

Ohio ASPIRE
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How to Become an Informed Voter

Essential Questions	How can I sort through the misinformation and disinformation to become an informed voter?
Outcomes	Students will: ● Define and distinguish misinformation and disinformation. ● Create connections between their own lives and how misinformation spreads. ● Define a claim of fact and distinguish it from an opinion. ● Describe the process of identifying claims and fact-checking. ● Examine the tools that fact-checkers use to identify and interrogate claims. ● Practice the skills of identifying claims and evaluating sources of information necessary to fact-check.
Standards Benchmarks identified in RED are priority benchmarks.	**CG.e.3** Political campaigns, elections and the electoral process **R.4.1.** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (RI/RL.7.1) a. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. (RH.6-8.1) b. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts. (RST.6- 8.1) **R.5.1.** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (RI/RL.9-10.1) a. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. (RH.9-10.1) b. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions. (RST.9-10.1)

	R.4.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories). (RI.8.3) a. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered). (RH.6-8.3) **R.4.12**. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (RI.8.8) **R.5.11**. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid, and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. (RI.9-10.8) **R.5.13.** Compare and contrast findings presented in a text to those from other sources (including their own experiments), noting when the findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts. (RST.9- 10.9) a. Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. (RH.9- 10.9)

TEACHERS: this content was designed for ABE/ASE students. Instructional scaffolding used in this lesson can be beneficial for multilingual students.

Because adult classrooms are multi-level, teachers will want to differentiate this HyperDoc by accommodating the different ways that students learn by using scaffolding strategies and appropriate leveled materials. Teachers will want to vary the instructional activities based on their student's needed skills.

For more information about collaborating and sharing on Google Drive, check out videos 36-45: Google Junior Training series - YouTube.

STUDENTS: Before you begin this lesson



- Go to File > Make a copy
- Change the name to: <your name> Informed Voter
- Begin working in your document
- When completing an activity, make a copy of the document and save with your name and the title of the activity

Be sure to read carefully. The green text is a prompt for reflection or activity.

Engage

Write your response to the question: *How can the spread of false information be harmful to a society?* on the Being an Informed Voter board. Read all the posts and comment to any that interest you.

Watch How false news can spread - Noah Tavlin
(3:41 min)

Sometimes, false information can spread so quickly and widely that it becomes accepted as true.

Read How a Raccoon Became an Aardvark about one of the biggest Wikipedia hoaxes to date.



Why do we sometimes believe what we read or hear, even when we shouldn't? There is a psychological explanation for this.

Read Critical Thinking Skills: Why They Are So Difficult to Acquire.



Factual Accuracy Discussion Post

During this lesson you will be asked to respond to several discussion prompts about how to become an informed voter. Follow the easy instructions found in this short video,
Written RoundTable Parlay Tutorial: For Students! **to get started**.

This discussion on factual accuracy can be found at
https://go.parlayideas.com?invite_code=alnWcpeas.

Share your ideas and respond to at least 2 other posts.

During this lesson you will use the Informed Voter Academic Vocabulary worksheet to find election terms that focus on being an informed voter. **Your task is to give the definition, facts or characteristics, examples/non-examples, and practice using the word in a sentence.** You will be using these words as you complete the following activities.



Watch Why Do Our Brains Love Fake News?
(5:20 min)

Type your answers to the questions below directly in the box:

Does confirmation bias rely more on the reasoning part of your brain or the emotional part? How does this affect a person's decisions?

At the end of the video - why is it important to research the facts of your own side AND the other side to fight confirmation bias?

What is fake (false) news?
Fake news is disinformation or misinformation presented as genuine news, often with the intent of deceiving readers or viewers. It can be created and disseminated through social media, websites, and even traditional media outlets.

How is fake news different from biased news?
Biased news presents facts selectively to support a particular point of view, but it doesn't necessarily contain false information. Fake news, on the other hand, includes deliberately false or misleading information.

What are the forms of misinformation?
These specific aspects of fake news may help to identify it and decrease its influence: clickbait, propaganda, satire/parody, conspiracy theory, misleading headings or information, manipulation, media bias.

Why is fake news a problem?
Fake news can misinform the public, influence political outcomes, and even cause harm. For example, fake health news can lead people to make dangerous choices, thinking they are taking effective precautions.

How can I spot fake news?
Look for multiple credible sources that corroborate the story. Check the author's credentials and the publication date. Be skeptical of sensational headlines and emotionally charged content. Utilize fact-checking websites like Snopes or FactCheck or Politifact.

Source: How to Spot Fake News for Students https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2023/09/how-to-spot-fake-news-for-students.html

Click on Infographic to enlarge



Dig deeper by reading these additional resources on fake news:

- A Citizen's Guide to Fake News 2.0
- Evaluating False News and Misinformation
- Understanding and Spotting False News
- Understanding the Fake News Universe

The ability to tell accurate news from false news is an important skill that you will use your entire life. These guidelines will give you valuable insight into telling facts from fiction online.

Click on the Infographic to enlarge



Source: *How to spot fake news* published by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions < https://guides.library.msstate.edu/c.php?g=672253&p=4733903>

Think about the two infographics that you just reviewed and answer the question below:

How will you spot fake news?



Practice Finding False Information!

Use the following questions with each article below to help you make judgments if the content is real or fake. Then provide additional reasoning.

- Do you find this story credible? What clues are you using to determine your answer?
- Investigate the website and author – what did you learn away from the page?
- Are there credible links in the article? Do they corroborate the information?
- Conduct a search using keywords from the headline and article. What did you learn?
- Based on your research, how accurate was the article?

Read each news article and decide if it is real or fake. Underline your answer under each title.

California Legalizes Composting Human Bodies

REAL OR FAKE

Capital Letters Banned By University Because They Could Upset Students

REAL OR FAKE

The Legend Of Harambe Continues As The Dead Gorilla Received Over 15,000 Votes For President

REAL OR FAKE

Find the source of each story, which can be a big hint. Here are some other tips and suggestions for spotting fake news:

- ☐ Does the article have a lot of flamboyant adjectives? Most real news articles don't.
- ☐ Does the article include any quotes from identified sources? A lot of fake stories don't.
- ☐ If the article quotes a source, do the person's words seem to match their title? Some fake articles have started putting words in the mouths of respected officials.
- ☐ And, of course, check the source. Is it an organization you recognize?

Discuss your choices with one of your classmates. Do you agree or disagree? Provide evidence based on the criteria above.

Explore

Define the term "post-truth". Type your answer in the box below:

Did you know the definition, or did you guess? What did you notice or what experiences do you have that informed your guess?

Read Word of the Year 2016**. Go back to the box above and write the given definition for post-truth that you learned after reading the article.**

Watch PBS NewsHour Classroom lesson: An experiment in misinformation
(3:15 min)

After watching the video, consider these questions: *Is misinformation a problem in day-to-day life? Why or why not? Where does misinformation come from? What causes a false story (piece of misinformation) to go viral? Why?*

Answer the questions below:

What do you already **know** about misinformation?

What do you want to **learn** about misinformation?

"What's the difference between misinformation and disinformation? asks Dr. Sam Wineburg, head of the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG). It's BIG!"

Consider:
"If you come across a tweet that purposely used a fake headline (disinformation) and you sent it to a friend, you would be responsible for spreading incorrect or made-up information (misinformation) and your friend would be misinformed."
Source:
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/lesson-plans/2020/11/lesson-plan-what-is-the-difference-between-misinformation-and-disinformation

Social media tends to be where most mis- and disinformation is spread. *Are there any recent examples you can think of that they have seen or heard online?* **Share your ideas with a partner.**

Use the Misinformation and Disinformation Comparison Chart to compare what you are learning about each of these concepts. Gather your definitions and examples from the following resources.

1. Misinformation vs. Disinformation: Get Informed On The Difference
2. Misinformation and Disinformation: A Guide for Protecting Yourself
3. Disinformation and Misinformation on the Internet

Watch these video clips about why misinformation spreads. Use the note-taking chart to provide the following information about the spread of misinformation.

- News Literacy Skills and Misinformation (3:23 min)
- Misinformation during Public Health Emergencies (2:59 min)
- Fighting the Spread of Misinformation (2:00 min)
- Origins of Misinformation and How It Spreads (5:47 min)

Click the graphic below for the The Spread of Misinformation Note-Taking Chart:

Videos	What factors contribute to the spread of false information?	What challenges do people face when dealing with misinformation?	What examples do you see in your own life?
News Literacy Skills and Misinformation			



Misinformation and Disinformation Discussion Post

Consider what you have learned about misinformation and disinformation as you complete this discussion prompt. Review this short video, Written RoundTable Parlay Tutorial: For Students! if you need help.

This discussion on misinformation and disinformation can be found at https://go.parlayideas.com?invite_code=1AsNp5riT.

Share your ideas and respond to at least 1 other post.

BAD NEWS

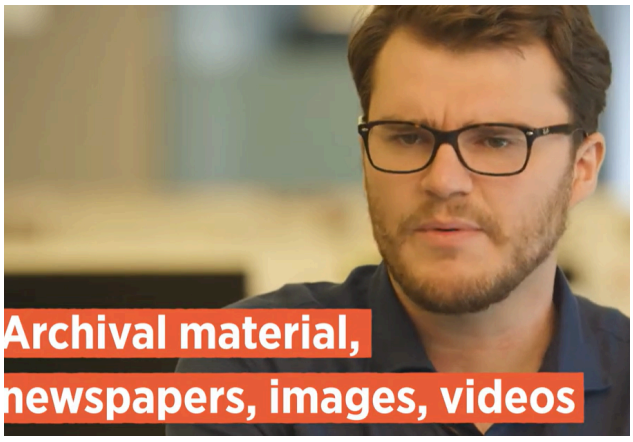
From fake news to chaos! How bad are you? Get as many followers as you can.

Play The Bad News Game This game teaches players how disinformation is designed by putting players in the position of the people who create it. Players try to design social media posts to receive the most "followers" and "credibility" points. The game highlights impersonation, emotion, polarization, conspiracy, discredit, trolling and takes about 30 minutes to play. **Play by yourself or grab a partner!**

Explain

The video below introduces you to a professional fact-checker, who describes the methods and processes he uses to verify information that appears in news stories. The video explains which claims can be fact-checked, and why some sources are more reliable than others.

Click on the image below to watch the video:



(7:04 min)

Type the answers to the questions below in the text box, then share your answers with your teacher and classmates:

How would you define a claim? How does it differ from an opinion?

Describe the fact-checking process from the video. Identify three or four steps used when fact-checking a claim.

What sources do fact-checkers use? Provide three or four examples.

EXAMPLE of identifying a claim:

Identify the Claim Donald Trump took the oath of office on Thursday, Jan. 17, 2017, wearing a *dynamic* blue tie.

Explanation of the Claim - the blue highlights are true claims and the pink highlights are false claims. Words such as "dynamic" are italicized because it is a statement of opinion.

1. Donald Trump did take the oath of office.
2. The oath took place on January 20, 2017.
3. It was a Friday,
4. He was wearing a red tie.

3 out of 4 claims are FALSE!

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f.Retrieved July 30, 2024.

Type the answers to the questions based on the *Superpredator* segment referenced in the How to Fact-Check History video in the text boxes, then share your answers with your teacher and classmates:

What was the original claim presented by the Princeton professor?

Why does Hogan view this as an example of "bad facts"?

What was the impact of this claim?

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f . Retrieved July 30, 2024.

Read

The "superpredator" caught the attention of reporters and politicians, some of whom used it to push for the continued overhaul of a juvenile justice system they considered too lenient. By the end of the 1990s, nearly every state had passed laws to make it easier to try juveniles in adult courts or to increase penalties for violent juvenile crimes. Combating the Myth of the Superpredator (10:08 min) can be viewed in full to provide additional context.

Identify the claim!

Use the highlighter tools (blue for true claims and pink for false claims) to identify the different claims in the sentence below. Be sure to *italicize* opinions.

It [the superpredator idea] energized a movement, as one state after another enacted laws making it possible to try children as young as 13 or 14 as adults.

Check the SUPERPREDATOR ANSWER KEY to see if you agree.

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f . Retrieved July 30, 2024.

Discuss the following questions, based on the *McDonald's Hot Coffee* segment referenced in the How to Fact-Check History video above. Share your answers with your teacher or a classmate.

What important details did news accounts of this story omit?

Why does Hogan view this as an example of a "bad narrative"?

In one sentence, how would you explain the difference between "bad facts" and "bad narratives"?

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f . Retrieved July 30, 2024.

Read

In 1992, 79-year-old Stella Liebeck ordered coffee at a McDonald's drive-through in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She spilled the coffee, was burned, and a year later, sued McDonald's. The jury awarded her $2.9 million dollars. Her complaint sounded frivolous but the facts told another story. The Misunderstood McDonald's Hot Coffee Lawsuit (10 min) can be viewed in full to provide additional context.

Identify the Claim!

Use the highlighter tools (blue for true claims and pink for false claims) to identify the different claims in the sentence below. Be sure to *italicize* statements of opinion.

In 1992, 79-year-old Stella Liebeck ordered coffee at a McDonald's drive-through in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Check the MCDONALDS ANSWER KEY to see if you agree.

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f . Retrieved July 30, 2024.



Practice Fact-Checking

Work with a partner to find one or more current news articles and choose sentences that include claims. Highlight the true claim in blue and the false claim in pink. Be sure to italicize statements of opinion. Include the name of the publication, the date, and the url as the source.

1. **Type sentence, then highlight each claim:**

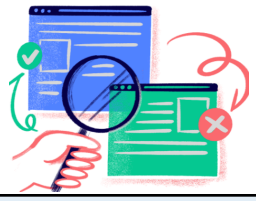
Cite source here:

2. **Type sentence, then highlight each claim:**

Cite source here:

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f .Retrieved July 30, 2024.

Joseph Hogan uses news articles from the time of the event, first-person accounts (in print, audio, or video), photos, videos and accounts by historians to fact check.Now that YOU can identify claims, it is time to fact check them! **Choose one of the claims you found for the exercise above or choose a set of claims from a new source to fact check.**



Write your answers in this column↓

Choose a claim to fact-check		
Analyze the source Consider the questions Hogan posed: • Where is this coming from? • Who is claiming this? • Why might they claim it? • Can I trust this source?		
What types of sources might help you verify or refute this claim? **Refer to the list identified by Hogan above. Where will you start?**		
Can you prove or disprove this claim? Find two different sources that verify or refute the claim. Explain whether they prove or disprove the claim and provide a link to the source.	Source 1: Explain:	Source 2: Explain:

RetroReport. (2024). Intro to Fact Checking https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUSbh7wKA9x6u8j36Bli7g29AUXpJB2_gNfvsDx0Icw/edit#heading=h.p2wa9634jb8f . Retrieved July 30, 2024.



Analyzing Claims Discussion Post

Consider what you have learned about analyzing claims as you complete this discussion prompt. **Review this short video**, Written RoundTable Parlay Tutorial: For Students! **if you need help**.

This discussion on analyzing claims can be found at https://go.parlayideas.com?invite_code=Eev20rrde

Share your ideas and respond to at least 1 other post.

Source: How to Fact-Check History https://retroreport.org/video/how-to-fact-check-history/

Apply

Read

The Internet has been called "The Information Superhighway" and rightly so. It's now the epicenter of breaking news while the free-flowing information has brought the world and the people closer and made us aware of other cultures and traditions. But all this comes with a flipside. The amount of misinformation that is spread on the web is staggering. It is spread mainly by websites, social networks, and email. The Hot Topics for such misinformation are Politics, Government Policies, Religion, and various Scams and Hoaxes.

Some websites have taken up the task of spreading awareness against rumors by presenting evidence and hard facts. Let's look at some of the best sites that help us distinguish between the truth and rumors.

Investigate a story! Have you heard something on social media or on the news that you thought might not be true?



Click on the images to explore fact-checking sources listed below and examine the facts in an article of your choice. Share what you find with your classmates.

FactCheck.org®

FactCheck a nonpartisan, nonprofit "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. They monitor the factual accuracy of what is said by major U.S. political players in the form of TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews and news releases.

Watch Lori Robertson on Combating Misinformation in Campaign 2024 https://www.c-span.org/video/?532947-5/lori-robertson-combating-misinformation-campaign-2024 (35:31 min) to learn more about this fact=checking resource.

POLITIFACT
The Poynter Institute

Fact-checking journalism is the heart of PolitiFact. Their core principles are independence, transparency, fairness, thorough reporting and clear writing. The reason we publish is to give citizens the information they need to govern themselves in a democracy.

Snopes

Snopes is the oldest (since 1994) and largest fact-checking site online, widely regarded by journalists, folklorists, and readers as an invaluable research companion. It has become the definitive Internet reference source for urban legends, folklore, myths, rumors, and misinformation.

Read Snopes Fact Checking Ratings to better understand how they rate the credibility of the information provided.

Open Secrets is a nonpartisan, independent and nonprofit, run by the Center for Responsive Politics, which is the nation's premier research group tracking money in U.S. politics and its effect on elections and public policy. They are by far the best source for discovering how much and where candidates get their money and also track lobbying groups and whom they are funding.

Collaborate

Verification and Geolocation

Now that you have some background in disinformation, time to practice verifying content online. Viral posts on social media usually play off feelings, beliefs or outrage. Let's learn to verify what we see online.

What is verification? Add the definition to your vocabulary list.

Geolocation is a form of verification. To introduce yourself to geolocation, **watch this** Washington Post TikTok Video explaining how reliable and credible journalistic outlets use geolocation to verify videos and photos. For another example of a fast-moving, viral post, **check out this** TikTok Video from the Washington Post.

- What did you notice?
- What surprised you?
- What did you already know or what are you being challenged to think more critically about?



Practice Verification and Geolocation

Work with a partner to complete each verification question at First Draft: Verifying Content, an interactive activity to help you verify online images, places, and accounts. One of the quickest ways to verify content online is using reverse image search and geolocation.

You will need Google Images, Google Maps and TinEye to complete the activities. Just like using Google to search for facts and names, you can also look for whether an image has been published online before.

Find the instructions for "how to find the answer" and how to download images. Here's how to search an image:

a. Click on the image to open it in your browser, then download it.
b. Open Google Images or TinEye
c. Upload the photo and ask it to search
d. Scan the results to see if the image has been published before.

Complete all four activities. **Are you able to verify the images and find their geolocation? If you were duped, do you understand why?**

W**hen you are ready, complete the** Observation Online Challenge **using your verification skills.** This should take you at least 15 minutes to work through the activity.

Work with your partner to find 3-5 questionable images to practice your verification skills. Now check your social media feed!

Source: How to fight truth decay through media literacy
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/lesson-plans/2022/04/lesson-plan-truth-decay

Evaluate

Choose to complete one of the following activities:

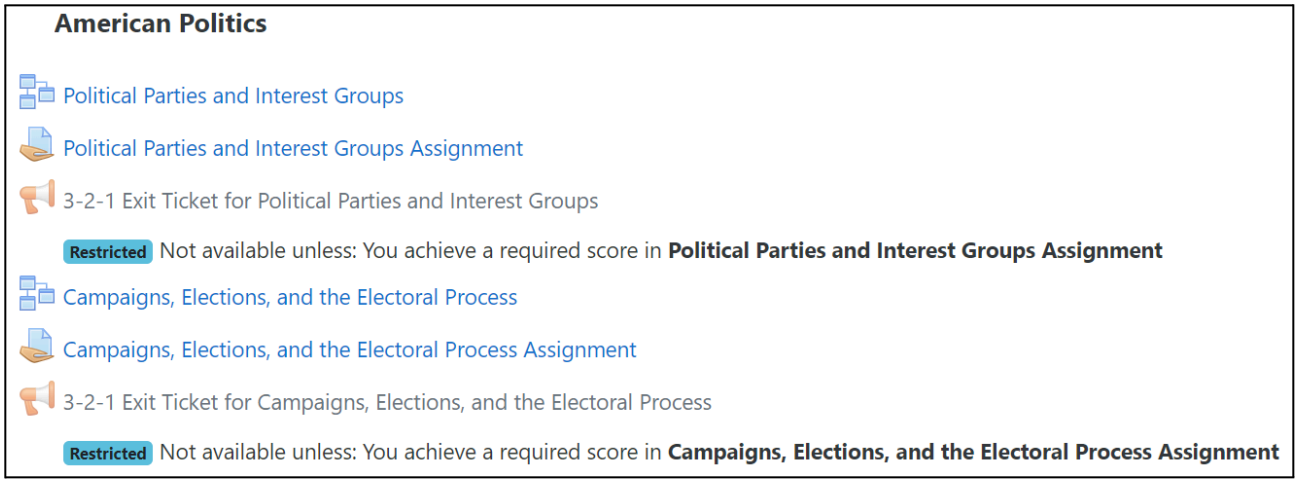
1. **Public Awareness Advertisement -** Using information from the lesson, develop an advertisement that raises awareness about the dangers of spreading misinformation and ways to avoid it. This advertisement can be in the form of a video, flyer, infographic, or billboard. You might want to use Canva - a graphic design platform - for creating your project. Check with your teacher for other tools.

2. **Evaluate a News Article -** Use the ESCAPE criteria to evaluate a current news article that you might question for its credibility.

Share your completed activity with your teacher.

Extend

Visit Ohio Aspire Social Studies Lessons to find virtual DE lessons created by Aspire teachers for students. For more information contact Matt Gambrill mgambrill@literacy.kent.edu.



Visit *Advocate, Organize, Vote*, Issue 62 of The Change Agent from August 2024.

Check out these additional student resources:

- Ohio Election Information https://fairelectionscenter.org/map/ohio/
- Fact Checking Political Candidates https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?22147 (3:59 min)

- The Dangers of Disinformation https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/dangers-disinformation
- 1440 https://join1440.com/
    - **Join a community of curious individuals for FREE to receive to news briefing everyday**

Check out these additional teacher resources:

- Jigsaw Activity https://newslit.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Fact-check-it-NLP-Classroom-Activity-FINAL.pdf
- Escaping Misinformation https://www.civiced.org/civics-inquiry/escaping-misinformation
- How filter bubbles isolate you https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/how-filter-bubbles-isolate-you/1/
    - Try using different search engines and discover how results may vary from Google to Bing to DuckDuckGo.