Lesson Plan  
2. Truth on Social Media

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# Summary

1. Subject(s): Misinformation on Social Media; How to identify misinformation on social media; fact-checking; distinguishing between types of media;
2. Topic or Unit of Study: Social media and fact-checking
3. Grade/Level: 8th grade
4. **Learning Objectives**:
   1. Students will be able to
      1. Spot ads
      2. Distinguish news from opinion
      3. Detect faulty evidence
      4. Identify fact-based and opinion-based statements
      5. Identify misleading or generated profiles.
5. Time Allotment: 30-45 minutes

\*To create this module, our team used outside resources to build a comprehensive course. You will find footnotes were we obtained information from other sources and can further help guide the course. Additionally, there are citations throughout the notes section of the PowerPoint.

# Implementation

## Learning Context

1. Definition of “social media”: “forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos).”
   1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media>
2. Examples of social media
   1. Well-known: Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube
   2. More platforms: Reddit, Byte (new Vine), Tumblr, etc.
   3. Direct Messaging: Discord, GroupMe, etc.
      1. Exclusive groups can be cyberbullying or spread rumors that are untrue
      2. Could also become “echo chambers” for false information
   4. Online meeting places: Omegle.
3. Definition of misinformation.
4. Forms of Misinformation on social media and how misinformation spreads.
   1. What forms can misinformation take?
      1. Ads?
      2. Fake News?
      3. Opinion disguised as fact?
      4. Fake people?
         1. Deepfakes
         2. AI influencers
            1. [Bermuda](https://www.instagram.com/bermudaisbae/?hl=en)
            2. [Miquela](https://www.instagram.com/lilmiquela/)
            3. [Blawko](https://www.instagram.com/blawko22/)
5. So, how do social media accounts and platforms make money/profit?
   1. More clicks leads to more page views, meaning companies will pay the website more to host ads on it.

## Procedure

1. Anticipatory Set
   1. Attention-getting device
   2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zV6CdeVdEI>
      1. Paranormal investigators **Mulder and Scully** look for truth in supernatural phenomena. Students can be just like them, except we will focus on investigating the nature of a different phenomenon - misinformation on social media.
2. Direct Instruction - Presentation
   1. Social media won’t fact check for you (e.g. Facebook won’t fact-check politicians)
      1. How is this story (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_War_of_the_Worlds_(1938_radio_drama)>) reflective of misinformation issues on social media today?
      2. Viral posts
         1. e.g. the dress or yanny/laurel
   2. Questions:
      1. Why/how do you use social media?
      2. What do you look for/like on social media?
3. Guided Practice
   1. Split students into groups or pairs and have them discuss the following: if you were in charge of misinformation on a social media platform, how would you regulate misinformation?
   2. Alternatively, if time allows, there is a fun game that highlights the mindset of someone spreading misinformation online. It is pretty self explanatory.
      1. Link: <https://www.getbadnews.com/droggame_book/junior/#play> (15-20minute)

# Materials & Resources

1. Instructional Materials:
   1. Informable by News Literacy Project
   2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zV6CdeVdEI>
   3. <https://www.rand.org/research/projects/truth-decay/fighting-disinformation/search.html#q=&typeOfTool=Education%2Ftraining>
2. Resources:
   1. [“Generation Like” Frontline](https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-generation/)
   2. Get Bad News Game: <https://getbadnews.com/#next>
   3. Relevant Website: <https://allsidesforschools.org/>
   4. [Future of Truth and Misinformation Online](http://www.elon.edu/docs/e-web/imagining/surveys/2017_survey/Future_of_Info_Environment_Elon_University_Pew_10-18-17.pdf) Pew Research

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