and career talks from BBC staff and journalists. To find out more and register your school to receive details about future opportunities: www.bbc.co.uk/youngreporter

The award-winning media literacy project (formerly known as BBC School Report) is funded from across the BBC as it helps to deliver the public purposes including sustaining citizenship and civil society.

BBC iReporter: www.bbc.co.uk/ireporter

BBC Reality Check - the BBC's principal fact-checking service which runs on TV, radio, on the website and via social media: www.bbc.co.uk/realitycheck

BBC Bitesize 'Fact or Fake' resources for 11-16 year olds: www.bbc.co.uk/factorfake

Collection of BBC content relating to disinformation and fake news stories: www.bbc.co.uk/beyondfakenews

Theme

Kari Kivinen is Headteacher at the French-Finnish school of Helsinki and a member of Faktabaari – Finnish fact-checking organisation www.faktabaari.fi. Elsa Kivinen is a student in the University of St Andrews.

How to protect ourselves from the infodemic?

Elsa Kivinen & Kari Kivinen

Kari's work in this area is well-known and I have used his ideas in the classroom and with student teachers. Having met him at the Five Nations Conference he was inspiring about the importance of schools in helping young people in a time of information disorder. Kari works across the Council of Europe as well as running a school in Finland and here he and Elsa share some ideas about tools for teachers and students.

"Facing the coronavirus, we must cultivate the best of ourselves and rely on science and education, verify any information and share knowledge."
Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General

We have all heard instructions telling us how to protect ourselves from the COVID-19 pandemic. During the past months we have learned to wash our hands, cover our coughs and sneezes, and avoid close physical contacts with others. But do you know how to protect yourself from the infodemic – the information epidemic or overwhelming flood of information?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an infodemic can be defined "an overabundance of information – some of which is accurate and some not – that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it." United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has warned that "our enemy is also the growing surge of misinformation".

While the coronavirus has spread into nearly every country on earth, there has also been mass circulation of falsehoods that have spread as fast as the virus itself.

The English term 'fake news' is widely used to speak of false news. Unfortunately, it is not a very precise term. It is better to use terms that describe what type of false information people are talking about. The misleading information can be divided into three different categories:

1. Misinformation refers to unintentionally incorrect communication. The writers do not

> **While the coronavirus has spread into nearly every country on earth, there has also been mass circulation of falsehoods that have spread as fast as the virus itself.**

know that they said something wrong or wrong. Misrepresentation is purely by mistake or negligence, without willful intent or attempt to cause harm.
2. Disinformation means intentionally misleading and misleading communications with the purpose of causing distress or harm to a person, community, group of people or government.
3. Malinformation is spoken of when truthful information is used intentionally to harm an individual, community, or state, contrary to the agreed uses of the information. This is often truthful information that is shared illegally, maliciously, or with the intent of knowingly causing distress and harm. Malinformation is closely linked with hate speech.

Based on a machine learning analysis of 112 million public social media posts in March 2020, in 64 languages, related to the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers at the Bruno Kessler Foundation found 40% of posts came from unreliable sources (UNESCO 2020a).

The fact-checkers all around the globe have been fighting against mis- and disinformation. The CoronaVirusFacts / DatosCoronaVirus Alliance database already contains more than 4,000 coronavirus fact scans.

In January, we asked 123 teenagers aged between 13 and 18 years, all studying in the French Finnish school of Helsinki, whether they had encountered any suspicious piece of news. The results showed 73 % of the students were familiar with the phenomena – and nobody really wanted to get

fooled. Most of them also said they get most of the news updates from social media, including Youtube.

Together with the teachers of the school as well as with Finnish fact-checking experts of Faktabaari we have collected some recommendations which could help you to distinguish information from disinformation.

If you come across a strange statement or claim, take a moment to critically reflect the following aspects:
- Who has produced this information and with what expertise?
  - Can you find the writers' names or a reliable web address?
  - When and where has the information been published? Is it still up to date?
  - What viewpoint does the source represent (that of a journalist, researcher, policymaker, a public authority, lobbyist, what is the political leaning)?
- Why is it made? What are the motives of the disseminator?
  - Is it an advertisement, a piece of news or someone's opinion?
  - Does anyone benefit from this? Is it sponsored by someone?
  - To whom it is targeted. How did you get it?
- Does the message aim to elicit a strong emotional response?
  - Are there strong story elements attached to the message?
  - Are there striking images in the message? Are the pictures authentic, untouched and unmanipulated?
- Can you verify the information from another source known to be reliable?

Social media constantly prompts us to make choices: should I click, like, share or comment? In a digital world, critical thinking requires reflection, ability to resist your impulses, as well as resilience to mis- and dis-information. Do not believe everything you see and be careful when sharing information if you have not verified it.

It is relatively easy to make a quick fact-check if you have got access to internet connection. Here are some useful hints and links:
1. Fact-proof the claim by trying to find different sources which could confirm the facts.
2. Use several search engines and avoid using Wikipedia or any other single source as the only source of information. There are several rather reliable academic search engines available (see the INFO BOX)
3. Check the domain owner information from e.g. WHOIS- service (www.whois.com)

> **In a digital world, critical thinking requires reflection, ability to resist your impulses, as well as resilience to mis- and dis-information.**

4. Verify the authenticity of the images by using e.g. Google reverse image search.

First Draft has an excellent toolbox to help you to verify images, links and videos (https://start.me/p/vjv80b/first-draft-basic-toolkit)

Check also the free verification tools offered by InVid (www.invid-project.eu)

5. Check if the fact-checking organisations have already examined the case e.g. https://fullfact.org, https://factcheckni.org, https://theferret.scot/fact-check
6. Trust scientific facts, not mere opinions!

The internet and social media are overloaded by information on every imaginable subject. It is a real challenge for us all to find, select, use and share the most reliable information. If we are conscious and sensible social media users, equipped with a healthy critical thinking approach, we can avoid getting fooled. On top of this, this helps us to protect ourselves and our friends from an infodemic!

INFOBOX

Academic search engines

Refseek - academic search engine for students and researchers. www.refseek.com

Plos - peer-reviewed articles are free to access, reuse and redistribute www.plos.org

Google Scholar - academic articles - not all of them will give you access to the full text
https://scholar.google.co.uk

DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals)
https://doaj.org

Europe PMC is an open science platform that enables access to a worldwide collection of life science publications and preprints from trusted sources around the globe http://europepmc.org

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Read more

Bruno Kessler Foundation 2020, www.fbk.eu/en/press-releases/covid-19-and-fake-news-in-the-social-media/
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Infodemics Observatory, 2020, https://covid19obs.fbk.eu/
The CoronaVirusFacts / DatosCoronaVirus Alliance database, www.poynter.org/ifcn-covid-19-misinformation/

Angie Bevan is Head of Citizenship at
The Cherwell School, Oxford

Case Study: The Cherwell School

Angie Bevan

Angie was one of the teachers who took part in the US Exchange. Here she shares some of her reflections on the experience and one of the lessons she has developed since coming back.

Before the closure of schools I had been working on developing media literacy further at Cherwell. Time constraints have been, and will always be a barrier to the full potential of this project, but I am pleased with some of the areas I have been able to implement since the exchange.

One of the main areas of focus has been updating the GCSE Citizenship media topic to give pupils' the tools to:

- Detect fake news and understand the difference between misinformation (sloppy journalism) and disinformation (a deliberate sabotage of fact)
- Consider ethical/moral responsibilities of how we interact with news (sharing and commenting on online content)

For my KS4 pupils' this has been explored in lessons including:

- The media- power and influence
- Politicians and social media
- Censorship and the media (UK & Global Case studies inc. Cuba, China & North Korea)
- Free press regulation and media regulators (IPSO, Ofcom, Editor's code of practice)

For KS3 I have been using parts of the materials presented to us at the Newseum in Washington, DC. These resources provide activities for pupils to detect misleading information and to identify images that have been used out of context. Fullfact and Snoopes have been useful factchecking websites to aid pupils' in their fake news busting detective work.

Lesson plan: Politicians and the Media

As part of the GCSE in Citizenship Studies students explore the role of the media in the UK and make comparisons with other countries – both in terms of its role but also how it is sometimes controlled. This is an important part of all the GCSE syllabuses and allows us to consider how the media can hold

> **This is an important part of all the GCSE syllabuses and allows us to consider how the media can hold politicians to account, how the media can be used to inform the public in regards to political decisions and messages, and the use of the media as a campaign tool.**

politicians to account, how the media can be used to inform the public in regards to political decisions and messages, and the use of the media as a campaign tool. Wider issues such as privacy, freedom of speech and the responsibility of the media are also key areas covered in the GCSE syllabus.

This lesson looks specifically at politicians and works towards developing the knowledge and understanding necessary to answer an 8 mark exam question: "Social media is the best way for politicians to gain support".

Lesson Plan:

- Begin by ensuring that students have an understanding of the key terms we are using in the lesson, so perhaps a multiple-choice quiz or matching exercise on key terms such as: media, social media and political party.
- Then, introduce the key question for the lesson: Why do politicians and political parties use media sources? Invite responses from selected students in the class (expect answers such as to gain attention, it's a way of speaking to a large audience, to encourage the public to vote for them, to share their opinion on an important issue, or to gauge public support for a particular issue).
- Introduce some social media sources showing how a range of politicians and activists have engaged with social media, both positively and negatively. I would ask students to consider the intent of these tweets (why might they be tweeting this), who they might be trying to appeal to, and whether they are positive or negative uses of social media. There are some examples on the next page.
- This could then be developed to consider the advantages and disadvantages of politicians and political parties using social media, with the following ideas being discussed before they attempt the 8 mark question: "Social media is the best way for politicians to gain support."
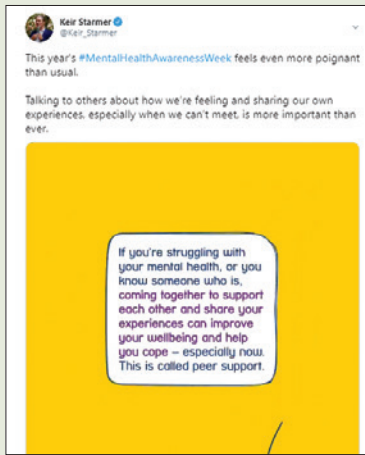
Advantages	Disadvantages
Can reach large audiences	Although social media is used by many it is not used by older generations (who tend to vote more) therefore politicians must not solely rely on this
To encourage the public to support them and vote for them	
They can get a range of information out to potential voters/supporters	Politicians tweets/social media posts can cause controversy e.g- Donald Trump
Social media can make the public feel connected to politicians- more approachable	Some people may think the politicians using social media is unprofessional
Social media can encourage younger generations to get involved in politics	TV campaigns can be expensive
Social media is free	Some politicians may not interview well or be very engaging during live TV debates
TV adverts can be done in a creative, engaging way to encourage the public to take interest in the party/person- could be more engaging than reading a manifesto	Bias- politicians may only post things or write books which present themselves and their party in a positive light
TV debates and interviews give people information about how the politician/party is going to address issues that may concern them	Politicians can receive negative attention/comments from the public online

Helen Blachford is the guest editor of this edition of the journal, Lee Jerome is one of the co-editors.

Protest Songs

Helen Blachford with Lee Jerome

Until I visited the US I would not have considered including protest songs within a series of media literacy lessons. Listening to the work of 'The Message Movement' who deliver non-traditional programmes that employ live music and popular culture as vehicles for learning it was clear I needed a re-think! Writing this article, in fact, has been a revelation to me as I recognise the impact protest songs have had on me and others and it has confirmed to me that they most definitely deserve their place within my media literacy programme.

People have been using music as a means to express discontent with their lot for as long as we know. Since medieval times in England, we have records of songs of protest. The British Civil Wars gave rise to songs criticising Oliver Cromwell, for example. These so-called "broadside ballads" (http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk) gave way to songs promoting socialism, or lecturing about temperance, slavery and other such moral matters.

Some of these are still sung today as national anthems or traditional folk songs. Coming forward we can see examples from the Civil Rights Movement with protest songs such as 'We Shall Overcome' and 'Strange Fruit'. Step forward again and artists such as Bruce Springsteen and Billy Bragg use their music to tackle the issues of the day through music. There's a link from both Springsteen and Bragg back to, arguably the most influential American folk musician of the first half of the twentieth century, Woody Guthrie. Guthrie was the modern father of protest (This guitar kills fascists) but, he also wrote many of the childhood 'learning songs' that are still used – he wrote these as camp side (dustbowl ballads) songs for children dispersed during the depression – these included counting songs and even a song about good hygiene (Wash, wash your little tootsies) - his Tom Joad and Pastures of Plenty sat alongside Steinbeck in raising national support for migrants. Bragg was later asked to put Guthrie's words to music by Guthrie's daughter – this became Mermaid Ave, after the street in New York where Guthrie lived.

> **The point of protest music is not to shift the world on its axis but to change opinions and perspectives, to say something about the times in which you live, and, sometimes, to find that what you've said speaks to another moment in history. (Dorian Lynskey)**

The message of these songs are not always understood by those who choose to use them, for example, not all presidents would successfully ally themselves with the right songs, as Ronald Reagan discovered when he cited Bruce Springsteen's 'Born In The USA' as a message of hope.

"The point of protest music…" explains Lynskey in 33 Revolutions Per Minute, "is not to shift the world on its axis but to change opinions and perspectives, to say something about the times in which you live, and, sometimes, to find that what you've said speaks to another moment in history." This is my starting point for reflecting on the value of protest songs within a citizenship curriculum, and its relationship to media literacy.

Protest songs and citizenship

It seems to me there are at least four ways in which protest songs connect with the citizenship education curriculum.

1. Voice

Protest songs are just one way in which people choose to express themselves politically. It is essential in a democracy that people are free to express a diverse range of political views, to comment on contemporary problems, and to hold politicians and others to account. In traditional citizenship learning we tend to focus on formal methods of communication, such as writing letters to politicians, crafting speeches for a debate, or perhaps making posters and banners. But songs are also powerful means by which political messages have been formulated and communicated. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child encourages us to listen to young people

Theme

Protest Songs

Rock Against Racism by Danny Birchall

express opinions, but it does not specify the form that such communication might take.

It is also useful to acknowledge that songs can also reach audiences who might be less engaged with other more formal means of political communication. Many of my students listen to music with a political message, whilst they would be unlikely to listen to Prime Minister's Question Time, or watch Newsnight. This really hit home a few years ago during a lesson on Blood Diamonds. One student shared a song by Kanye West which in turn inspired another student (who had been relatively disengaged from citizenship lessons up until then) to go away and investigate the issue further. A little while later that student came to class to talk about their investigation into blood avocadoes, which I knew nothing about. In this single example I realised how music could act as a powerful way to connect to an audience who may perceive themselves to be relatively uninterested in politics.

2. Relevance

That story about engagement also reflects how powerful songs can be in making issues relevant to young people. Music is central to many young people's lives, and so it is also a way for them to connect to the broader issues that inform their musical heroes. I have also noticed how readily students use music if they are putting together a film in citizenship. I would imagine that many of the younger generation, consuming YouTube and other multimedia channels throughout the day, are entirely immersed in the idea that powerful media often combine visuals and music to underline a

> **Music could act as a powerful way to connect to an audience who may perceive themselves to be relatively uninterested in politics.**

message. It certainly seems to me that they are often adept at using music to express themselves creatively and powerfully when they have something to say, especially in relation to a single issue campaign they are passionate about.

3. Tools for action

Protest songs are also political acts in and of themselves. As Eileen Smith's reflections (see text box) illustrate, singing songs often becomes entwined in protest. In some movements this is explicit, for example I grew up listening to Billy Bragg as part of the Red Wedge, itself a part of the broader Labour movement; and before this there was Rock against Racism – started in reply to Eric Clapton's drunken endorsement of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. Sometimes the songs were individual acts of protest, sometimes they crystallised a political campaign in an accessible and powerful way, and sometimes they accompanied direct action (such as 'we shall not be moved' at sit-ins and blockades). Often though, political music functions as a vital way to bond a group of people together. By giving people a shared language and invoking intense emotions, music can unite a crowd and create strong affective connections between them. Traditionally in political education we have sought to emphasise the rational analysis of politics and the rational planning of actions, this can be seen in some of the media literacy activities featured in this journal, for example IREX's 'label to disable' mantra, to encourage young people to recognise and name an emotion in order to rationalise it. But more recently political theorists have also started to address the affective dimension to political action – very often we act because we feel something, and we come to a rational explanation after we

Remembering Red Wedge image - A state of Independence by Diego Sideburns

have committed to a position or action. In that sense, we might say that anger or indignation very often precede action. Being part of a live audience at a gig or a rally where a singer is performing songs that speak to the hearts of thousands of

people simultaneously can be moving, intense and incredibly galvanising as a political act.

4. Empathy

Finally, songs can give us an insight into the political movements they are associated with. We can learn a lot about the anger and indignation of the Civil Rights Movement through the music of Nina Simone, for example singing Mississippi Goddam (https://youtu.be/hBiAtwQZnHs). We can understand something important about how trade unionists feel about their movement by listening to Billy Bragg singing There Is Power in the Union (https://youtu.be/DwbzxemJZIc). We can also gain an insight into how the Greenham Common protestors stood their ground when confronted with mass arrests (https://youtu. be/0TIXBJuwUcE). We can read about all of these movements and ideas, and yet listening to the soundtrack of the movements somehow generates a more powerful sense of empathy. That is not to say we want to induce automatic agreement, but it is helpful to see how and why people were motivated to act themselves. Songs connect us to politics, but more importantly perhaps, they can connect us to those who act.

Links to media literacy

So far I have shared some of the broader reasons for including protest songs in the citizenship curriculum. But this edition of the journal is concerned more specifically with media literacy. Here I have a few more specific thoughts about how we can use protest songs to encourage those transferable skills I am trying to develop in my curriculum.

> **Being part of a live audience at a gig or a rally where a singer is performing songs that speak to the hearts of thousands of people simultaneously can be moving, intense and incredibly galvanising as a political act.**

SNCC Freedom Singers by bswise

1. Music as a medium

Media literacy relates to all forms of media, and music is one ubiquitous form of media that saturates the modern world. If we are teaching young people to understand the media infrastructure that brings them news, it is as relevant to help them understand how music (and film, and the spoken word through podcasts etc.) are also produced, curated, disseminated and turned to profit.

2. Interpretation

Some of us love a song because of the tune, the beat, or a little recurrent phrase we can sing to ourselves. But others connect more deeply with the message in the music – whether that is embedded in the music or in the lyrics. We can all enjoy Bruce Springsteen's Born in the USA for example, but not everyone is engaging with the Boss's political intentions (or even aware what they are). Sometimes we bring our own interests and motivations to the music, and use it in our own lives for a particular purpose, but the musician who made the music also has their own personal and (sometimes) political intention. The song itself has both meanings, and we need to be able to understand it in both ways to fully understand it.

More broadly we can also think about using music as a way in to understand a particular period of time. Songs, and singers, exist in specific cultural contexts. Some songs become 'classics' just because they reflect something significant about a community or a time and place. Exploring significant songs can provide a glimpse into other people's lives and help us understand how people lived differently.

The 'Teach Rock' programme in the USA teaches history through music, as well as the history of music. There are some distance learning materials that could be used in the UK context too (https://teachrock.org/distancelearning).

3. Consumers and producers

Media literacy encourages us to think about young people as both the consumers of media and as having the capacity to produce media as well. In the age of the Internet, this is much easier than it has been in the past, and so it makes sense to incorporate songs within our broader teaching about how to be a responsible media producer.

4. Broadening experience

The term cultural capital has been adopted by the DfE and Ofsted. In one important sense the use of a broad range of music is useful in that it can introduce students to a wider range of cultural forms of expression and identity than they will experience in their own lives. Music can therefore act as an accessible way to engage with difference, and to situate our own cultural experience within broader traditions.

Some examples of what this looks like in practice

1. Use a Protest Song to introduce students to a particular movement.

You might have a song playing as students enter the room and a starter task where they listen to the lyrics and think about the message. Some of the protest songs I have used to introduce topics include:

- "We Shall Overcome" a gospel song which became a protest song and a key anthem of the civil rights movement.
- "Diamonds from Sierra Leone" a song by American hip-hop artist Kanye West (mentioned above). This song contrasts the material wealth with the horrors of the civil war in the West African country Sierra Leone, financed by the illegal diamond trade.
- "Land Of The Free" by The Killers was written in the aftermath of a mass shooting in their hometown of Las Vegas on 1 October 2017 which killed 58 people, The Killers issued this genuine appeal for gun control in the US.

2. Using lyrics to learn about attitudes in different time periods

Music can be a primary source for studying history, just like a photograph, newspaper article or diary entry. Listening to music can be an

Steve Van Zandt, rock musician and founder of the Rock and Roll Foundation who produce the TeachRock online education resources

engaging way for students to learn more about the attitudes and culture of a particular time period.

So, you might start here by asking students the following questions: Why do you listen to music? How does music make you feel? Does music ever cause you to think differently, feel a part of something larger or to want to take action? Pete Seeger, an American folk singer and social activist said: 'One of the purposes of music is to help you forget your troubles; another, help you learn from your troubles (some do), and, some will help you do something about your troubles'. Your class could discuss what he means and whether they agree with this statement.

Then students can listen to a protest song (related to what you are studying at the time), provide them with the lyrics so that, as they listen, they can annotate it or highlight it - reacting or responding to anything in the lyrics or in the music itself. You can then draw out key points from the lyrics using questioning such as: What did you notice in the song as you listened? How did it make you feel? What did you hear that makes you say that? What else do you want to know? Is this effective as a protest song and why?

3. Controversial Protest Songs

Phil Collins' song, 'Another Day in Paradise', is an example of a protest song which drew some criticism. I have used it to explore the idea of freedom of speech, and whether those in a privileged position, such as musicians with large followings, have a duty to use their voice responsibly. The song lyrics raise awareness about homelessness, in the song, Collins observes a man crossing the street to ignore a homeless woman, and he implores listeners not to turn a blind eye to homelessness. Collins received a lot of criticism from the English rock press at the time of its release, who said he was unqualified to sing about the poor due to his wealth, he replied saying: "When I drive down the street, I see the same things everyone else sees. It's a misconception that if you have a lot of money you're somehow out of touch with reality." We can contrast that argument with one from Billy Bragg who was scathing of the song in an interview in 2000, stating: "Phil Collins might write a song about the homeless, but if he doesn't have the action to go with it he's just exploiting that for a subject."

4. Other Ideas

- Assign students to small groups to listen to other protest songs and annotate the lyrics, and then

report back to the class about what they heard.

- Write a Protest Song or Verse: If you are studying a specific issue or a specific movement, e.g. extinction rebellion, students can write their own protest song about that issue, or they can compose an original verse for an existing song. This could then be used as a method of them taking action, having a voice and raising awareness of an issue they are studying or feel passionate about.
- Create a Playlist or Podcast of Protest Music That Matters to You. You could do this at the end of a series of lessons, invite students to identify protest songs that matter to them, from any era and about any topic. As a class, they might then create an annotated playlist or a podcast that features discussion by the students and snippets of each of the songs. This could then be shared with others.

One of the purposes of music is to help you forget your troubles; another, help you learn from your troubles (some do), and, some will help you do something about your troubles. (Pete Seeger)

Billy Bragg by deargdoom57

Protest Songs Case Study

Eileen Smith – Retired Nurse and Campaigner for Keep our NHS Public and CND.

The experiences of war have informed my life.

I was in the air raid shelter with my family on Christmas Eve 1940 when the hum of bombers flying overhead was interrupted by the sound of bombs exploding nearby. It was not an unusual sound in the suburbs of Manchester, where we lived, as it was on the flight path of an obvious target, Trafford Park - an industrial area producing weapons of war.

When my Father, who was on 'fire watch' entered the shelter that night we heard that our home had been hit and we would be taken to a local church to spend the rest of the night there. On Christmas Morning, my parents would take stock of the damage, supervise the evacuation of whatever could be saved and arrange accommodation for the family. Residential areas were frequently bombed as the pilots of the planes returning to base in Germany were anxious to lighten their load, by discharging unused bombs to enable a quicker and safer flight home.

The next significant event was the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I was horrified that 'my' country could harbour and support nuclear weapons at Aldermaston. Years later during a break in my nursing career, when I was very much involved in looking after my own family, I heard of the organisation the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. I heard about their marches to protest the storing of nuclear weapons.

I had to join the protest movement, and this is when I

started singing protest songs. To this day I still have the 'Sanity Song Sheet' produced by CND and my children remember me singing them 'men and women join together do no heed the men of war' and 'If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning, I'd hammer all over this world, I'd hammer out a warning…' 'We shall not be moved…' wonderful songs. I hope that young people can continue to sing these protest songs that bring people together and that they can think about making their own peaceful protest songs.

As I write this, I have tears in my eyes. I have to believe that the time will come when people will live together in peace. At 88 I continue to protest and sing protest songs.

Further reading:

https://observer.com/2016/12/power-to-the-people-the-most-inspiring-protest-songs-of-all-time/

Park Hospital Prize Giving, the first NHS hospital, Eileen Smith on the right

Case Study: PBS Student Lab Reporters at New College Leicester

Sera Shortland

This is the second example of how the teacher exchange to the US is supporting curriculum deveopment in the UK. Sera writes here about the influence the trip has had on her, and showcases how she has implemented learning from one of her highlights of the trip, a visit to watch PBS Newshour broadcast live from their studio in Washington and hear about one of their media literacy programmes 'Student Reporting Labs'.

I participated in an invaluable exchange visit to the US and learned more about the challenge of misinformation and how educators can support young people with the skills they need to navigate online spaces. Although social media can create many positive opportunities for young people, allowing them to participate in politics as never before, having such easy access to comment and share, social media platforms can also perpetuate negative, false or misleading opinion. One of the roles of education is to help filter out misinformation and provide creative and impactful digital experiences for our students.

When teaching about media literacy, the citizenship classroom comes into a league of its own, after all citizenship's core purpose emphasises 'Teaching should equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.' (Department for Education, 2014).

Part of our role as citizenship educators is to provide meaningful and real-world opportunities for young people to engage critically with democracy and provide opportunities for them to ask questions, voice their ideas and express their concerns. Talk has an important role to play when thinking about media literacy. Providing any opportunities for 'talk', especially by using a deliberative technique (see work by Lee Jerome on the Deliberative Classroom), is vital to help students process and explore how they think and, perhaps more crucially, about how other people influence thinking and manipulate it through false stories and sensationalism. We need to encourage students to take ownership of their stories, to construct and direct their own narratives concerning issues that affect them.

Providing spaces to talk and build knowledge around media literacy is important and you do not have to be an expert in citizenship or media to support young people, there are plenty of resources to help, ACT not only produce useful resources, but can also direct you to reputable learning sites.

For example, since completing my PGCE, I have dipped into resources and ideas written by the PBS Newshour team, such as the recent decoding media bias lesson (which can be found here: www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/decoding-media-bias-lesson-plan/). PBS work with young people in many ways and have produced a video series on media literacy, 'Misinformation Overload' (https://srlmisinformationoverload.tumblr.com/).

Before lockdown, my students signed up to participate in PBS Student Reporting Labs, a project-based learning programme that supports young people to become youth educators, creating the news by reporting on important issues in their community and producing impactful video reports for local media outlets and the national PBS NewsHour.

Students have been learning about misinformation and filmmaking, researching topics around stereotyping and mental health using fact checking sites such as Snopes, NewsGuard and Fact Check, as well as tools such as Google Reverse Image Search. They have naturally started to question sources around statistics and pseudo-science articles that they come across and have gradually become more confident and self-assured in their own news reporting. They are becoming newsmakers in their communities; they are informed media creators and consumers and it is a delight to see.

PBS Student Reporting Labs have a host of online lesson

Sera Shortland is Head of Citizenship at New College Leicester. She is also an ACT Teaching Ambassaor and member of ACT Council.

packs and advice to help students to become skilled media journalists, reporters, camera operators and film makers. The lessons are easy to adapt and are engaging for students as they build new skills and students can take ownership of issues that they research. If using the resources in the citizenship classroom, think about the skills and concepts you wish to develop, use current events to grasp the opportunity to talk more and think more about democracy, government, fairness justice, rights and equalities. By creating the narrative and telling the stories of what matters to them, students learn through being active campaigners and changemakers.

Leah Clapman founded PBS student reporting labs in 2009 and agrees: "Getting out of the classroom, asking questions, evaluating and thinking critically about what people say and producing media for an authentic audience is an empowering way to make sense of the world. It's also good for citizenship. Independent evaluations have shown that teens who do Student Reporting Labs are more civically engaged — specifically, they say they are more likely to volunteer in their community and participate in civic activities around current events and issues."

For Leah, the curriculum does not include enough student journalism: "Youth reporting on elections creates opportunities to look at the issues in new ways, forces candidates to consider the needs of young people and brings Gen Z into the national conversation".

To take part in student reporting labs, we needed a digital camera with audio capability, an SD card, tripod and enthusiasm. Once students became adept at using the equipment (within minutes) we followed the format provided by PBS. All the lessons are accompanied by a series of 'Level Up' worksheets that guides you through the skills needed for video creation and production as well as skills needed for journalism and ethical reporting. It has been a slow process as we are trialling a new way of working and creating film, but next year we hope to submit our very first film to the Newshour team.

Lesson plans are written for an American audience and some adaptation is required. I taught lessons as part of extra-curricular enrichment and so in a more relaxed format, you could incorporate lessons as easily into your curriculum.

Have a look at the PBS site (https://studentreportinglabs.org/about/) if you want to find out more and find units of work created to support your teaching of media literacy, student journalism and film making, including a series on 'storytelling through coronavirus'. On the next pages you can see how I adapted the online lessons and an example of the first lesson plan.

References

Deliberative Classroom resources and commentary can be found at : www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/deliberative-classroom-topical-debating-resources-and-teacher-guidance
Department for Education (2014) The national curriculum in England: complete framework for key stages 1 to 4. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4

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10 lessons for creating the news and becoming citizen journalists

PBS Student Reporting Labs	Citizenship Link:
1 What is Newsworthy? 2 Finding Story Ideas 3 Journalism Ethics 4 Facts vs Informed Opinions 5 Copyright and Fair Use 6 What Makes a Good Video Report? 7 Interviewing: The Art of Asking Questions 8 Broadcast News 9 Team Work and planning 10 Production	This unit of lessons could be linked to any of the citizenships core concepts depending on your context and interpretation of the lessons. So, for example it is easy to see how democracy and the government, justice/fairness could fit into the lesson on Copyright and Fair use, equally you may want to look at freedoms and restrictions and apply the concept of rights and equalities throughout your scheme of learning. Before you plan your unit, ensure you have your big question and clear understanding of which citizenship concept and skills you wish to apply this will provide the lens for your planning. My planning involved the concept of rights and equalities which fit into a unit of 'the rights, responsibilities and role of the media.' Through this project students have opportunities to participate and explore the different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of their community. Students have lots of opportunities to develop skills of research and interrogation of evidence, debating and taking informed action.

Demonstrate learning: What you should know by the end of the topic

1. What are the five values journalists use to test for newsworthiness?
2. How can I apply these values and create newsworthy stories?
3. How do stories develop and how do I pitch a great story?
4. How do I ensure ethical reporting?
5. What are the differences between fact, opinion and informed opinion?
6. How does media inform public opinion? How do I de-code media bias?
7. How does the law balance the rights of both authors (copyright holders) and users?
8. How do I critique reports?
9. How is a television news segment structured?
10. How can I work effectively in a team to make a difference?
11. How do I use production techniques to create a newsworthy film?

Theme

Lesson 1 What is Newsworthy?

Why teach?

This lesson is part of enrichment for an active citizenship project and builds on previous learning and the following specification links:

KS3 NC Citizenship link

The precious liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom

(specifically looking at press freedom and freedom of speech)

KS4 NC Citizenship link

Human rights and international law

(specifically looking at regulations of ethical press reporting, and the rights enshrined in documents such as UNDHR (1948), UNCRC and HRA (1998)

The different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity

Learning objectives

Describe what makes a newsworthy story (AO1)

Apply critical thinking skills to consider responsible journalism (AO2)

Analyse arguments and make justifications using evidence to support your views (AO3)

Securing Grade 2:

• Ask questions and select information from the sources. Give opinions about issues that affect them and can name all five of the journalism values.

Securing Grade 4:

• Identify a range of viewpoints when describing the journalism values. Give a considered view to explain the term newsworthy. Begin to explain the links between sources, journalist codes and freedoms.

Securing Grade 6:

• Interpret sources for validity, explain the influences that shape the news and how news becomes newsworthy. Develop structured and balanced arguments around source materials, present persuasive arguments when justifying views

Securing Grade 8+:

• Develop cogent arguments relating to news stories, newsworthiness and responsible journalism. Analyse how these affect communities in around the world using range of issues and events. Detailed use of key ideas and concepts, students are questioning and hypothesising through debate.

Assessment:

Checking student's prior knowledge before starting the topic: Identify misconceptions and gaps. Key terms secured? Case Studies re-called? Linking through the curriculum

Questioning throughout.

Peer assessment

Use of CORT thinking skills as an assessment tool

Check responses and plan tasks to support closing the learning gaps. *Teacher to challenge through questioning and scaffold/model where support needed.*

Key terminology:

Tier 2	Tier 3
Research, source, justify, describe, explain, interpret, compare, analyse, evaluate, identify.	Media, journalism, regulations, freedoms, mis-information, dis-information, mal-information, newsworthy, timeless, proximity, controversy.

Suggested activities:

- **Introduction** Emerging from unprecedented global pandemic, people rely heavily on media outlets to keep up to date. But we also have an 'Infopandemic' (Joseph Borrell) Therefore we need to be expert citizen journalists: *misinformation, disinformation and malinformation v freedom of speech.* Coronavirus: restricted freedoms, for example, the rights people have to practise religion have been interrupted due to social distancing and regulations. *Good journalism* grounded in human rights principles.

- **Prior Questioning:** During lockdown what were the news stories that interested you? Why? Prompt: When the schools might re-open? Which other news stories have you come across that have been important and why?

- **Starter:** Stories that influence (Choose 3 big, topical stories e.g. Boris Johnson leaving hospital, Captain Tom, Donald Trump's disinfectant). What information can you recall about each story? CAF images (Consider All Factors, De Bono). Cut up questions/ students pick at random, or ask each other: What do you know about the people in the image? Why might this story be important? What is the message? The Target audience? What is the bias? Are these reliable stories? Are they specific to the UK? Do they have a global significance? Are there any challenges or tensions in terms of human rights? Which of these stories are the most important, why? Are they newsworthy stories? What does newsworthy mean? *Draw out the political implications for each story, for example: What does captain Toms fundraising tell you about the state of the NHS? How have politicians restricted our freedoms? By limiting our freedoms in what ways have we become better/ worse citizens? Do restrictions strengthen or weaken the power politicians have over citizens?*

- **Activity:** What makes a story newsworthy? Using PBS five tests: Devise icons to match words for students to layer each story, discuss meanings. How are these stories newsworthy? (Teacher may pre-select graphic icons for students to use).

- **Activity:** Reviewing the values of journalists: Read through the PBS sheet found on the website (https://studentreportinglabs.org/lesson-plans/lesson-1-1-what-is-newsworthy/). Are there any of the tests that they cannot see or link? Students write their ideas in the last column and justify how each story fits into the 5 tests. Use questioning to explore different ideas and extend thinking. E.g. The tests help you to produce stories that will captivate and be interesting. How far do the tests support responsible journalism? Should further tests be added? Feedback and discuss ideas. Look back at the stories you recalled, using your new language, how would you now describe newsworthiness?

- **Reflection exit ticket:** What information will you take away from today's session? In what ways do you feel more informed citizen journalists? How can we apply what we have learned? What questions do you still have?

Bryden Joy teaches at Perins Schools and is a member of ACT Council

Media Literacy: Theory to Practice

Bryden Joy

Bryden Joy was one of the participants in the US teacher exchange programme and a fellow ACT South East Teaching Ambassador, with whom I have been fortunate to work. In this article he encapsulates the impact of the exchange both on him and, thanks to the Citizenship curriculum he has developed, his students.

It seems such a cliché to talk about a CPD as being "The best course I've ever done!" or "Life-changing!", but I truly feel that my involvement in the US Embassy's media literacy tour really has changed my educational priorities.

I've always felt strongly that my pupils should know what is happening in the world around them, so that they have the opportunity to develop into fully-functioning members of society who can not only survive, but thrive, when they leave the comfort of full-time education. Even having set those aspirations for my pupils, I never really thought in any depth about the impact that their news consumption could have on them.

Sure, I knew that 'fake news' was being misused by people if the facts didn't suit them, and I already taught a lesson about inaccurate websites online (my favourite ever Year 7 lesson, about the Pacific North-western tree octopus). But when I met experts from Stony Brook University, Common Sense Media and PBS, that was when I fell into the rabbit-hole and realised just how big this was. More importantly, I realised how little I was doing to help my pupils deal with the issues that came from the sudden ability to spread information globally in an instant. For someone who considers themselves to be a digital native, and who remembers being part of Facebook when it was about connecting university students, it was quite a shock.

It would have been easy for me to go on this amazing trip, and just come home and continue on as I had always done. But, as anyone who

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knows me would attest, when I've got something on my mind, I need to do something about it. As I sat in my hotel room a few days before flying home, I thought of a way in which I might be able to make use of the many resources I was gathering.

The timing of this trip was fortuitous for me; the Easter holidays seem to be the final quiet before the storm of the exam season, but if you pay attention you'll notice the groundwork being laid by various members of staff for the following academic year. In my case, it wasn't so much quiet as it was crescendo, as the staff body had made collective decision to move from five lessons per day, to six lessons per day. That then made available a substantial chunk of time at Key Stage 3, which I felt would be the perfect group to work with.

Planning for year 8

Sat with my collection of media literacy resources spread out across the hotel room, I started drafting an outline of how I could draw as many of these concepts together in a coherent scheme of work. I thought that one lesson per fortnight with a Year 8 class would enable me to provide pupils with a solid understanding, and so after whittling down my list of ideas to nineteen, I began the ultimate card sort game of trying to logically order them. I structured the lessons into three mini-units; one focusing on news literacy, one about creating media, and one about social media.

My biggest concern was that the pupils wouldn't buy into the lessons, that they would feel like they didn't need to know anything of this because it wasn't relevant or interesting. After my first lesson

Information Neighbourhoods

Advertising
- Includes one-sided claims, often without factual evidence
- Content paid for by client to increase sales or attention
- Creators are unnamed, but may publish corrections

Entertainment
- Is focused on gaining and holding an audience
- Producers can manipulate the point of view as they desire
- Producers may sometimes be named, may publish corrections

Propaganda
- Mixes facts with illogical or unproven conclusions
- Often uses exaggeration
- Clearly supports a government or other organisation
- Creators are unnamed and do not publicly correct errors

Publicity
- Uses careful public statements to offer a one-sided view
- Client may pay to promote products or improve image
- Publicists and PR staff are usually unnamed unless publicly correcting an error

Journalism
- Good journalism includes the verification of content
- Journalists' ethics forbid them from working for interest groups
- Work is signed; authors are held accountable for their work and publicly correct errors.

Raw Information
- Unfiltered content cannot be verified; may be truthful or may be designed to obscure the truth
- Person posting it may do so for a specific reason
- Poster usually not held accountable for the information

with one class, my fears were gone – I knew that the pupils were interested. That first lesson focused very much on the pupils themselves and what their perceptions were; we spoke about what the media was, how the way that people consumed media has changed over time, and then completed an activity adapted from IREX's Learn to Discern program, where pupils listed all of the ways that they sourced new information in the course of a day. After they listed what they consumed, they then had to consider how they consumed it, by mapping out the different devices or resources they used for each source. Their homework was to attempt a 24-hour media blackout, inspired by a task set for students in Stony Brook University's journalism programme.

Moving forward, lessons were structured to help pupils to understand the components of the REVIEW model, which I had devised with fellow ACT Ambassador and trip participant Helen Blachford. We had come across so many useful concepts and techniques throughout the trip, but we knew that it would be difficult to continually bombard pupils with new ideas or acronyms. The REVIEW model allowed us to establish a simple process through which pupils could critically

> **After my first lesson with one class, my fears were gone – I knew that the pupils were interested.**

examine the sources presented to them, in a way which would be memorable enough to continue beyond the classroom.

Each of the lessons up until Christmas had a connection to one or more of the aspects of REVIEW. We spent one lesson exploring the concept of 'information neighbourhoods' from Stony Brook, and the key indicators of the intent of an article. The concept behind this activity is that only journalism demonstrates accountability and independence, whilst also being verifiable; the other 'neighbourhoods' all lack at least one of these three requirements. Pupils were given an assortment of articles and social media posts, and asked to identify which neighbourhood each article sat within. This brought a rich discussion as pupils debated where some sources should sit, before we agreed that it was possible for some neighbourhoods to overlap.

Another lesson looked at how to evaluate the accuracy of news reports, and how to verify information by comparing other sources or by using fact-checking websites. After discussing what types of information we could fact check and how to do so, we used Stony Brook's IMVAIN model to compare a range of articles about Boris Johnson's

appointment as Prime Minister. This model is based on the idea of five key elements which offer significant information about an article.

- The reader examines whether the article is independent, or if perhaps there is some potential gain from portraying the story in a particular way.
- By comparing the story to multiple other sources, the reader can quickly gain a sense of what information is consistently being reported, and what may be embellished or glossed over in the original articles.
- The third aspect is about whether the content is verifiable, and if the reader is able to – or would be able to – find corroborating evidence.
- The penultimate element is looking at the author and cited sources, and determining whether or not they are sufficiently authoritative and informed to be making such comments; for example, a quote attributed to the Prime Minister about governmental spending holds is likely to have more authority than a random Twitter user's prediction about what the national debt will be next year.
- The final criterion is about whether or not the journalist is named; linking back into the work about information neighbourhoods, accountability is a key component of good journalism.

By using the IMVAIN model while examining the articles, students were able to identify which were impartial and which had inherent political agendas, which led nicely into the following lesson on bias.

> **Only journalism demonstrates accountability and independence, whilst also being verifiable; the other 'information neighbourhoods' all lack at least one of these three requirements.**

On our trip, one of the biggest takeaways I had was the realisation that bias cannot be proven from just one article. Yes, you can see that a news outlet does not support a particular person, group or action from that one article, but bias is truly demonstrated over time, with multiple pieces of evidence to support that claim. An excellent way to help pupils to understand this is to use a video advertisement created for The Guardian, based on the Three Little Pigs story. The advert intends to demonstrate how journalists follow a story and how it can evolve from one issue into another, but it perfectly demonstrates the idea that we've only ever heard the story from one point of view; that of the pigs. Following a discussion where we unpicked the possibilities of the story having been fabricated or distorted over time, we then put pupils' newfound knowledge of bias to the test by asking pupils to read a series of articles about Raheem Sterling, and the language used to describe his tattoos. Pupils were able to identify that the stories included truthful reporting, but pointed out that the pattern of sensationalist headlines and placement of relevant information could be used to suggest some sort of bias against Sterling.
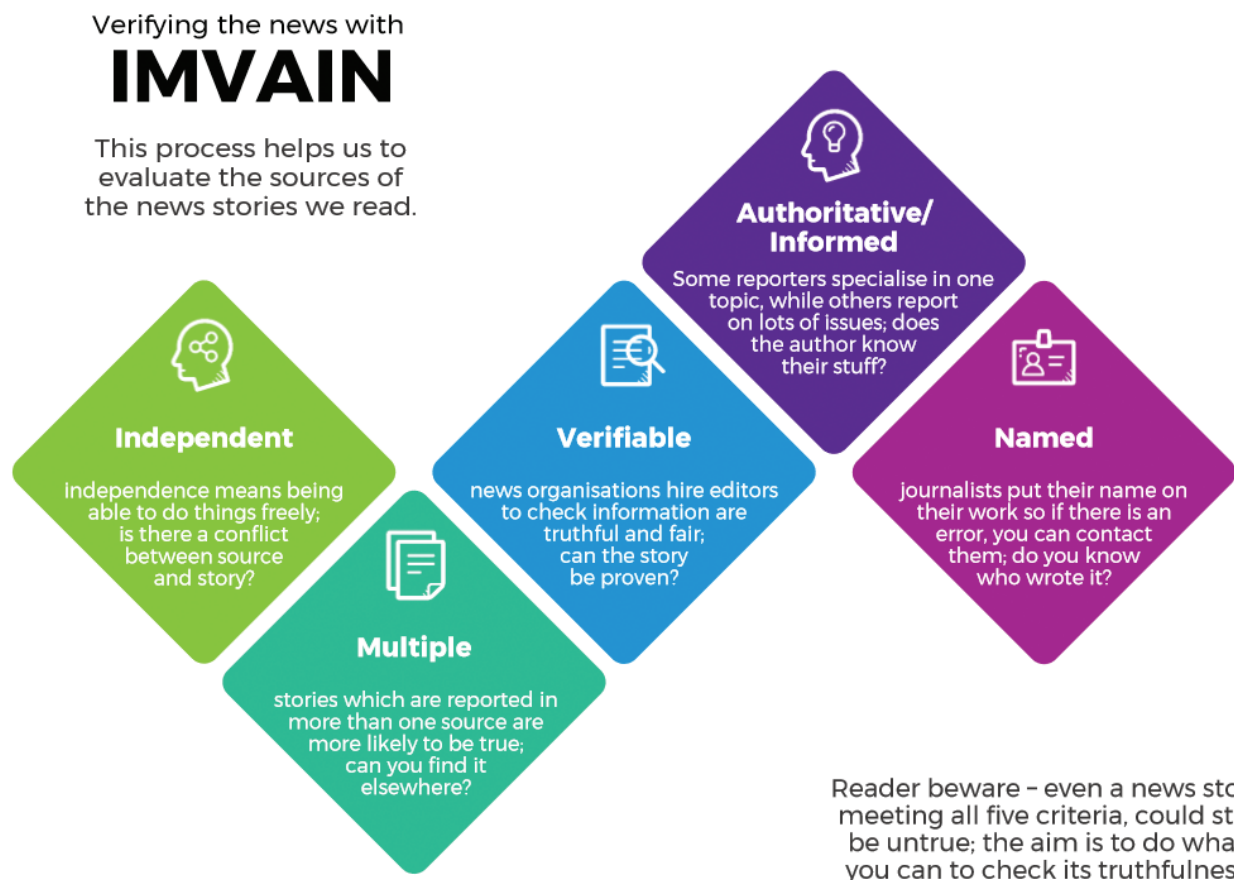
We finished the mini-topic by making use of BBC's iReporter game, where pupils take on the role of a journalist in the BBC newsroom, to check pupils' understanding of what we had covered. The pupils really enjoyed having an opportunity to put their skills into practice, particularly in such a fun manner. The game also acted as a bridge to our next topic, which was one I had not originally planned to cover.

Do you REVIEW?

ACT
Blachford & Joy, 2019

R Reputation — Have you heard of the source? — Have they been reliable before?

E Evidence — What facts are cited in the story? — Are there holes in the story?

V Verify — Compare to other sources — Does everything match up?

I Intent — Why was the story published? — Is it factual and impartial?

E Emotions — How do you feel about the story? — Are you swayed by your feelings?

W Weigh it up — Think about what you know — Does the story sound plausible?

Verifying the news with IMVAIN

This process helps us to evaluate the sources of the news stories we read.

Independent

independence means being able to do things freely; is there a conflict between source and story?

Multiple

stories which are reported in more than one source are more likely to be true; can you find it elsewhere?

Verifiable

news organisations hire editors to check information are truthful and fair; can the story be proven?

Authoritative/ Informed

Some reporters specialise in one topic, while others report on lots of issues; does the author know their stuff?

Named

journalists put their name on their work so if there is an error, you can contact them; do you know who wrote it?

Reader beware – even a news story meeting all five criteria, could still be untrue; the aim is to do what you can to check its truthfulness

As part of GCSE Citizenship, my Year 10 pupils cover the role of the media and the idea of holding people to account for their actions. I wanted to bring some of that information down to a Key Stage 3 level, and so I added a few lessons where we looked specifically at newspapers; what is in them, how they are created, and the differences between tabloids and broadsheets. I adapted some of the educational resources from The Guardian's website, and gave pupils the opportunities to create their own topical front pages to demonstrate key features. The final lesson of the mini-topic incorporated a discussion about the idea of holding people responsible for their actions, and watching part of 'The Disk', a film created by The Telegraph detailing the newspaper's work in publishing the series of articles about MP's expenses.

I wanted to continue with lessons pupils felt connected to, and so the next few lessons were spent looking at music. When I met Juma Inniss from The Message Movement when we were in Boston, I had a moment of epiphany, that I could incorporate an analysis of song lyrics into these lessons. In practice, this evolved into looking at the concept of protest songs, and how artists have used language to express their emotions through song lyrics. I gave my pupils worksheets about different songs, and asked them to analyse the lyrics and figure out what the song was about. We then linked back to one of

the core concepts of media literacy, which often seems to be forgotten, that media literacy is also about the ability to create. Pupils had time to think of an issue which was important to them, and to then start drafting lyrics.

It was at this time that Covid-19 became much more significant in our lives, which certainly shaped many of the song lyrics that my pupils wrote. Unfortunately, it also cut short the first year of media literacy at my school. My plans for the summer term – exploring the world of social media, echo chambers and algorithms – had to be scaled back, but I am looking forward to making a greater use of the resources I gathered in the next academic year.

I can honestly say that I've really enjoyed planning and delivering for my pupils, and I have continued to learn so much, even after the trip ended. I had idea how many different organisations had media literacy resources on their websites. I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to share my experiences with other teachers, through presentations at the Five Nations Network conference in Belfast, and running online CPD sessions with ACT. I hope that more schools will find time in their curriculums to provide their pupils with high quality media literacy lessons, to ensure that pupils can recognise fact from fiction online.

Lesson	Topic	Area of focus	Resources used
1	Introduction to the Media	Pupils' consumption of media	Media consumption task from IREX's *Learn to Discern*
2	What is News?	Recognising different types of information content	Stony Brook's *Information Neighborhoods*
3	Truth & Reliability	Identifying features of an article which suggest accuracy	Stony Brook's IMVAIN model
4	Verification	Understanding how to fact check news stories	Task adapted from Newseum visit
5	Bias	Determining how to recognise bias	*The Guardian's* Three Little Pigs video; Raheem Sterling articles
6	Journalism in Action	Demonstrating skills gained from previous lessons	BBC iReporter
Christmas holidays			
7	Introduction to Newspapers	Identifying key features of newspapers	*FirstNews* newspapers and weekly quiz, *The Guardian* resources
8	Tabloids and Broadsheets	Naming key features of different types of newspapers	Various front pages, taken from Newspapers for Schools
9	Holding People to Account	Responsibilities of the media in scrutinising people's actions	*The Telegraph's* The Disk video
10	Protest Songs	Examining how songwriters use lyrics to express their views	Selection of songs about different social issues
11	Protest Songs	Writing, and then sharing, song lyrics about social issues important to the pupils	Pupils' own ideas and work
12	Protest Songs		
Easter holidays			
13	Changing Media & Technologies	Exploring the new ways in which information is shared	IREX's *Learn to Discern*
14	Images	Identifying faked and misappropriated images	New York Times slideshow, Newseum educational activities
15	Data & Algorithms	Discussing how technology influences what we view online	Wall Street Journal's *Red Feed Blue Feed*
16	Echo Chambers & Confirmation Bias	Recognising how people seek validation of their ideas	
17	Fake Social Media	Investigating the world of fake & hacked social media accounts	Lesson created in workshop at IREX
18	Being a savvy consumer	Putting all of it together	A carousel of mini-tasks based on previous lessons

It's about people not tech

Dr. Angelika Love

In this final article for the special edition theme on media literacy, Angelika Love returns us to an overview of the importance of the topic. In focusing on the individual who engages with digital media she reminds us that the internet has the potential to divide us from people or to connect us, and will therefore be central to young people's experience of citizenship.

Did you catch 2018's most memorable demonstration of media illiteracy? When a white-haired US Senator asked Mark Zuckerberg how Facebook's business model could be sustainable if Facebook was free, teenagers around the world buried their heads in a collective 'facepalm'. The generational divide, culminating in Zuckerberg's almost kindly reply, "Senator, we run ads", is nothing new. Given the pace of technological change, will today's educators quickly require an 'update'?

I am at the tail-end of the floppy disk generation. When I went to school in the early 2000s, I.T. meant that 15 clunky laptops would occasionally be carted into the classroom to briefly interrupt the buzzing of the overhead projector. At the conference on Digital Inclusion & Positive Identities, recently convened by the educational charity Cumberland Lodge, a friend told me that her toddler tried to swipe open the fridge door. It's time to contemplate how we can raise ethically astute, literate citizens of a digital age? If we ourselves have long since drowned in the forever-accelerating Insta-Snapchat-WhatsApp vortex.

Despite the rapid evolution of digital societal infrastructure, schools remain largely analogue environments – albeit ones equipped, in principle, to prepare young people for digital spaces. After all, raising tomorrow's citizens is not merely a question of digital skills. Rather, citizenship education concerns, first and foremost, guiding ethics and behaviour, personal values and social goals. These are timeless matters which can, and

should, be developed in the social environment where young people spend a large proportion of their waking hours: at school.

According to the most recent Media Literacy Index, high-quality education offers the best response to misinformation and 'fake news'. After all, many of the rules of engagement governing analogue civil society (including the classroom) are relevant in virtual spaces, too: consent and respect for privacy matter not only in sex and relationship lessons; accountability and ownership apply beyond conversations about plagiarism and exam practice. Counter intuitively, the key to educating tomorrow's citizens could be to de-emphasise the distinction between our online and offline lives, and to consider whether the "digital" prefix is necessary at all, in discussions on citizenship education.

State-of-the-art education in a digital age focuses on enhancing children's resilience to the lures of misinformation, and on helping them to cope, with the incessant torrents of information-overload: by giving them the tools to think critically, interpret and evaluate information. Important though resilience is, this strikes me as an insufficient approach to educating tomorrow's citizens. Children are not simply consumers of online material: those who not only cope but create and thrive with the self-efficacy of citizens, will also be tomorrow's developers of digital technology. Which standards will future tech giants apply to their ideas, designs and algorithms, when they think about what it is that makes a society worth living in?

> **" Counter intuitively, the key to educating tomorrow's citizens could be to de-emphasise the distinction between our online and offline lives, and to consider whether the "digital" prefix is necessary at all, in discussions on citizenship education. "**

Dr. Angelika Love; Scholar at Cumberland Lodge

When Supreme Court Justice Lord Sales recently called for the creation of an expert commission to oversee digital innovation, he stressed that tomorrow's most powerful social innovators need not all be coders. Rather, to ensure that "algorithms and artificial intelligence are used to enhance human capacities, agency and dignity", those at the forefront of shaping the digital age will also be ethicists and psychologists. Their most powerful tools will be what Gori Yahaya, CEO of UpSkill Digital, calls "soft skills with a digital edge". These skills – including a mindset for continuous learning – can be developed in the classroom.

From my point of view, as a social psychologist, one of the core skills required in a digital age is the ability to step outside of our 'echo chambers'. Technology companies – social media platforms, in particular – claim to create community, counter division, and offer everyone a 'tribe'. At a recent Cumberland Lodge conference, psychologist Dr Elaine Kasket called this "purpose washing": a branding exercise shrouding these companies' true purpose and impact. Perversely, Twitter and Co are designed to confine their users to echo chambers, to lull us into a comfortable sense of certainty about our beliefs. By encouraging us to text not talk, 'social' technology has also prompted us to rely on a means of communication that, neuro-chemically speaking, builds less connection with the people we care about, not more. On balance, social technology has the power to undermine, not enhance, our ability to relate to others. In such digital environments, it is essential to hone the skills that allow us to break out of familiar communities.

Seven decades of social psychological research have shown that the key to developing the social and emotional skills that underpin cohesive societies lies in forging positive relationships across (ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, political, etc.) divides. Unfortunately, schools are often less diverse than the neighbourhoods in which they are located – a homogeneity that is accentuated further by our tendency to re-segregate into homogenous peer groups, even in relatively diverse social spaces. From the point of view of teachers, it is therefore crucial to integrate a wide range of voices into the curriculum, and to model curiosity about the unfamiliar, empathy across social fault lines, and tolerance and openness in the face of complex social diversity. Even if your students'

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lives unfold in culturally monochrome bubbles, the diversity of your own social experiences – like ripples radiating from a pebble landing in water – affect them indirectly. Their social experiences, and your own, will shape how the children and young people in your care will engage with, and contribute to, society – offline and online.

For too long, the digital-analogue distinction has suggested that our lives, and the rules and values that govern society, can be parsed into separate online and offline realities: that what we learn in the classroom – about friendship, ownership, boundaries, and empathy – does not inform how we act online. Organisations with the mission to further social cohesion – including Cumberland Lodge, which is currently facilitating discussion, workshops, and in-house research, to explore education in the digital age – recognise that educational institutions cannot afford to watch technological changes from the side-lines. Just as we must consider that 'digital natives' may lack the skills, knowledge and instincts required for fully consensual and truly civic participation online, we ought not to dismiss the timeless insights into citizenship that educators can convey offline. At a recent meeting of educators and innovators at Cumberland Lodge, Helen Milner from The Good Things Foundation summarised this well: "In the end, digital is about people, not tech".

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Education as a Catalyst for Change in a Divided and Polarised World

Dilia Zwart

Education has long been regarded as a socialising force for a better world. In the aftermath of the Second World War and the promise of Never Again, UNESCO was founded to ensure that education contributes to the building of peace and international cooperation. Education can serve as a tool to disrupt prejudice and nurture respect for differences, fundamental to cohesive, inclusive societies. And yet, many continue to see Never Again as a statement of fact, rather than a commitment that demands action. Many in the UK may feel that atrocity prevention and peacebuilding are needed elsewhere, such as the continent of Africa, the Middle East, South America, or South Asia - but not here at home. Protection Approaches believes that no society is immune to identity-based violence. Atrocity prevention and peacebuilding are constant and consistent processes needed in every society, and education is central at every stage. This article by Dilia Zwart gives an oversight to the education programme at Protection Approaches.

Sustainable peace and stability hinge on the next generations' ability to be empathetic, active citizens who take informed, responsible action for positive societal change. Promisingly, many young people around the world are becoming vocal activists for issues such as climate change and gun safety. What can be learned from these changemakers? That we need to invest more in the kind of education that empowers young people to be catalysts for positive change in a polarised and divided world.

Through our national education programme, we work with schools to promote positive school cultures that foster inclusiveness and empower young people to lead on positive change in their communities. Having previously designed and implemented education programmes in deeply divided communities with histories of atrocities, including Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina, our education team draws on the lessons of peacebuilding education such as dialogue, critical thinking, media literacy, and fostering meaningful interactions. Based on these lessons, as well as our community work in the UK, our team has designed a unique workshop programme suitable for diverse UK educational environments, from Eton College to Feltham Prison.

During our workshops, we create a safe space for constructive dialogue around sensitive issues of identity and prejudice and discussing ideas for positive action. Learners consider historical and contemporary case studies to investigate how hate and prejudice can form in any society. Recent examples we have looked at include an SS guard at Auschwitz, a young girl who committed a racist act in 1950s America, and a right-wing extremist in the UK today. The

students we meet draw the same conclusions: perpetrators of hate had come to believe they were doing the right thing, and were influenced by the media, politicians, and other sources to believe that certain groups are somehow different or even a threat to their nation. When looking at these stories we emphasise the experiences of victims, and ask learners to consider the emotional, social, and structural harms of hate. We then challenge them to consider actions they can take as individuals, as well as collectively, to tackle hate and bridge community divides.

During our school visits, we have met with teachers who are productively discussing sensitive topics and promoting examples of positive action in and out of their classrooms. Some are even leading whole-school initiatives, such as cross-curricular approaches to learning and innovative models of inclusive student leadership. In the current Coronavirus pandemic, we know of teachers here in the UK and around the world proactively responding to students' anxieties and needs, as well as productively challenging xenophobia and misinformation. Teachers have an opportunity to share their examples of best practices, which can enable learners to practice the competencies needed to tackle hate and build kinder, more caring societies. But it should not be the job of teachers alone.

In order to empower young people, we believe school years are a formative and socialising experience that can nurture the next generation's resilience through a whole-school approach. Therefore, we are building partnerships with schools to develop bespoke strategies to meet new challenges facing educators posed by hate, prejudice, and offline impacts of online harms. Drawing on our pioneering community-led work bridging divided societies in London, our holistic programming takes an inside and outside the classroom approach, providing resources including lesson plans, teacher training, and events celebrating diversity and inclusion. At the time of writing, we are offering support to schools affected by the COVID-19 pandemic by providing our materials online.

The pandemic and its long term impacts only underlines the urgent need to rethink

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education as a process that empowers young people to be responsible, active citizens and positive changemakers. In 2015, global leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and championed the idea that education is at the heart of more sustainable, just, and peaceful societies (SDG 4.7). Civil society actors and organisations across Europe agree – indeed peace education was the most cited solution to the prevention crisis during our 2019 consultation. During this pandemic, it has become clear that peace and civic education are not simply 'nice to have' extras in a curriculum but vital for healing trauma, engendering dialogue, and empowering young people to make a positive difference. What action is now being taken to implement this vision for education?

Schools around the UK are already modelling ways for young people to challenge prejudice and build sustainable peace, as we have observed during our visits to over 30 schools across the country in 2020. These examples show that whole-school approaches that integrate inclusiveness and respect for difference into all aspects of school life, from policies on bullying to everyday classroom practice, can best enable learners to constructively deal with conflict and find positive solutions together. Citizenship educators have the power to transform not only the ways in which young people think about the rapidly changing and complex world in which they live but also the behaviours that lead to positive change. In such a way, education is the key to not only disrupting the roots of prejudice but promoting a world based on social justice and positive peace.

> **During this pandemic, it has become clear that peace and civic education are not simply 'nice to have' extras in a curriculum but vital for healing trauma, engendering dialogue, and empowering young people to make a positive difference.**

The Five Nations Network 20th Anniversary in Belfast

Camilla Bell-Davies

In early February, the annual Five Nations teaching conference took place in Belfast, on the theme 'Building Democratic Culture in Schools – Empowering Teachers as Defenders of Democracy.' It was to be a particularly special conference marking the 20th Anniversary of the Five Nations Network, generously supported by the Gordon Cook Foundation. The theme enabled teachers to reflect on their responses to increasing concerns about the effects of social media, misinformation and false news, and to consider their role in promoting and defending democracy in their classrooms and in the culture of schools. The conference provides teachers with invaluable space to consider the role of citizenship in the curriculums in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England to exchange teaching approaches and ideas, and to form and renew friendships.

As teachers and educators arrived from across the UK and the Republic of Ireland, the conference commenced with an opening activity in country groups, to allow participants to get to know their teams. Ideas were shared about the building blocks of a democratic school, realised in creative representations and sculptural forms. There was some healthy competition between countries and theirvisual representations showed how much we had to agree on, and also how many ideas we had to share.

Liz Moorse gave a conference welcome and speech on 'Building democratic culture in schools, the Council of Europe RFCDC and the Democratic schools Network.' She

also spoke on behalf of Katerina Toura from the Council of Europe, on the 'Free to speak, Safe to Learn' initiative which involves 50 member states of the Council of Europe, including the UK, who have come together to respond to the growth of extremism and terrorism and the increase in misinformation. The campaign is designed to encourage schools to promote democracy and human rights with a view to strengthening democratic culture.

The first plenary session included Sir Keith Ajegbo of the Stephen Lawrence Trust, Kari Kivinen, a headteacher of the French Finnish School in Helsinki and Mrs Amanda McNamee, Principal of an integrated school called Lagan College Belfast. Sir Keith reflected on his journey as the head of Deptford Green School for 20 years, a mixed comprehensive in South East London with a multicultural intake in a socio-economically deprived part of the borough. During his tenure, the school gained a national reputation for its work in citizenship education.

Kari guided us through the educational path that Finland has boldly trodden to bring about integrated citizenship education, democratic participation from students learning about their rights and how to incorporate information literacy to ensure children have the skills to deal with misinformation from a young age. Having an international perspective was welcomed by delegates, especially one from

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Finland which is the object of such intense scrutiny in education debates.

Learning about Lagan integrated college through Amanda's perspective was equally fascinating as an insight into the Northern Ireland context, not least because because the college was founded in 1981 as a response to the challenge of community conflict and a religiously divided school system.

The Five Nations Network also funds a number of Development Projects each year and two colleagues presented their work. Katie Shearer, from St Eunan's primary school near Glasgow, detailed her project 'Plastic Pollution, We are the Solution,' where children learnt interactively about the importance of protecting the environment. Martin Ferguson of Ashfield Girls High School in Northern Ireland presented his project 'Approaches to Embedding Oracy: GCSE Literature and

Democratic Deliberation.' The day closed with a demo-carousel, where each country presented the projects they'd put together in the morning, the building blocks of democratic education. These conceptual sculptures spoke volumes and injected an element of fun and creativity into the sharing of ideas.

The evening dinner at City Hall gave us an opportunity to wave goodbye to Ivor Sutherland, who will be stepping down as the link Trustee for Five Nations after many years. We also welcomed our new link Trustee, Val Gilchrist, who will continue the strong relationship between the network and the Gordon Cook Foundation.

Sunday morning was a slower start, but thankfully we had two rounds of incredible workshops to focus our minds. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend Kari Kivinen's workshop on teaching Misinformation, Malinformation and Disinformation in his school, and

John McCLoskey's workshop on religious diversity in an Irish integrated school. Both gave me totally different perspectives, and gave teachers some amazing ideas to use in their classrooms. Elsewhere, workshops were led by Helen Blachford & Bryden Joy, teachers from England on 'Practical strategies for teaching Media literacy,' Kristina Kaihari from the Finnish Education Agency on 'The specifics of the Finnish curriculum: Human rights, Citizenship and media literacy in the classroom,' Wales country leads Shubnam Aziz & Sue James stepped up to the mark at the last minute to produce an insightful session on combatting racism in schools & society, and Niamh and Martine of Ireland shared a window into 'Tackling Discrimination-Schools of Sanctuary.' The workshop presentations and videos can be found on the Five Nations site.

Finally, country groups led by our committed country leads, came together again to discuss what they'd learned over the course of the weekend. One of the teachers, Kim McCauley from Scotland sums up the conference; "For me, it underlined the importance of supporting teachers across the board to feel like confident, empowered political actors if they are to be successful in creating democratic cultures within schools and developing students' awareness of democracy and politics more widely."

We hope that this year's conference helped encourage teachers' own political literacy and view of themselves as democratic actors with a voice, as well as leaving them with inspiration for their classrooms and schools. We look forward to hosting next year's conference which we begin planning next month Writing this in April, soon after the lockdowns and isolation measures, it is hard to grasp how only a few weeks ago we gathered in such numbers to share our work. Many of the things we learned in Belfast we are still reflecting on now, and we will be for years to come.

For more information visit www.fivenations.net

Review of "Fact or Fake" BBC Bitesize Videos.
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/tags/zr2yscw/fact-or-fake/1

Emily Mitchell

As a teacher it's hard to find videos that you know you can trust, it's hard to find a clip that explains exactly what you want. Well if you are looking for videos about fake news you need look no further. The BBC has created a fantastic set of videos to help guide you and your students through the maze of information that exists about 'fake news'. The videos provide clear and meaningful examples to help young people and adults navigate this complex topic. These videos are empowering, the message is that together and with the right information young people can become savvy to fake news and can learn very quickly how to spot it.

The introductory video gives a clear overview to the different types of 'fake news', and from the word go they use young people and their views. The clips masterfully intersperse experts, telling us the science or the thinking behind a particular aspect of 'fake news'. This I think is so necessary to keep our young people engaged. Our students hear so much about 'fake news' yet these videos clearly define the subject and explore the issues around it in a manageable way.

Another video considers how 'fake news' is spread and explores how the concept feeds into our emotional brain. The language used in the videos is accessible and could be developed and used across the top end of KS2 all the way up to KS5. Another considers practical ways we can spot 'fake news', making an interesting comparison to online dating. We research our dates before we meet them online therefore, we should do the same with our news, don't take what you see as gospel.

A different video considers, I think one of the most relevant topics to young people;

how to be social media smart. It explores how images and videos are so easily exploited online. The consistent use of up to date examples that young people will have seen helps to make this a very real concept. One video uses current journalists who give their top tips in spotting 'fake news' while challenging young people to try and do the investigative side to their role themselves, leading nicely into classroom activity. Additionally there is an excellent video resource for parents exploring how they can support their children when using the internet at home and protect them effectively from 'Fake News'.

I believe that each of these videos could be an excellent stimulus to a lesson and a whole scheme of work could easily be built around them, using each video title as your lesson focus. The BBC Fact or Fake videos have clear links underneath each to the key words contained within and important learning points. These could be used as guidance for where you can take the lesson next and how the learning can progress from the information introduced. I would recommend using the "Pause Points" within each theme to dissect different aspects and make sure that students have understood key messages. One clear overall learning thread discussed is one that we can all use in a world where the media can be deafening; pause and think, is the information fact or fake?

> " These videos are empowering, the message is that together and with the right information young people can become savvy to fake news and can learn very quickly how to spot it. "

Review of Tansy Hoskins (2014) "Stitched Up – Anti Capitalist Book of Fashion" Pluto Press. ISBN: 9780745334561

Emily Mitchell

I have been a dedicated lover of clothes for a LONG time. I have early memories of my mum taking us into Primark and me doing everything I could to make sure that I was not seen as we walked into the shop. Now of course Primark is a household name, very few people are embarrassed to go in aside for ethical reasons of course. As a young adult my dislike for Primark continued, I launched a letter writing campaign to challenge the shop on its exploitation of workers and encouraged it to sign up to the ethical trade initiative. As an adult I have not bought any new clothes in

> **Hoskins expertly guides the reader through the maze of contributing factors to the fashion industry**

a year and have recently launched a making do Instagram account following my attempts to be sustainably conscious.

Why am I telling you all this and not launching straight into my review of this book? Well I feel that I have to justify and give some context for why I chose to read this book and to demonstrate that I am a strong advocate for ethical fashion. Upon reading Stitched Up Tansy Hoskins incredibly detailed and well researched account, I was struck by the strange feeling that perhaps I needed to care even more. I have read extensively

BBC Bitesize

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For student resources to help spot fake news, head to **bbc.co.uk/factorfake**

Review

Emily Mitchell Education Engagement Assistant Houses of Parliament

around the topic of ethical fashion and I found that there were many sections of the book that I already had some knowledge. Hoskins explores the devasting impacts of cotton production and its subsequent draining of the Aral Sea and how this has impacted the surrounding population. Hoskins expertly guides the reader through the maze of contributing factors to the fashion industry. The most fascinating one for me is the role of the media and particularly the online sphere. Upon reading this review it is important to remember that this book was published in 2014 therefore the writing of the book will have occurred sometime before that. Many of the references to the media's role within fashion are now a little outdated and a few concepts have been missed, however this excites me that Hoskins may want to revisit this topic again in a future account. The writer weaves personal accounts and interviews from insiders considering the impact of the media on body image and the media's lack of representation of different groups within society when depicting fashion trends. Due to the timeline of writing the book fails to explore the most recent influence on fashion – social media and the rise of influencers upon the fashion industry. I wonder that if I were to use this as a resource with young people, I would take sections of the chapter on "Fashion Media" and "Buyology" and ask students to extend and consider how they think influencers upon social media have impacted upon how we view clothing, how we buy clothes and the fashion industry as a whole.

The title of this book should have been a give-away as to its political sway however I do not think that I was ready for the level of politicisation I encountered. As a past Politics and Citizenship teacher I kept thinking where is the alternative argument? However, as the title suggests this is not going to be a balanced account. Hoskins doesn't and shouldn't apologise for this, she expertly explores Marxist ideology and applies it to the niche area of fashion. I was concerned, every now and then that the ideological

links were a little tenuous, that said the author uses her expert understanding and deep dislike of neo-liberal economics to explore how the fashion industry is deeply segregated and exploitative of nearly every group upon the planet. I excitedly awaited the alternative to be shared. What would a true communist fashion industry look like? Of course one of the deep rooted problems with Marxist communism is that it has never had the chance to reach its final stages, humans get too caught up in the seizing of power and gaining for themselves therefore we can never find out for real what this state of society would be like. Hoskins unapologetically weaves into the final chapter her idealistic alternatives of how the fashion industry could look if people were placed at the centre and neo liberal economics were no longer the driver.

I could not help but feel a little at sea after reading the book and I don't think this was Hoskins intention at all. I think she aimed to rally and to inform that there can be an alternative, this she does skilfully and in a huge level of detail. Personally I do not think we are going to see an overthrow to capitalism and we consumers of the fashion industry should work within the system doing the small things we can to make it better. Dependent upon your political persuasion some will see this as a positive and others may see this view as pessimistic. I could not escape the niggling feeling I shouldn't love fashion when I read this book and I am sure this was not Hoskins intention. She herself clearly enjoys the industry, perhaps I wanted to hear more of how this impacts on our everyday lives and how Hoskins attempts to be part of the industry but also challenge it with her everyday shopping habits. I would love to read a follow up book exploring her thoughts on how the fashion industry has changed and how she personally responds to this. The book is a deep and theoretical exploration of the fashion industry and one that anyone interested in fashion should read with the thought that this is just part of, and only the start of the story, there is so much more to come.

> " **Hoskins unapologetically weaves into the final chapter her idealistic alternatives of how the fashion industry could look if people were placed at the centre and neo liberal economics were no longer the driver.** "

CND Peace Education (2019) "Critical Mass"
https://cnduk.org/education/free-teaching-resources/

Sera Shortland

CND Peace Education is one of the many reputable organisations that continue to produce remarkable and informative resources that sit alongside school workshops or teacher training sessions, all available for free. Not only is the ability to present a variety of opinions within longer exam questions a crucial element of GCSE mark schemes, the Education Endowment Fund has found that students can gain the equivalent of two months learning through being taught how to express views with purpose and reason, to argue, discuss and explain rather than merely responding to information.

Critical Mass, the latest addition to the CND Peace Education learning collection offers all this and more. The production, use and impact of nuclear weapons are explored around themes of identity, gender and race to show how people are affected in different ways by nuclear weapons and the arms race. The pack includes five narrative rich, factually accurate lessons that can bring a political and experiential dimension to Art, Geography, RE, English and History lessons. The lessons are ready to go without needing much adaptation to suit your context. Lessons are differentiated and offer ideas for further enrichment as well as being accompanied by PowerPoints, all downloadable from the CND Peace Education site. The case studies include; USA and North Korea, India and Pakistan, the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Hibakusha' people of Japan and East Asia. Background information to aid teacher knowledge is supported by sequences of questions to ensure progression in learning and a spiralling of knowledge. Information is presented in a way that allows students to make their own judgments and explore their own values.

> **"** I was transported back to my childhood and filled with memories of marching in protest of nuclear weapons to the air base at Molesworth with my mother **"**

One lesson in the pack is themed around Philosophy for Children and by using the source material and questions provided as thinking starters citizenship classes can provoke deep philosophical inquiry. Students started to question their own understanding of power and authority and started debating whether issues in society are gendered. It was a joy to watch them grapple with their previous mindsets. They enjoyed taking on the role of stakeholders through staging a community meeting and learning about Uranium Mining in Geography. In a GCSE RE lesson on WMDs, students explored the Greenham Common case study. I was transported back to my childhood and filled with memories of marching in protest of nuclear weapons to the air base at Molesworth with my mother. Such memories allowed me to add my own personal story within the framework of this lesson and help students to understand what it was like for the empowerment of women at this time, how gender and identity impact on global issues.

Citizenship educators are experts at handling controversial issues in the classroom and skilled at translating subject matter to increase student's knowledge, expertise and passion. I therefore make no apology for my enthusiasm of Critical Mass from CND Peace Education; my students loved being challenged by some of the very clever ideas and powerful knowledge set out in a clear and accessible manner. Providing opportunities for our young people to collaborate, to tell their story and have a say in matters that concern them is as important as continuing to educate them about the other controversial and complex issues around them.

Student Teacher Case Study

Ben Gerrish

As a new entry to the journal we will have a case study of a Student Teacher in future editions, with this first one on Ben Gerrish. This serves an additional purpose to introduce you all to our new student representative role. This is a new role on council to represent initial teacher education, and will be a 1.5 year post. Election in the Autumn term starting on council in the New Year, completing two meetings and then handing over to the next representative. The ACT council comprises teachers and practitioners who represent the membership and contribute to the association's education programmes and decision-making.

I'm delighted to be joining the Association of Citizenship Teaching as their Student Representative, if not a little daunted. As a trainee Citizenship teacher, my cohort and I regularly study the works of key practitioners and thinkers within the field; Blachford, Moorse, Bhargava, Jerome, Kerr; names I'm more used to Harvard referencing, not working alongside. This is an enormous honour and I'm thrilled to be involved. I just need to remember the session my cohort and I had at university on how to deal with imposter syndrome…

Teaching has long been a dream of mine, but so too was working in human rights and the charity sector. I was always THAT kid at school; reading New Internationalist magazine, listening to Rage Against The Machine, trying to convince friends and classmates to sign petitions or go on marches. I didn't get invited to things much.

After studying Human Rights and Politics at Kingston University, I landed a job at Amnesty International UK, where I stayed for several years, working in a number of roles within fundraising and campaigning. I later moved to the woman's rights organisation The Fawcett Society, and it was during my time there I completed a Master's degree in Culture, Diaspora and Ethnicity, which rekindled my love of education and learning. It was then I decided the time was right to start looking into teaching seriously. At the time of writing, I have just begun my second school placement, with an NQT role lined up for September, and an unyielding belief that this has been the best decision I have ever made (although to this day I have no clue how I navigated the application process).

Citizenship was always going to be my subject specialism. The issues I cared most about as that irksome teenager remain so today. Now a little wiser, more determined and somewhat switched on (older, exasperated, shouts at Question Time), I feel I can play a part in helping to equip young people with the skills and knowledge they need to become active, considered participants within our political landscape; a landscape marred with mountainous mistruths, misleadings and misanthropy. I can also occasionally teach how alliteration can be deployed for dramatic effect.

I'm not sure what I was expecting before I began. I suppose, retrospectively, the usual nerves around behaviour management, but that now seems to pale in comparison to the lesson planning, marking, lesson delivery, resourcing, pedagogical theory, university assignments, mid-term planning, academic reading, lectures, subject studies… ignorance really is bliss. And yet, if I'm being honest, there's not a single part of it I haven't enjoyed. And, just when you have one of those 'what am I doing here?!' moments, something happens that reminds you. Or a particular skill you didn't think you had suddenly erupts, and it's fantastic. Like the time students were entering my classroom as I was writing on the board… Bob had his shirt untucked, Alice had her coat on, Mo was rocking on his chair whilst talking to Sharmeen, who was about to throw a projectile at Emily… not only was it all behaviour managed within seconds, it was done so without even glancing from the board. If you know, you know.

> " I can play a part in helping to equip young people with the skills and knowledge they need to become active, considered participants within our political landscape; a landscape marred with mountainous mistruths, misleadings and misanthropy. "

Spotlight on Council

Dr Verity Currie Assistant Headteacher Enfield Grammar School and ACT Council Member.
ACT Council comprises teachers and practitioners who represent the membership and contribute to ACT's education programmes and decision-making.

When I was at primary school we used to have two playgrounds. The top playground was for the infants and for the girls. The bottom playground was for the boys. I never understood why this was the case. I can remember asking the teachers why and being told that the boys preferred to play football. It didn't make sense to me to keep us separate based on whether we were boys or girls. I spoke to the Headteacher and asked if girls could be allowed in the bottom playground and gave my reasons. He agreed. I guess looking back, that bringing about change, however small, is always important regardless of age.

In the real sense, I suppose my journey with Citizenship started as a TA. I was working as a TA for SEND students and spent my time going from one subject to another. I loved that role. The kids made me laugh every day and each lesson was a new challenge and a new opportunity. One of the lessons I used to support in was Citizenship. I'd never experienced the subject as a student but as a TA it was an eye-opener. I loved the different ways of exploring complex political topics and concepts, and I also realised just how engaged the students were as they were given real opportunities to express their views, to learn new ideas and also to be challenged in a meaningful way.

I didn't originally intend on teacher training. My PhD research at the time was psychoanalytic and it was this that had lead me to take the role of TA. I was on a school trip one day, and the Head of Citizenship was sat next to me on the coach. He said he would like to have me in the department and would I be interested in training. I said "yes" and that as they say, was that.

Fast-forward a couple of years and I had become Head of Department. I loved the role and more importantly the subject and the way in which

students responded to it - giving them the knowledge and means to affect real change is something I feel strongly about. I attended an ACT conference in London and watched as other teachers, academics, and ITT providers all contributed to this great event. They said that they were always looking for new members to join the council. I contacted and put my name forward. Being on council has been one of the most important aspects of my development as a teacher. I've been given more opportunities than I had ever imagined from being involved in pilot projects, to roundtable discussions with the DfE, being part of the advisory group, helping to organise conferences, running seminars, learning to develop my pedagogy and subject knowledge, and most importantly becoming friends with the most amazing group of individuals.

I'm now in my second year of being an Assistant Headteacher and I love it. A couple of weeks ago we had a parents' evening. I was amazed as the majority of parents coming to see me weren't seeing me as the Head of Lower school but rather wanted to talk about their child's progress in Citizenship. They loved the subject- said that they were so glad that they were learning about the topics we were covering and said how it had given them opportunities to have discussions with their children that they hadn't really thought of having before. Educating and empowering our young people has never been more important than it is today and I feel grateful to be able to contribute.

> **Being on council has been one of the most important aspects of my development as a teacher**

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