



Civic literacy: The Media and Me

Learning intentions

This activity focuses on developing students' media literacy and critical thinking skills.

To be civically engaged, students need to have an awareness of current events, from local issues to national and global challenges. Having the skills to be able to gather reliable information and know how to fact check sources is critical.

Activity overview

This activity encourages students to think critically about the information they consume and co-construct a class toolkit for evaluating the credibility of sources. By exploring various media formats and discussing the importance of fact-checking and asking questions, students will become better-informed and more discerning consumers of media.

Materials

- Various media sources (such as news articles, videos, social media posts)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers.

Activity outline

- 1 Invite students to brainstorm different ways they get information about what's happening in their school, community, state and world. Write their responses on a whiteboard or paper.
- 2 Discuss and list the advantages and disadvantages of different media sources, such as newspapers, television, radio, family, friends and the internet.
- 3 Share a news story with students: for example, an item from the ABC's Behind the News program, a print article from a local newspaper, or a Squiz Kids podcast episode. This activity can be completed as a whole class or in small groups.
- 4 Invite students to share questions they would ask of the media source, such as:
 - Who wrote this piece of media and why did they create it?
 - Is this media fact or opinion?
 - Where have the facts and data been sourced from?
 - Are there important voices missing from the piece of media?
 - How does the media make you feel?
- 5 Workshop these questions and compile a list which can support students during their inquiry.

Extension activity

Provide students with an opportunity to work in small groups to consolidate their media literacy skills. Give them a new piece of media to review and check against the questions they co-designed for their toolkit.

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