Can you spot digital lies? Teacher's Notes

Level (L), time (T), age (A)	Materials	Aims
L: B2+ T: 60 – 90 mins A: Adults	Video: https://www.bbc.co.uk/ideas/videos/can-you-spot-digital-lies/p09hbzz6 Optional: 'Fact or Fake News Quiz 2023' https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z3cxs82.	• To practice **vocabulary** related to fake news so that students can talk about this topic. • To practice **listening** for details so that students feel more confident listening in 'real life'. • To encourage students to **critically think** about and reflect on fake news so that they are (more) aware of this issue.

🗨 Warmer ideas

Option 1: You might want to start the lesson by showing students a mixture of real and fake videos/images and they have to decide if they are real or fake. Alternatively, you could use a pre-made quiz online, such as 'The Fact or Fake News Quiz 2023' from BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z3cxs82.

Option 2: You could also start by having students tell a story. Give the following instructions (written or verbally):

> You are going to tell a short story (2-3 mins). It can be a true story or a lie. The story should be about either (1) a birthday party, (2) a disaster on holiday or (3) a funny story about a friend. You should include when it happened, where you were, who was there, what happened.

Tell students they have few minutes to think about their story. They can make notes if they want to. Put students into pairs; the youngest person starts by telling their story to their partner. They should NOT say if it is true or a lie. Their partner asks them questions and finally has to decide if they think the story is true or fake. Monitor timings and warn students when they only have a few minutes left of their turn. Swap roles and repeat. This is a slightly longer warmer but works well as an introduction to get students thinking about if they believe everything they hear. Alternatively, you could do this activity at the end of this worksheet/lesson or as a longer speaking activity (with more scaffolding) in the next lesson.

🗨 Speaking

1 Start by showing the students the video until 00:37 without subtitles. After this, hand out the worksheet and tell them to complete exercise 1. Tell students to then compare their answers in pairs before watching

the same clip again for them to check their answers. Answers:

> a **Scams threaten all our finances.**
> b **Political misinformation weakens* our democracy.**
> c **Health misinformation threatens all our lives.**
>
> *The video says 'undermines'. Tell students this or ask them to listen for the word used in the video when they watch it again.

2 Tell students to do exercise two in pairs/groups. You could ask them to think of at least two reasons why they agree or disagree. Encourage students to share their answers to the second question with the class.

➕ Extension activity: fast finishers

Get fast finishers to research a famous or recent fake news stories which lots of people believed and write a few sentences about it e.g. what was the fake news, how was it found out etc.

Potential answers for exercise 3:

> **1**: I disagree with statement a because I think you can protect your finances online if you use strong passwords / I agree with statement b to a certain extent because political misinformation has already had an impact on elections in many countries.
>
> **2**: I don't think I've ever believed something that was fake news. /
> Actually, yes. I once saw a video about … and believed it/shared it to later be told/find out that it is fake – it was quite embarrassing and a bit of a shock.

🔤 Vocabulary

3 Tell students they have two to three minutes for exercise 3. Then ask them to compare their answers in pairs before going through the answers as a class.

➕ Extension activity: fast finishers

Ask fast finishers to expand the words in bold e.g. what are the nouns/adjectives/verbs for the words in exercise 3?

Answers to exercise 3:

> 2**a**   3**g**   4**e**   5**c**   6**d**   7**f**
> Expansion:
> 1 verb = to scrutinise. 2 noun = a meddler. 3 adj = overwhelming. 6 noun = verification. 7 noun = a tackle (point out the more common use of 'tackle' as a noun is in football).

➕ Extension activity: fast finishers

After going through the answers, ask students their opinion on sentences 1, 3, 4 and 7. They can do this in pairs/groups or as a class. Alternatively, they could write down their answers to be collected and marked, either in class or as homework.

4 Set a strict time limit of two minutes for exercise 4. Some students might just write down the words from exercises 1 and 3 or the glossary on the next page. That's ok; it's extra practice of those words. If you don't want them to do this, tell them. You could give them a min/max number of words they have to write down e.g. minimum 8, maximum 12.

▷ Watching

5 Tell students to read exercise 5 before watching and check they have understood the task. Watch the whole video from the beginning, with or without subtitles (your/your students' choice).

➕ Optional game: To encourage students to actively listen/watch and complete exercise 5, tell them the person who ticks off the most words is the winner. Afterwards, you could ask students to quickly compare their words and think about why their words were/weren't mentioned.

6 Tell students they are going to watch the video again and listen for specific information. Give them a few minutes to read statements a-f. Encourage students to answer the questions now based on the first watch, if they can, and check their answers while they watch again. After watching, tell students to compare their answers with their partner and then go through the answers as a class.

Answers:

> a **T**
> b **NM**
> c **F – you can simply verify information online by…**
> d **NM**
> e **F – deepfakes* is a completely new form of technology**
> f **T**
> * Deepfakes (plural) normally takes a plural verb but in the video it is used with a singular verb.

🧠 Thinking

7 Set a time limit e.g. two minutes to complete exercise 7. Encourage students to use an online learner's dictionary if they need help with this exercise.

Potential answers:

> **curious / scared / worried / afraid / amazed**

🗣 Speaking

8 Put students into new pairs/groups. Tell them to take it in turns to do exercise 8. If students don't feel comfortable talking about their reactions with others, ask them to write their answers down instead. Encourage students to use the vocabulary from exercises 1, 3, 4 and 6 in their answers.

Potential answers:

> I'm **curious** to learn more about deepfakes because I have never heard of them before.
> I'm a bit **worried** about believing fake news and how it's used to meddle in politics.
> I'm **amazed** at how believable deepfakes can be and that we can verify information online like they said in the video.

9 When pairs/groups have finished exercise 8, they should move directly on to exercise 9. Monitor and specifically focus on writing down students' use of the vocab from this worksheet. You could explain to students you are listening out for this. To go one step

further, you could tell students to write down any words their partner says from the worksheet/video. Set a time-limit for exercises 8 and 9 e.g. five minutes each, if you want to.

✚ Extension activity: fast finishers
Fast finishers can choose three (new) words from the worksheet and write a sentence/sentences using them.

💭 Reflection
Point out the reflection task to students and leave a few minutes at the end of class for students to complete it. You could suggest they write their answers down e.g. somewhere on the worksheet/their notes. If there's not time to do this at the end of the lesson, suggest that students take a few minutes to do this activity at home. You could start the next class by asking them what their takeaway from last lesson was or what words they wanted to remember/use. You could also ask for their feedback to question two to see which activities they liked/didn't like and why.

👥 Group project
This is an extra activity which can be started at the end of this lesson (if there is time), set as a homework task or a whole task which can be done in the next lesson. If you have the time/possibility, you could get students to design and make a video to warn people about the issues covered in the video they watched in class, rather than a poster. This would need to be further scaffolded. Read more on implementing video projects in class here: https://sandymillin.wordpress.com/2023/04/17/maw sig-pce-2023-behind-the-scenes-creative-materials-for-learner-generated-digital-media-amanda-stroia/

⬚ Extra/homework activities
Tell students to research 'BBC verify' and find out what it is: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65650822 (Last accessed 17.07.23).

Do the 'AI Quiz: Can you tell which person is real?' with students and discuss their reactions/opinions: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66220781 (Last accessed 17.07.23).

This is comprehensive, interactive article about 'deepfakes'. It's from 2019 but still relevant and informative. You could ask students to read it and summarise different sections: https://www.theguardian.com/technology/ng-interactive/2019/jun/22/the-rise-of-the-deepfake-and-the-threat-to-democracy (Last accessed 17.07.23).

💭 Quick teacher reflection
As busy teachers, we rarely get the time to reflect on how lessons went. Take a few minutes to think about the following:

1 What went well in the lesson? Why?
2 What didn't go so well in the lesson? Why?
3 What would you do differently if you taught this lesson again? Why?
4 Any other thoughts...

Use the space below to make your notes:

Transcript of video 'Can you spot digital lies?' Link to video: https://www.bbc.co.uk/ideas/videos/can-you-spot-digital-lies-p09hbzz6 (Last accessed 17.07.23)

BEN WEICH; Full Fact, independent fact-checking organisation: Bad information impacts all of us. Scams threaten all of our finances. Political misinformation undermines our democracy. When it comes to the coronavirus pandemic, health misinformation threatens all of our lives. PROFESSOR HARITH ALANI; Knowledge Media Institute, The Open University: In human history, it has never been so easy to spread misinformation to millions of people so rapidly. LAURA WALTERS; Journalist: My name is Laura Walters, I'm a journalist, and I have been a victim of misinformation. CAPTION: IS EVERYTHING YOU SHARE ONLINE 100% ACCURATE? ARE YOU SURE? CAPTION: CAN YOU SPOT DIGITAL LIES? MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE OPEN UNIVERSITY LAURA WALTERS: I got a cold call from a new website looking to publish news content. Everything seemed very normal, like any other freelance commission. **I wrote the story on Chinese influence in New Zealand**, and then I literally thought nothing more of it. And about three or four months later, I got a call. Turns out that the FBI had actually tipped off Facebook. **This news organisation wasn't a news organisation at all. It was the same troll farm that meddled in the 2016 US presidential elections**. From there it's been a deep dive into learning about how our networks are infiltrated to try and spread misinformation. I could have completely avoided this situation if I had applied the scrutiny in the same way that I do when I'm investigating a story myself. If I can show how it happened to me, maybe I can help other people avoid it. It's been a real wild experience for me. BEN WEICH: It's important to remind people of the dangers of information and the new ways that people can share information that present risks to all of us, but also the internet as a means of sharing good information. Yes, we're all confronted with more information than ever which makes it hard to tell fact from fiction, but at the same time, fact-checkers like us can use the internet and the reach that we have to correct the record quicker than we ever could, and directly to people. CAPTION: FACT CHECK PROF. HARITH ALANI: **You can verify a story in many cases by simply typing in the claim that you're not very sure of and putting "fact check" next to it,** for example, on your preferred search engine. There's a very good chance that the top result will actually take you to one of the fact checking organisations' website that has already looked into that claim. Fact checking organisations have looked into well over 100,000 claims just when the pandemic started. Within one year, they have looked at over 10,000 claims only related to the pandemic. There were quite a few stories circulating that were false, that were offering very simple cures to the disease, such as if you inhale steam. LAURA WALTERS: And that it would cure coronavirus just seemed completely illogical. But when people are just overwhelmed by the amount of information and they're scared and they're anxious, it shows that they can believe things. CAPTION: MINDSET IF YOU'RE FEELING ANXIOUS ALREADY, DON'T CONSUME BEN WEICH: It's interesting, when we're sort of anxious we have, on the one hand, a need to actively go out and find information as a way of explaining what's going on, or even to help keep us safe. But at the same time, the research shows we also experience paradoxical inability to process complexity, which, all together, means that when we are anxious we are even more susceptible to bad information. CAPTION: TOOLS TO BEAT MISINFORMATION PROF. HARITH ALANI: There are tools online to verify, for example, fake images. One of them is Google reverse image search where you put in an image and search for that image. BEN WEICH: It is a really useful way of seeing where that image originally came from. Something like this would be a huge news story so if it's not being reported by trusted news sources that might be a clue that it's not actually true. CAPTION: THE FUTURE OF MISINFORMATION BEN WEICH: Deepfakes is a big concern, and it's a growing concern, because it's completely new technology. FAKE TOM CRUISE: The wonderful world of deepfakes. AI and VFX. PROF. HARITH ALANI: In the future that technology's going to be perfected and then we would really struggle to tell whether that video is not what it's meant to be. And so more technology is coming out that would help curb the spread of misinformation in the form of plug-ins or that you could download and attach to your browser. They could tell you what's less credible and what's more credible. Algorithms that could help the social media platforms to detect automatically and very rapidly which stories being circulated that are not true. **I'm quite hopeful on our ability to tackle the spread of misinformation in the future** because more people are aware of the issue because AI technology is becoming far more effective and powerful in determining what is credible and what isn't and then reducing, **if not stopping the spread**, of that misinformation.