WP3 - POWERPACK TOOLKIT ACTIVITIES

Digital Well-being:
Digital Detectives:
Catch the Fake News!

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1. General Information

Well-being dimension: Digital well-being
Target age group: 10-12 years
Activity format: Interactive game / group activity
Duration: 45-60 minutes
Group size: 4-6 students per group
Transversal approach: Digital literacy, critical thinking, ethics, and citizenship

2. Learning Objectives

- Identify reliable sources and distinguish them from questionable or false sources.
- Analyze information found online using basic verification criteria.
- Develop critical thinking and teamwork skills to evaluate news or data.

3. Materials Needed

- Devices with internet access (tablets, computers, or smartphones)
- Worksheets or notebooks to record findings
- News cards or posts (real and fake) adapted for their age
- Markers, pencils, and paper
- Timer or clock

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4. Activity Steps

Step 1: Introduction (5-10 min):

- Explain what fact-checking is and why it is important.
- Present simple examples of real and fake news.

Step 2: Group formation (5 min):

- Divide the class into teams of 4-6 students.
- Give each group their news cards/posts.

Step 3: Investigation (20-25 min):

- Each group researches their assigned news items:
  - Who published the information?
  - What evidence is provided?
  - Are there reliable sources that confirm it?
- Record conclusions on the worksheet: “True / False / Not sure.”

Step 4: Discussion and presentation (10-15 min):

- Each group presents one news item and explains how they verified its credibility.
- The teacher guides the discussion, corrects mistakes, and reinforces evaluation criteria.

Step 5: Closure (5 min):

- Emphasize the importance of checking information before sharing it online.

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5. Teacher Notes & Tips

- Check that the links and selected news are age-appropriate.
- Encourage students to ask questions and be curious about the information.
- Observe group dynamics: some students may need guidance to collaborate effectively.
- Reinforce safe and responsible use of the internet.

Content of the News for Students
To help students investigate and distinguish real from fake news, use topics relevant to their age and context:

Real News (adapted for their age):

1. "An 11-year-old child creates an invention to clean beaches and wins a local science contest."
2. "A nearby school organizes a plastic-free day to protect the environment."
3. "The government announces the construction of a playground accessible to all children."

Fake News (adapted for their age with absurd elements):

1. "A dinosaur has been discovered living in the city forest."
2. "Eating chocolate every day allows you to fly."
3. "Free Wi-Fi at school can make students super-intelligent in one week."
4. "A 3-year-old cat is the mayor of a town in Europe."

Tips for content:

- Mix believable news with some exaggerated or absurd items to encourage investigation.
- Include images or eye-catching headlines to simulate social media or newspapers.
- Ensure fake news is fun and safe, not alarming or inappropriate.

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6. Reflection prompt for students

- Which strategy helped you the most to identify if news was true or false?
- How did you feel working with your group to solve the information mystery?
- What will you do differently next time you see news online before believing or sharing it?

7. Tips for adaptation for children with special needs

Easier Version (Early Primary / extra support):

- Use simpler, more visual news with clear images and simple language.
- Provide step-by-step examples of how to investigate news.
- Allow an adult or peer to read and record information.
- Reduce the number of news items to analyze.
- Use very specific guiding questions like “Who wrote this?” or “Is it believable?”

Medium Version (Medium Primary / more independence):

- Use more complex news or headlines that appear realistic.
- Encourage students to research independently online with supervision.
- Promote group discussion and reasoning about their conclusions.
- Increase the number of news items or the difficulty of absurd elements in fake news.

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Adaptations for Students with Special Needs:

- Provide simplified versions of news and visual or infographic material.
- Allow extra support from an adult or peer during investigation.
- Allow longer times for investigation and discussion as needed.
- Offer alternative ways to express findings: drawings, diagrams, voice recordings instead of just text.
- Break tasks into clear, predictable steps to support understanding and participation.

8. References (methodological approach)

- Students learn by doing, investigating, and evaluating real and fake news.
- It fosters media literacy, teaching students to identify reliable sources and evidence.
- Teamwork strengthens social skills and the ability to argue and make decisions.
- Presenting the activity as a detective mission increases motivation and engagement.

Connects learning to real-life contexts, promoting digital responsibility and reflection on information they consume and share.

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SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

PowerPackProject

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CONSORTIUM

iNqubator — COORDINATOR

PARTNERS

ESPLAI SOCIAL

BeTrained Academy

JÓZSEF ATTILA ÁLTALÁNOS ISKOLA CSÍKSZEREDA

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EASIER VERSION

REAL NEWS CARDS

Young Inventor Cleans Beaches

An 11-year-old student created a small machine to collect plastic from beaches and won a local science contest.

School Organises Plastic-Free Day

A nearby school held a special day where students avoided using plastic to help protect the environment.

New Accessible Playground

The local government announced the construction of a new playground designed so all children can use it safely.

School Garden Grows First Vegetables

Students harvested the first tomatoes and lettuce from their new school garden.

Local Firefighters Visit the School

Firefighters came to the school to teach children how to stay safe during emergencies.

FAKE NEWS CARDS

Fish Found Living in School Fountain

Students say they saw colorful fish swimming in the school's drinking fountain.

Backpack That Does Your Homework

A new backpack can magically complete all your homework while you sleep.

Dinosaur Found in City Forest

A huge dinosaur was discovered walking in the forest near the city.

Chocolate Makes You Fly

Scientists say that eating chocolate every day allows children to fly for a few minutes.

Cat Becomes Mayor

A 3-year-old cat has been elected mayor of a small town in Europe.

MEDIUM VERSION

REAL NEWS CARDS

Students Plant 100 Trees

A group of students planted 100 trees in a local park to help the environment.

Local Library Opens Gaming Room

The town library opened a new room where children can play educational video games.

Young Swimmer Saves a Dog

A 12-year-old swimmer helped rescue a dog that fell into a river.

Town Starts Bike-to-School Program

The town launched a program encouraging students to bike to school to reduce pollution.

Local Museum Opens Free Science Exhibit

A museum nearby opened a temporary exhibit where children can try hands-on science experiments.

FAKE NEWS CARDS

Robot Teacher Takes Over the Classroom

A school replaced all teachers with robots that never make mistakes.

Moon Turns Green for One Night

Scientists say the Moon will turn bright green next Friday.

Shoes That Make You Run at 100 km/h

A new pair of shoes can make children run faster than a car.

Invisible Ink Messages Found on Street Signs

People claim that secret invisible messages have appeared on street signs around the city.

New App Predicts Your Dreams

A new mobile app says it can predict exactly what you will dream about each night.

VERIFICATION CARDS

Question: Who published this information?

Hint: Is it a real organisation, a person you know, or a random page?

Question: Is there any evidence?

Hint: Photos, videos, or facts that look real and not exaggerated.

Question: Can another reliable source confirm it?

Hint: Check if other websites or pages say the same.

Question: Does the image look real?

Hint: Check if it seems edited or strange.

Question: Is the headline exaggerated?

Hint: Big, shocking claims are often fake.

Question: When was it published?

Hint: Old or unclear dates can be a warning sign.

RESULTS CARDS

TRUE

The information is real and confirmed.

FALSE

The information is fake or invented.

NOT SURE

More information is needed to decide.

PROBABLY TRUE

It seems real, but needs one more check.

PROBABLY FALSE

It looks fake, but we need more proof.

NEEDS MORE EVIDENCE

We cannot decide yet.

ADAPTED NEWS CARDS

REAL NEWS CARDS

Kid Helps Clean Beaches

A child made a small machine to pick up plastic from the beach.

No-Plastic Day at School

A school had a day without plastic to help the planet.

New Playground for Everyone

A new playground will be built so all children can play.

Kids Plant Trees

Students planted many trees in a park.

New Game Room

The library has a new room with learning games.

Child Saves Dog

A 12-year-old helped a dog in the river.

Kids Help Clean the Park

Children helped clean a park by picking up trash and leaves.

School Starts a Reading Corner

The school made a small reading corner where kids can sit and read quietly.

New Ramp at the Sports Center

A new ramp was built so all children can enter the sports center easily.

Class Donates Toys

Students collected toys to give to children who need them.

FAKE NEWS CARDS

Dinosaur in the Forest

A dinosaur was seen in the city forest.

Chocolate Makes You Fly

Eating chocolate makes you fly.

Cat Is the Mayor

A cat is the mayor of a town.

Robot Teachers

Robots teach all the classes now.

Green Moon

The Moon will be green next week.

Super-Fast Shoes

Shoes that make you run faster than a car.

Flying Backpack

A backpack can make you fly if you jump very high.

Talking Trees

Trees in the park can talk to people at night.

Magic Pencil

A pencil that writes homework by itself when you sleep.

Invisible Pets

A new pet shop sells invisible animals you can only hear.

CHECK CARD

Who wrote this? A person? A school? A strange page?

Is it believable? Does it sound real or too crazy?

Can we check it? Look it up online or ask an adult.

Is the picture strange? Does it look fake?

Is the title too crazy? Does it sound impossible?

Is the news old? Check the date.