

# VERIFYING INFORMATION

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 workshop will enable participants to understand how to correctly search for and master information, how to become more efficient in their searches and how to analyse the information generated and develop a critical mind.

**General Objective** Awareness 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** Nothing 2hide

**Support material needed for training** Paper - Pencils - White board or other writing surface (optional) - Computers/tablets

**Resource originally created in** French

## WORKSHOP DIRECTIONS

### 1 Introduction

This workshop aims to develop awareness of how to properly verify information and its sources more broadly. This is a workshop that requires everyone to actively participate. In the end, participants will answer questions one by one. The goal will be to find out how far they are aware of current events and how to improve their awareness in this area.

**Facilitation tips:** We recommend you be aware of important current affairs in the week leading up to the workshop. You should be able to identify 5-10 things that have happened the previous week, whether that be in a national context or globally. It would be good to consult a variety of sources and information types for this (printed news, videos, news relevant over several days etc.) This search can be complemented by these other workshops from Digital Travellers:

- Defining a Source
- Monitoring Info with Twitter
- Customizing Verification Tools with Feedly or Flipboard

### 2 Discussion

Ask the group to name the three most important news stories that have circulated this week. This is not always obvious so be aware of 5-10 issues or stories that may come up. You could then proceed one of two ways. You could either ask participants to say their answers out loud directly or have them write them down first. Either way, ask them to specify where they heard, read or saw the news items they come up with. If you have a board, write down all the different sources they come up with. It is best that participants have already completed the workshop '[What is a Source](#)'.

If they haven't completed this workshop, have a look at it yourself and briefly explain the concept of a source to the group. The goal is to get a sense of how aware the group is of current affairs. Are they only aware of their own areas of interest (culture, sports, etc.) or do they have some broader awareness?

### 3 **Getting reliable news**

Next, ask participants to go to the computers in groups of three. Ask them to search for three key stories from that day (or the day before if it's still early!). Suggest they look for this information on some of the following sites:

- Social media (e.g. Twitter)
- News sites (e.g. Guardian, New York Times, etc.)
- Blogs
- Newsletters
- News aggregators (e.g. Google News)

After 15-20 minutes of searching, ask them to:

- Cite the three key points or stories they found
- Cite the sources (which you can write on the board next to the sources mentioned in the previous exercise)
- Say whether they have found other ways of informing themselves
- Compare the three key stories before and after researching. Have they changed? If so why?

This exercise should show why it is important to refer to a diverse range of sources when researching what is going on the news in general or indeed on any particular subject. We can at this point give some advice on how to go about this. Comparing what you have before and after the research also allows you to understand how valuable it is to inform yourself critically and effectively – how making the effort to research well can influence our perception of what is happening (or not if there are no obvious changes!)

### 4 **Knowing the news**

Ask participants to write a short paragraph (around 5 lines) on one of the key news items they selected during the previous exercise. Allow 5 minutes for this. Ask each to read theirs. A good way to approach this would be to follow each reading up with questions on the missing information. What you want to know is: what is it they are talking about, when did it happen, who or what does it concern, how or why did it happen, in what conditions and where? If possible, nudge them out of their comfort zone. Demand more detail or ask them to contextualise further. The goal of this exercise is to show that just because we vaguely heard about something doesn't mean we know it. The idea is to always reflect and think critically about what we think we know and, when something is important, we should make an effort to inform

ourselves well.