

# BINARY WAR: REAL OR FAKE NEWS?

INFORMATION AND DATA LITERACY > 1.2 EVALUATING DATA, INFORMATION AND DIGITAL CONTENT

TARGET GROUP	AGE GROUP	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	FORMAT	COPYRIGHT	LANGUAGE
All, Job seekers, School drop outs, Students (secondary school)	Adults, Elderly citizens, Teenagers	Level 1	Activity sheet	Creative Commons (BY-SA)	English, French

This adaptation of the classic card game 'War' leads participants to exercise their critical thinking abilities regarding information they find online. Is the information true or false ?

**General Objective** Skillset building

**Preparation time for facilitator** less than 1 hour

**Competence area** 1 - Information and data literacy

**Time needed to complete activity (for learner)** 0 - 1 hour

**Name of author** Simon Cossin et Kamithou Mouhidine

**Support material needed for training** Paper-Pencils-Cards

**Resource originally created in** French

## WORKSHOP DIRECTIONS

### 1 Introduction

This adaptation of the classic card game 'War' leads participants to exercise their critical thinking abilities regarding information they find online. . The card game 'Real or Fake News' comprises 54 cards, [downloadable here](#). It is designed for 2 players and 1 host who verifies participants' answers and their scores at the end of the round. Game components:

- 24 'Real' news
- 24 'Fake' cards
- 4 'Bonus' cards
- 2 'Penalty' cards
- 1 How to Play card
- 1 'Points' card

To play, print the cards and cut them out.

**Facilitation tips:** We recommend you laminate them so they are more resistant. For this, leave a margin of about 1 millimetre for when you cut them to get the optimal result. For more on fake news, see ['Fake News and Other Information Manipulation'](#)

### 2 Preamble

To begin, start a discussion by asking a few questions such as: For example:

- Do you often read news online?
- Do you have a Facebook/Twitter account?

According to participants' responses, follow up with various ideas. Emphasise that online, there are reliable and unreliable sources, as is the case with printed news. Information does not only circulate on 'news' sites, but also through social media platforms, for example, where it is propagated by millions of users. Now ask the following question:

- Imagine you are using a social media platform. You come across a post (or publication) that says

‘Climate change is an extraterrestrial conspiracy’. Does this sound true to you?

*Expected response:* No. Not all information we see online is necessarily true. We should show scepticism regarding certain content. To illustrate this, tell participants they will play *Binary War*. The goal of the game is to differentiate real news (i.e. reliable information) and fake news (false or satirical information).

### 3 Setting up the game

The three participants get into position: one host and two players. The host shuffles the deck and cuts it to two piles of 27 cards. They place one pile before each player and makes sure that when a player picks up a card, they place it facing their opponent. Before starting the round, they quickly explain the **rule of the game** to the players: To play, each player picks up a card from their decks in turn, the first player to get the right answer keeps the card and places it to right of their pile. Players may only respond with ‘real’ or ‘fake’. If a player makes a mistake, their opponent keeps the card. When a player picks up bonus or penalty card, and places it in front of their opponent they read it aloud. The effect is applied to their opponent immediately. The game ends when all the cards are played or when one player has no cards remaining. To count the points at the end of a round, we refer to the card ‘Points’. To verify a response, the host refers to ‘Question sheet’ in annex. The host is responsible for verifying the responses. To help them with this task, three sheets have been prepared corresponding to each type of card (circle, triangle or square). They are available in annex. The game stops when one player has no cards remaining, or when time runs out. Note the scores on paper. Mix up the roles now by having the host take the place of a player. Play two rounds consecutively so that players see all the cards.

**Facilitation tip:** Set a time limit in advance, if you think the game will last too long.

### 4 Annexes

#### ANSWERS FOR YELLOW CARDS (Circle), VALUE = 1 POINT

The illuminati control the world! Fake

*This comes from a conspiracy theory which has a biased outlook of reality not based on fact ([source](#))*

Eating vegetables is bad for the health! Fake

*Vegetables are beneficial for health ([source](#))*

Everything on Facebook is true! Fake

*There are a lot of scams and fraudulent information on Facebook ([source](#))*

Climate change doesn't exist! Fake

*In the scientific literature, there is an [overwhelming consensus that global surface temperatures have increased](#) in recent decades and that the trend is caused mainly by human-induced emissions of greenhouse gases. ([source](#))*

All websites are reliable! Fake

*Harmful sites exist online ([source](#))*

Donald Trump is an alien! Fake

*He's the president of the US ([source](#))*

Potatoes are purely vegetables! Fake

*Potatoes are more accurately tubers. ([source](#))*

Mario was created by SEGA. Fake

*Mario was created by Nintendo ([source](#))*

Cats hate water! Fake

*It's more complex than that. Some kinds of cats do; some don't ([source](#))*

Sport is bad for health! Fake

*Sport is enormously beneficial for health ([source](#))*

Everest shrank 4mms in 2017! Fake

*It is possible that 2015 earthquakes in the area shrank the mountain, but we must wait for the definite results of a recent research expedition. ([source](#))*

Horses can't vomit! True

*They cannot vomit due to their digestive system ([source](#))*

Chocolate improves memory! True

*There are various cognitive benefits to consuming flavanols found in cocoa ([source](#))*

**ANSWERS FOR ORANGE CARDS (TRIANGLE) VALUE = 2 POINTS**

Fake news is a typical cuisine in Texas! Fake

*Fake news is false information ([source](#))*

The Onion is a news site! Fake

*It's a satirical website. ([source](#))*

Verifying our sources is pointless! Fake

*We must always verify our sources to avoid issues ([source](#))*

The moon influences our sleep! Fake

*There is no convincing evidence to suggest the moon cycle influences human sleep patterns. ([source](#))*

Using your phone at a gas station is dangerous! True

*Yes because it might distract you and cause accidents ([source](#))*

In 2030, robots will replace football players on the pitch! Fake

*This is only speculation based on various theories ([source](#))*

We should wait 2 hours after eating to go swimming!

Fake *This is exaggerated. The health risks are minimal ([source](#))*

Albino ferrets can't reproduce! Fake

*They sure can. ([source](#))*

Ads that tell me 'you won 1000 euros' are true! Fake

*These are deceitful and enticing ads that scam unwitting users. This illegal practice is called phishing or spamming ([source](#))*

Fact-Checking, that's the next film by Steven Spielberg! Fake

*It regards checking facts you have read or heard ([source](#))*

Bruce Willis wrote an album called *Bruce is Dead!* Fake

*The song 'Bruce Willis is Dead' exists but was written by Mr. Oizo ([source](#))*

There are more lakes in Canada in than in all other countries combined! True

*60% of the planet's lakes are in Canada ([source](#))*

In Europe, ferrets were domesticated before cats! True

*([source](#)) ([source](#))*

Bruno Mars' real name is Peter Gene Hernandez! True

*([source](#))*

A blue whale's heart is known to weigh up to 180kgs! True

*([source](#))*

For every human, there are around 1.6 million ants! True

*Ants are one of the most common creatures on earth ([Source](#))*

A man survived 20 minutes underwater without breathing! True?

*His name is Stig Severinsen ([source](#))*

The nazis tried to teach dogs to read True

*([source](#))*

Ferrets are terrified of height! True

*Maybe this is why they don't jump ([source](#))*

### **RED CARD ANSWERS (SQUARE) VALUE = 3 POINTS**

There are no laws on the internet! Fake

*There are various laws governing the internet depending on where you are in the world. ([Source](#))*

The term ‘fake news’ was first used by Donal Trump! Fake

([Source](#))

Russia sold Alaska to the US in 1867 for 7.2 million USD! True

([Source](#))

The hill with the longest name in the world is

Taumata-whakatangihanga-koauau-o-tamatea-turi-pukaka-piki-maunga-horo-nuku-pokai-whenua-ki-tana-tahu.  
True

*But it's height fails to live up to the length of its name at 305 m. ([source](#))*

The first commercially successful video game, Pong, was released in 1972! True

*It was also the first two player game ([source](#))*

On the internet, you can create, modify and re-share content under Creative Commons licensing! True

([Source](#))

On the internet, personal information is referred to as ‘cookies’! *But not the edible kind — they are files that collect and contain personal data ([source](#))*

When you visit a site that has advertising, you are effectively earning money for that site! True

*This is often why users can use these services ‘free’ ([source](#))*

The EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), implemented in 2018, means that websites need to ask users’ permission to use their data! True

([Source](#))

There are laws designed to counter information manipulation! True *Some countries have implemented such laws, though critics say the state should not control information as this would be an infringement on free speech rights. ([source](#))*

To verify information you find online, you can use fact-checking sites! True

*There are many, e.g. [Factcheck.org](#) ([source](#))*

To know more about your rights as an online user, you can refer to the Council of Europe! True

([Source](#))

**Activity designed by Simon Cossin and Kamithou Mouhidine — VDN Grand Est**