

## Title: Trustworthy Online Sources - Using A Search Engine

Primary age range: Y3/4

Secondary age range: Y5/6

Link to subjects: Literacy, Computing/IT

Learning Objectives:

- To **identify** and **understand** clues that appear on online sources of information that may help students determine the credibility of a source
- To **train** students in one of the elements of **lateral reading**

Lesson Outcomes:

- Students will undertake research on a topic of their own choosing and present a trustworthy and untrustworthy source they find

Key Competencies:

**KC2:** The ideas of science and scholarship (learning)

**KC5:** How to function in variable contexts and environments

**KC8:** Interpersonal communication

**KC10:** How to confront themselves with challenges

Note:

This activity focuses on online sources of information. However, the same process can be used for physical sources of information as well, at which point students can utilise the internet to verify the credibility of a physical source of information. Depending on time available, this lesson may be conducted in parts or as a whole lesson in class.

There are guidance notes in the PowerPoint to assist teachers in facilitating discussions.

Activity Outline:

1. Start the lesson by asking students, "How do you research information?". Ask them to take you through their process step by step and note down their process on the board. This will enable teachers to get a gauge of how far students are aware of lateral reading. Things to note: Do they say they usually read the first piece of information that comes up on their searches? Do any of them talk about verifying sources? How do they decide whether or not to believe a piece of information?

2. Continue the lesson with a short lecture using the PowerPoint, “Trustworthy Sources – Online Sources” as an aid. The slides are purposefully animated so that teachers may be able to get students to discursively answer the initial questions on each slide before revealing the answers. There are guidance notes on the slides featuring key discussion points for teachers.
3. After finishing the short lecture, brainstorm with the class a number of topical issues. Recommendation: If accessible, use Jamboard or Mural to collate students’ responses. If not, feel free to Mind Map responses on the board. Encourage students to think of topics that have local relevance as well. That way, they can also engage with media from their locality. Possible topics:
  - Climate change
  - Gun control
  - Abortion rights
  - Animal testing
  - Fast fashion industry
  - Housing crisis
  - Trade unions
  - Free Education
  - Vaccinations
4. Divide students into groups of 3-5. Ask each group to choose one of the topics they have put forward. The task is to now find two pieces of information discussing the selected topic. These may be in the form of videos, print/digital articles, infographics, etc. Students should present one from a source they deem to be trustworthy and another which they deem to be untrustworthy.
5. At teacher’s discretion, give them some time to find these articles (a week or two). Groups will then come back to class presenting the articles they have found.
6. Guidance for presentation:
  - *Summary of information*
  - *Why do you trust this source of information?*
  - *Why do you not trust this source of information?*
  - *Was it hard to decide whether or not to trust a source?*

\*For the presentation, encourage students to utilise media to create presentation aids. This can be in any form digital/non-digital depending on access.
6. Conclude by discussing what students think are the most important considerations in evaluating the credibility of a source.

Materials Needed:

PowerPoint

Internet Access

Supporting Resources:

On Wikipedia:

[Can we trust Wikipedia? 1.4 billion people can't be wrong](#)

[Students are told not to use Wikipedia for research. But it's a trustworthy source](#)

[Using Wikipedia: Crash Course Navigating Digital Information](#)

Other useful lessons on trustworthy sources:

[Webpage Comparison Exercise](#)