

Group Discussion Activity MT1.2_3: "Fact or Fiction Detective"

Objective:

To apply information assessment skills in a fun and engaging way by identifying reliable vs. unreliable information in everyday scenarios.

Duration: 25 mins

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Instructions:

1. Divide Participants into Groups:

1. Split the participants into small groups of 3-4 people. Each group will be tasked with being "detectives" who must figure out if a set of information is reliable or not.

2. Present Scenarios:

1. Give each group a set of 3 real-life scenarios where they must assess the reliability of the information presented. For example:
 1. **Scenario 1:** A viral social media post claims that drinking lemon water cures all diseases.
 2. **Scenario 2:** A well-known health blog publishes an article about the benefits of a new miracle diet but provides no references.
 3. **Scenario 3:** A government website releases statistics on the country's unemployment rates.

3. Group Task (10 minutes):

1. Each group must discuss whether the information in the scenarios is reliable or not. They should identify which details make it credible or questionable, applying the assessment strategies they've learned (e.g., cross-checking facts, evaluating sources, identifying biases).
2. Encourage the groups to have fun and be creative with their detective roles, perhaps coming up with quirky names or assigning a "lead detective" in each group.

4. Debrief and Share Findings (5 minutes per group):

1. Each group presents their "detective report" on the scenarios, sharing whether they found the information reliable or not and why. Encourage humorous presentations, like holding up magnifying glasses or "detective hats" while explaining their reasoning.

5. Discussion Points:

1. How did you decide if the information was reliable?

Attachment to MT
Task 2.3



2. What strategies did you use to assess the sources?
3. Were there any surprising or tricky elements in the scenarios?

Materials Needed:

- Pre-prepared scenarios (printed or displayed on a screen).
- Optional props (like magnifying glasses or detective hats) to add a humorous element.

Scenario 1: The Miracle Lemon Water Cure

A post on a popular social media platform claims the following:

"Drinking lemon water every morning will cure all diseases, including cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. It detoxifies your entire body, boosts your immune system, and even makes your skin glow overnight. Forget doctors and medicine – lemon water is all you need!"

Clues to Assess:

- The post lacks any references or scientific evidence to support the claims.
- It uses exaggerated language like "cure all diseases" and "forget doctors," which is often a sign of unreliable information.
- The source of the post is an influencer who is not a healthcare professional.

Group Task:

- Discuss whether this claim is reliable or not and explain why.

Scenario 2: The New Miracle Diet on a Health Blog

A popular health blog publishes an article titled "**The Miracle Diet: Lose 20 Pounds in 2 Weeks Without Exercise!**" The article claims that by eating only one type of fruit for two weeks, anyone can rapidly lose weight. The author promises this method is backed by "science" but doesn't link to any studies or research. There are no qualifications listed for the author, who appears to be an amateur blogger.

Clues to Assess:

- The article doesn't cite any sources or studies to verify the claim.
- The blog itself is filled with advertisements for weight-loss supplements, suggesting potential bias.
- The author has no visible credentials in nutrition or healthcare.

Group Task:

- Evaluate whether this diet recommendation is reliable and what warning signs you would look for in assessing such information.

Scenario 3: Government Unemployment Statistics

The official government website of your country publishes a report stating, **“The national unemployment rate has dropped by 5% in the last quarter, showing strong economic growth.”** The report is filled with detailed statistics and includes data from several governmental agencies. It also provides links to the full dataset and research methodology used to calculate the unemployment rates.

Clues to Assess:

- The source is an official government website, which typically undergoes strict verification processes.
- The data is accompanied by a research methodology and links to the original dataset.
- The report references multiple credible agencies for cross-verification.

Group Task:

- Determine if this information is reliable and discuss the importance of providing data and methodology when presenting statistics.

Bonus Scenario: The Amazing Smartwatch that Solves All Your Problems

An ad claims, **“This new smartwatch doesn’t just track your steps, it can predict heart attacks, detect your mood, and help you sleep better – all for just \$49.99! Thousands of satisfied customers say it's changed their lives!”** The ad includes a link to buy the watch but no reviews or detailed information on how the watch actually works.

Clues to Assess:

- The ad makes grand claims without offering any scientific explanation or research to back them up.
- The price is suspiciously low for a device that allegedly offers so many advanced features.
- No testimonials, product reviews, or credentials are provided for the manufacturer.

Group Task:

- Discuss whether this ad’s claims are believable and identify any red flags.