

## Can you spot digital lies?



### Speaking

1 Put the words in a-c in the correct order to make a sentence.

Example: *information bad all of us impacts.*

*bad information impacts all of us.*

a. finances threaten our scams all.

\_\_\_\_\_

b. political democracy our misinformation weakens.

\_\_\_\_\_

c. health lives all our threatens misinformation.

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Discuss these questions in pairs:

- Do you agree or disagree with these statements? Why/why not?
- Have you ever believed something online and then found out it is fake?



Photo by Jorge Franganillo on Unplash



### Vocabulary

3 Match the word in bold (1-7) with its correct definition (a-g).

#### Word

1 Journalists should apply a lot of **scrutiny** to their writing before they publish an article.

**b** (example)

2 Some trolls try to **meddle** in political campaigns and elections to change the result.

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3 People can be **overwhelmed** by the amount of information they have. \_\_\_

4 Some people are more **susceptible** to bad news than others. \_\_\_

5 The FBI **tipped off** Facebook about the fake account. \_\_\_

6 There are lots of ways to **verify** information online. \_\_\_

7 Social media sites need to **tackle** the spread of misinformation on their platforms. \_\_\_

#### Definition

a To try to (secretly) influence people and change things.

**b** Careful examination of something to get information about it.

c To warn somebody about something, often so they can take action.

d To prove something is true.

e Easily influenced or harmed by something.

f To try to deal with a problem.

g Feel something is too much and you can't handle the situation.

4 You are going to watch a video called 'can you spot digital lies?' Use the space below to write down any words you think you might hear in the video related to the topic.

 **Watching**

**5 Watch the video and tick off any words from exercise 4 that you hear or see.**

**6 Read statements a-f below. Watch the video again and write if the statements are (T), false (F) or not mentioned (NM). If they are false, write down why under the statement.**

*Example: Laura Walters wrote her story about Chinese influence on the 2016 US presidential elections. F – she wrote her story about Chinese influence on New Zealand.*

a The news organisation which contacted Laura was part of the same troll farm that meddled in the 2016 US presidential elections.

b Facebook is the biggest spreader of misinformation.

c You cannot simply verify information online by typing “fact check” + “something you think is misinformation” into a search engine\*.

d Some generations are more susceptible to bad information or misinformation than others.

e “Deepfakes” are an old form of technology.

f Professor Harith Alani is hopeful that the spread of misinformation can potentially be stopped.

**Glossary**

**A troll:** a person who leaves intentionally mean messages on the internet.

**A troll farm:** an organised group of ‘trolls’ (see above).

**A deepfake:** a video or sound recording that replaces someone’s face and/or voice and looks real.

**Misinformation:** wrong information.

**Acronyms**

**AI** = artificial Intelligence

**VFX** = visual effects

\*Have you heard of the search engine Ecosia? If not, try it out because it “plants trees while you search the web”: <https://www.ecosia.org/>

**Thinking**

**7 What’s your reaction to the video? Write down three words to describe how you feel after watching it.**

*Example: overwhelmed.*


**Speaking**

**8 Share and compare your words from 7 with your partner. Explain why you chose them.**

*Example: I feel a bit overwhelmed because I thought I was good at spotting digital lies but now I’m not so sure...*

**9 Has your opinion on the four statements in exercise 1 changed after watching the video? In pairs, discuss why or why not.**

**Reflection**

**Take a few minutes to think about questions 1-3 below. Reflecting on these things can help your learning.**

1 What is one thing you will take away from this lesson?

2 Which of these activities did/didn’t you like? Why?

3 What are two or three words you would like to learn and try to actively use in your English?

**Group Project**

Design a poster to warn people about the issues covered in the video. Think about:

- Your target audience
- Key message
- Where the poster will go (print or digital?)