MODULE 6: APPLY THIS KNOWLEDGE TO YOUR AREA

MODULE OVERVIEW

This module is designed to introduce adolescents aged 12-17 to the concepts of **disinformation** and **fake news,** through an understanding of information disorders. It aims to equip them with the critical thinking skills needed to identify and evaluate information, and to promote responsible digital citizenship.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this module students will be able to:

◆ Implement social media in the classroom from the right perspective

◆ Use social media in the classroom in a safely and effectively.

◆ Introduce the use of social media to counter disinformation no matter what your area or subject is

◆ Create a classroom PLE that will help you to teach your students all the module learning materials.

STRUCTURE OF THE MODULE

◆ 6.1: How can we make social media work for us in the classroom?

◆ 6.2: Implementing a personal learning environment using social media

◆ 6.3: Using our PLE in social media to combat disinformation

◆ 6.4: Projects and activities to inspire you

6.1: HOW CAN WE MAKE SOCIAL MEDIA WORK FOR US IN THE CLASSROOM?

Until very recently, it would have seemed inconceivable that a tweet or an Instagram post could serve as a teaching tool. Nevertheless, in the past few years, the incorporation of social media in education has emerged as a vital resource for learning, particularly for adolescents.

The impact of social media on education is irrefutable. It has not only changed how students interact with one another and their teachers but has also created new avenues for collaborative learning, knowledge exchange, and the enhancement of digital skills. However, it's important to remember that there are some challenges involved with using it, so it is essential to understand how we can maximize its benefits while minimizing its disadvantages.

The utilization of social media in educational settings encompasses the ways in which students engage with content as well as the methods educators employ to create and disseminate their instructional resources. Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) offer the most effective methodological approach for integrating social media in the classroom. PLEs provide a structured framework that maximizes the benefits of social media while mitigating its potential risks. Let´s see how it can be used successfully in the classroom.

6.2. IMPLEMENTING A PERSONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Implementing a Personal Learning Environment (PLE) using social media in the classroom can create an engaging and effective learning scenario to achieve the objective of using social media to counter disinformation (remember that you have all the information about a PLE in the Module 2). It is important to note that a PLE could be created within the integration of several digital tools and applications that can be brought together in a unique application such as Symbaloo (more info: Six ways to use Symbaloo in your classroom). However, in this case we will focus on how to create a PLE with social media platforms.

Here's how teachers can manage this approach while maintaining a dedicated class social media account:

Setting up the PLE

◆ Choose a platform: Select a social media platform that best suits your educational goals. It is recommended to use the social platforms most used by your students, so that they can discover good practices in addition to their usual informal use. As far as we know, Instagram and TikTok are the most used.

◆ Create a class account: Set up a dedicated class account, rather than allowing students to use personal profiles. This ensures a controlled environment and protects student privacy.

◆◆ Start creating the PLE by following profiles that are of interest to your students. Remember that the value of the PLE you create lies in the value of the profiles you follow that will support your students. By following profiles with high pedagogical value, the timeline of the platform will be filled with fascinating content for your students' learning.
Here are some interesting accounts to follow when we start using Instagram to create our PLE:
General accounts: @nasa; @noaafisheries; @natgeo; @amnh; @tech
Teachers accounts: @mathgiraffe; @headoverheelsforteaching; @iteachalgebra; @madlylearning; @social_studies_success

◆◆ Establish clear guidelines: Develop and communicate rules for social media use in the classroom. For example:
- Only use the class account during designated times
- All posts must be related to course content
- Respect others' opinions and maintain a positive tone
- Establish shifts of students to be in charge of the account, evaluating their collaboration with a specific rubric (language, synthesis, visual elements used, etc.) in this way they will develop digital competences.

Implementing the PLE:

Content Creation and Sharing: Encourage students to create and share content related to your subject:
- Post summaries of key concepts learned in class.
- Share relevant articles, videos, or resources they find.
- Create and share infographics or visual representations of course material.
- Ask your students to create digital material (pictures, videos, posters, etc.) to be uploaded to the class account as a learning outcome. Making their work visible beyond the classroom walls will also be a motivating element.

Collaboration and Discussion: Use the social media platform to facilitate collaboration:
- Create discussion threads on course topics.
- Encourage students to comment on and engage with each other's posts.
- Use hashtags to organize discussions around specific themes or units.
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Research and Information Gathering: Teach students to use social media as a research tool:
- Follow relevant experts, organizations, or news sources.
- Use the platform's search function to find information on course-related topics or activities.
- Evaluate the credibility of sources found on social media.

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◆◆ Rotate responsibilities: Assign students or committees to manage different aspects of the class account, gradually releasing responsibility as they become more proficient.

◆◆ Monitor activity: Regularly review contributions and interactions to ensure that they are in line with educational goals and guidelines. You can set up a co-evaluation process in which students evaluate themselves as they follow instructions for good practice.

◆◆ Integrate with formal learning: Use the PLE to complement and extend classroom activities. For example, post homework reminders or share additional resources related to in-class discussions.

◆◆ Encourage reflection: Prompt students to reflect on how the PLE is impacting their learning process and digital literacy skills.

◆◆ Model appropriate use: Demonstrate how to use social media effectively for learning by actively participating in the class account

6.3. USING OUR PLE IN SOCIAL MEDIA TO COMBAT DISINFORMATION

Implementing a Personal Learning Environment (PLE) in social media to combat disinformation and fake news is a crucial skill, given the high percentage of students who already use social media. This situation makes it our responsibility as educators to integrate these issues into the classroom. Here's how teachers can implement this approach effectively:

Developing Critical Thinking Skills: Teach students to critically evaluate information they encounter on social media related to your subject:
- Source Verification: Encourage students to check the credibility of sources by examining author credentials, publication date, and website reputation1.
- Cross-referencing: Instruct students to verify information across multiple reliable sources before accepting it as fact2.
- Fact-checking: Introduce students to reputable fact-checking websites and teach them how to use these tools effectively.

Curating Reliable Information Sources: Guide students in creating a curated list of trustworthy sources on social media related to your subject or area:
- Follow reputable news organizations, academic institutions, and verified experts in relevant fields.
- Create Instagram lists focused on specific topics to streamline access to quality information.
- Use social bookmarking tools to save and organize credible sources for easy reference.

Collaborative Fact-Checking: Encourage students to work together in identifying and debunking misinformation:
- Create a class hashtag for sharing and discussing potentially false information found online.
- Assign group projects where students collaboratively investigate viral social media claims and present their findings.
- Use collaborative tools like shared documents or wikis to compile a class database of debunked myths and reliable sources.
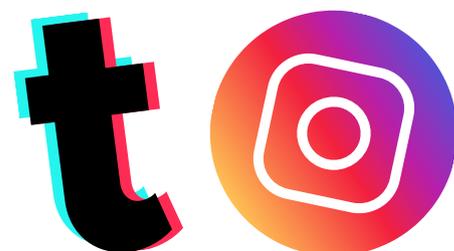
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Instagram Activities

- Fact-Check Carousel Posts: Students create multi-slide carousel posts debunking viral claims. Each slide can focus on a different aspect of the fact-checking process, such as source verification, cross-referencing, and providing accurate information. Use this source: https://newslit.org/educators/resources/fact-check-it/
- "Is This Legit?" Stories: Encourage students to use Instagram's interactive story features (polls, quizzes) to engage followers in critically evaluating viral posts. They can present a claim and ask followers to vote on its authenticity before revealing the fact-check. Use this source: https://www.poynter.org/mediawise/ifcd-2024/teach-with-fact-checking-lesson-plans/
- IGTV Explainer Videos: Students produce longer-form videos explaining complex topics or debunking persistent myths, using Instagram's IGTV feature to provide in-depth analysis. Use this source: https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/lesson-plans/2023/01/lesson-plan-how-to-fact-check-the-fact-pages-on-instagram

TikTok Activities

- Kinetic Typography Videos: Students create engaging videos describing the five types of misinformation using kinetic typography, a technique that combines motion and text to convey information visually. Use this source: https://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/may22/Winnick--Teaching-TikTok-to-Help-Counter-Misinformation.shtml
- "Debunk in 60 Seconds" Challenge: Inspired by TikTok's short-form content, students create concise videos fact-checking claims in under a minute, using catchy music and transitions to maintain viewer interest. Use this source: https://home.edweb.net/webinar/newsliteracy20241114/
- Duet Fact-Checks: Utilize TikTok's duet feature to directly respond to and fact-check viral misinformation. Students can create side-by-side videos providing correct information or context. Use this source: https://newslit.org/updates/teach-with-tiktok-help-students-stick-to-the-facts-on-social-media/
- Trending Sound Fact-Checks: Students repurpose popular TikTok sounds or trends to create fact-checking content, making it more likely to appear on users' For You pages. Use this source: https://home.edweb.net/webinar/newsliteracy20241114/
- Behind-the-Scenes Fact-Checking: Students document their fact-checking process, showing how they use tools like reverse image search or source verification, to educate viewers on digital literacy skills. Use this source: https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/lesson-plans/2024/03/how2internet-how-to-produce-a-fact-check-video

Projects to inspire you or your students

Media Wise
https://www.poynter.org/mediawise/

Tik Tok Media Wise:
https://www.tiktok.com/@mediawise

Instagram Media Wise:
https://www.instagram.com/mediawise/?hl=es

X Media Wise: https://x.com/mediawise

Student Reporting Lab
https://studentreportinglabs.org/about/

Tik Tok Student Reporting Lab:
https://www.tiktok.com/@reportinglabs

Instagram Student Reporting Lab:
https://www.instagram.com/studentreportinglabs/?hl=en

X Student Reporting Lab: https://x.com/ReportingLabs
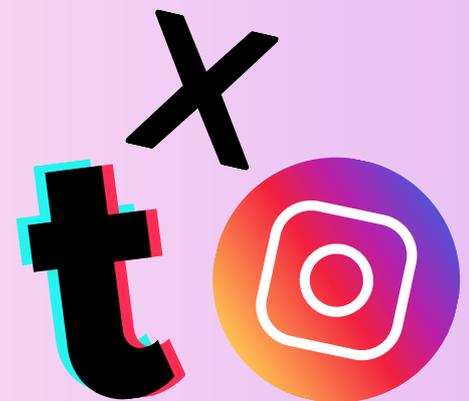
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