

Critical Thinking to Improve Media Literacy

The internet offers incredible opportunities to learn and connect. We have more information at our fingertips than ever before, but not all of it is accurate or reliable. Whether we are reading social media posts, watching videos, browsing reviews, or reading news articles, it is important to think critically about the information we encounter online.

Use this checklist to ask questions, start conversations, and help evaluate the credibility of online content.

DEFINING MEDIA LITERACY

Media literacy helps people understand, question, and evaluate the messages they encounter in media, from news articles and videos to social media posts and online discussions.

WHO

- Who created this content?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Who paid for or sponsored this content?
- Who benefits from this message?

WHAT

- What message is the creator trying to communicate?

- What information is being presented as fact versus opinion?
- What perspectives or viewpoints might be missing?

WHEN

- When was this content published?
- Has the information been updated since it was first shared?
- Is the content still relevant today?

WHERE

- Where did you find this content? Is it from a reputable source?
- Where else can you find information about this topic?
- Where is the content being shared or discussed online?

WHY

- Why was this content created?
- Why might the creator want people to believe or share it?
- Why does this content catch your attention?

VERIFY

Before believing or sharing content, check other sources:

- Open another tab and search for information from trusted outlets
- Look for reporting from multiple sources
- Check professional fact-checking organizations when possible