

# DIGIRES HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

*How to creatively integrate  
media and information  
literacy exercises in the  
classroom?*



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# PREAMBLE

We live in a time of global digital communication and intensive information flow, where we are exposed to a wide range of information through modern media, ranging from high-quality content that can be trusted to content that is misleading or produced by artificial intelligence. As digitalization accelerates, the volume of false, deceptive, and often hostile content grows exponentially. Such content poses a significant challenge to democratic sustainability, disrupts decision-making processes, and generates public discontent. Although different media have become part of our daily lives and identities, **do we know how to search for the truth and distinguish a reliable source from a false or manipulative one? How do we make sense of the endless clutter of images, sounds, texts, symbols, data, and the human and machine communications that go with it?**

Amid inexhaustible information and data, we need clarification and know what or who to trust. Therefore, we need to learn to see the world around us differently, a world saturated with information and all kinds of distractions and manipulations – to ask ourselves every time **if what we see on our smartphone or computer screen is accurate?**

**The teacher** is the guardian of knowledge and the nurturer of human creativity, possessing extensive expertise in the subject matter.

However, they often struggle to communicate this knowledge from the perspective of the media world. There is a need for more structured activities to engage students without requiring extensive prior knowledge.

We, therefore, present an innovative **set of engaging practical activities** with examples and detailed scenarios that can be easily adapted to a variety of subjects, developed by the Baltic Digital Resilience Research Centre **DIGIRES**, a team of media literacy and media experts, as well as improved and tested by the **BECID** Baltic Engagement Centre for Combating Information Disorders.

These activities aim to make media literacy education more relatable to students' experiences, involve and communicate with them, and listen to their perspectives.

The best media literacy education is **a conversation about everyday life issues.**

# PREAMBLE

That is why the DIGIRES activities are designed to engage and empower all participants to think, to question the information that appears in the public domain, and to encourage them to step out of their comfort zone because that is where real learning happens.

It also highlights the importance of reflecting on participants' experiences. Only through reflection can one draw accurate conclusions.

The practical activities include a detailed step-by-step plan, tips and guidelines, and discussion questions to fully support the teacher's preparation for media literacy lessons in a timely and high-quality manner.

The **Lateral Reading** method will teach you to identify the elements of a reliable source, evaluate textual and visual information in terms of credibility, develop text analysis skills and attention to detail, and the importance of slowing down on the content consumption.

The interactive activity **Media Walkshop** will encourage you to notice and recognize the world of media around you and to understand the meaning of information and media objects in the everyday environment.

The interactive activity **Categorising Opinions** will help to understand how dichotomous thinking and categorizing things as “black” or “white” divide society and push it towards confrontation, polarisation, and hate speech.

The **Understanding Uncertainty** method will help you recognize your emotions, behaviour, and information-seeking tendencies during uncertain times. It will also enhance your ability to resist manipulation and disinformation, such as fake news and propaganda, which are especially prevalent during crises and periods of uncertainty.

Join us and tap into the collective knowledge and experience to foster a culture of learning and sharing!



Detecting and debunking manipulative content is enhanced by reading and analysing the text, which can be effectively developed through various techniques that are easily applied to everyday life. A crucial habit that accompanies internet browsing is **lateral reading**.

Lateral reading is an essential media literacy skill that involves searching for information within a source and exploring multiple perspectives and sources simultaneously. This method allows each person to assess the credibility and validity of the information they encounter. By comparing data on different platforms and analysing the professionalism and bias of different sources, students are better able to understand complex issues and distinguish between credible and misleading information. Lateral reading promotes critical thinking and enables students to navigate the wide landscape of digital media effectively.

Lateral reading is an effective strategy for determining a source's reliability. By comparing the information it contains with other sources, you can verify claims and gain more contextual information about the source. This method, used by professional fact-checkers, is a key tool in their daily work to check a source's credibility.

Processing information this way involves spending relatively little time on the same website about which more information is to be found. Instead, one steps back from the page and looks at what other reliable sources have said about the site. For example, opening multiple browser tabs, combining different information from across the internet, and comparing different sources to better understand the site under study.

Many of the questions asked by professional fact-checkers are the same as those asked by vertical readers scrolling up and down the source pages being evaluated. Unlike these readers, however, they understand that the truth is more likely to be found in the web of links to (and comments about) a site than on the site itself.

Lateral reading helps the reader to assess the quality of the site he or she is visiting in terms of the accuracy of the information, provides a broader perspective on the content published there, and helps to understand whether the site has an editorial process or an expert reputation that would allow it to accept the accuracy of the site's facts.



# 1. Text comprehension: did you know that we read vertically?

## LESSON TOPIC

Lateral reading method for reliable information search.

## GRADE (YEAR)

9–12

## SUBJECTS FOR WHICH THIS LESSON PLAN CAN BE INTEGRATED

Native language lessons (Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian), English or other foreign languages, history, civics, information technology (IT), or as a non-formal education activity.

## AIM OF THE LESSON

Introduce the concept and method of **lateral reading** and show how to apply this technique to everyday life.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Identify the characteristics of a reliable source.
- 2 Learn how to evaluate textual and visual information in terms of credibility.
- 3 Develop skills in text analysis, pay attention to detail, and understand the importance of slower content consumption.

## APPLIED ACTIVITY

Lateral reading.

## DURATION

45 min.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 Different text-based examples of disinformation (e.g., an article on a specific website, a post on a specific social networking group).
- 2 A computer.
- 3 A projector (or a smartboard).

## PREPARATION

The teacher prepares a presentation on the lateral reading method, which can be used when consuming information online. The presentation can be prepared using teaching materials provided by Stanford University (in English).

Before the lesson, the teacher selects several examples of disinformation (e.g., an article on a particular website or a post on a specific social networking group).





## 1. Text comprehension: did you know that we read vertically?

Variations of suitable examples include an article posted on a website actively spreading disinformation; a fraudulent website mimicking a credible media channel and copying the attributes of a credible website, such as the logo, name, style of articles, etc.; a post in a controversial group on a selected social network. The chosen examples can include textual and visual material. Still, the most important thing is that they are in the form of an article, i.e., the text material makes up a large part of the example.

### STRUCTURE/ACTIVITY

#### INTRODUCTION

(~ 10 MIN.)

The teacher gives a presentation on the lateral reading method, explaining its importance and real-life applicability.

#### GROUP WORK

(~ 10-15 MIN.)

Students are given a practical task that can be done individually or in small groups of 2-3 people.

Each student, individually or as a group, opens the example of disinformation provided by the teacher on their computers (or any other electronic device).

The **aim of the task** is to use all available open sources to find out:

- as much information as possible about the website where the example was posted,
- the author of the article or message,
- identify which information in the example is correct and which is not,
- assess the credibility of the example.

If the task is carried out individually, students may be given the same example of disinformation, or if in groups, each group may be given a different example of disinformation. Regardless of the approach, the task encourages collaboration and mutual support. After completing the task, students should provide as many references and arguments as possible to support their conclusions, fostering a sense of shared achievement.



## 1. Text comprehension: did you know that we read vertically?

### ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

#### DISCUSSION (~ 10 MIN.)

After the activity, the teacher facilitates a discussion on the examples of disinformation provided, the conclusions reached by the students, and the difficulties they encountered in completing the activity. The following questions are proposed to guide the discussion:

- Tell us what you found out about the example – the website on which it was posted, the author of the text, the illustrations (if any) in the example, the article's content, the people, places, and events mentioned in the article.
- Which sources did you use and why?
- Would you recommend reading the information on this website, in a social network group, to a friend, and why?
- What difficulties did you encounter in analysing the example given?

#### REFLECTION (~ 10 MIN.)

Students can be asked to summarize their experience of the activity by briefly answering the following questions (they can also be asked to write their feedback on different sheets of paper):

- How did I feel doing the activity?
- What knowledge/skills would have helped me to do this task better?
- What difficulties did I encounter?
- What did I like about doing this task?

#### FOLLOW-UP (HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT)

For homework, students could be encouraged to find out which websites or social networking groups their relatives or friends browse the most and to analyse the information on them for reliability using the lateral reading method.

### PLACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS





## 2. Surrounded by media: the role of information objects in everyday life

According to UNESCO and other well-known experts worldwide, **literacy** is a set of different abilities to use data and information to understand, analyze, interpret, create, and communicate with all that travels through and within the media. **Media literacy** grows when at least three types of “tools” are effectively employed: knowledge (knowing how we think), the ability to recognize feelings (how we feel), and the skills to act.

The ability to use the tools and applications offered by technologies such as internet search engines and personal social networking accounts is a direct reference to skills. At the same time, the willingness to understand, analyze, and evaluate content and one’s progress refers to epistemic knowledge and expertise. Thus, developing **media literacy** is about more than just knowing how to check facts, which online tools to choose, where to look for a trustworthy source, how to say “I understand what journalism is”, etc. All of this has to be used and applied: constantly monitoring and reading quality journalism, analyzing social media posts, and not spreading or sharing unreliable and unverified information.

As can be seen, analytical and critical reflection on one’s experience with information is crucial to interpreting the concept of literacy and achieving such an outcome. This is precisely the essence of critical thinking. Media-enabled awareness is thus born in the totality of these three steps – thinking, evaluating, and experiencing the information; recognizing and evaluating what is happening; capturing a new thought, and taking the next step.

### LESSON TOPIC

**The role of information and media objects in everyday life.**

### GRADE (YEAR)

9–12

### SUBJECTS FOR WHICH THIS LESSON PLAN CAN BE INTEGRATED

Native language lessons (Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian), English or other foreign languages, history, geography civics, information technology (IT), or as a non-formal education activity.

### AIM OF THE LESSON

To develop the ability to observe and understand information objects in the school, city, or other environment, in the media, or online. This requires moving from passive to active observation interpreting the clues and meanings in the environment and various forms of information.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Identify information objects in the surrounding environment and try to understand their meaning in the wider media context.
- 2 To develop the ability to think critically about the information environment.

### APPLIED ACTIVITY

Interactive method **“Media Walkshop”** (“slow learning” approach).



“Slow learning” strategy refers to using tasks and methods that allow participants to spend more time learning about, observing, and reflecting on the environment, its phenomena, and objects.

We live in a fast-paced information age with little time for the practice of awareness. This learning strategy, therefore, allows us to stop and try to understand what feelings, thoughts, and reflections are triggered by the current environment or the objects in it.



### DURATION

45 min. (the activity can also be extended into two lessons / 90 min.).

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 For capturing the signs of the environment: a map of the city/locality (if outside the school) (can be a plan of a larger building), notebooks, pens, and smartphones.
- 2 For reflection on the experience in the chosen media format (homework): the work (media product) produced by the group can be a photo-narrative (photos with explanations/quotes, diary, drawing). If the assignment is a preparation for the next lesson, podcast, or video, all creative methods are suitable.

### STRUCTURE/ACTIVITY

### INTRODUCTION

(~ 5-10 MIN.)

- 1 Students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the questions:
  - What is media to you?
  - What do you consider as information objects?



In contemporary contexts, the word **“medium”** or **“media”** does not only refer to the traditional type of media, such as the press, radio, and television, but also to all information and communication media and the means of communicating and hosting information content. Media can be photography, cinema, and the internet. Everyone from ordinary people to political, business, scientific, sporting, and popular culture figures actively uses social media. Media can be used to create art (**media art**).

**Information objects** are incredibly diverse, existing in both physical and digital forms.



They serve the purpose of conveying, communicating, or storing information. From the tangible like posters, billboards, and signs, to the digital realm of computers and video cameras, these objects populate our information environment, each with its unique role and function.

- 2 An interactive “Media Walkshop” activity is explained to students:
  - Students are introduced to the aim and objectives of the lesson.
  - In pairs or small groups, students choose a route (which can be a space in the school (inside), in the schoolyard, or in the classroom). In this environment, they search for and document various “signs”, i.e., objects, messages, and things visible and invisible to the human eye, such as cameras, telephones, posters, pictures, stickers, books, and other information objects in the school.
  - Once they have worked out the task, the pupils divide themselves into roles (route planner, writer, photographer, designer, journalist, etc.). The roles can be combined, i.e., one person can have several tasks.

### GROUP WORK (~ 20 MIN.)

- Once the route has been planned (start, scheduled stops, end), all groups move in their intended directions. The “Unlocking the Meaning of Signs” handout can be given to the pupils as support material.
- After discovering a “sign” (media or information object), they take time to “read” it: discuss, record (photograph), interpret, research, or interview.



“Unlocking the Meaning of Signs” handout: questions to be discussed by the groups:

How would you describe the environment? Is it quiet, noisy, friendly, aggressive, dominant? What are the signs (media and information objects) that indicate this? For example, on a bulletin board, you may see many different messages; some messages may be friendly and attractive (e.g., an invitation to join a debating club), and others may be more aggressive (e.g., instructions not to litter in school grounds).

What is visible and what is not visible in the media and information object? For example, if the chosen information object is a “photocopier,” – what data does it collect, who archives and stores it, what is its purpose, what is it used for, etc.?



### ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

#### DISCUSSION (~ 10 MIN.)

- What narrative can you create from this experience? How does media affect our environment and choices?
- What media product format do you choose to tell this story (your experience)? Why?

#### REFLECTION (~ 10 MIN.)

Students can be asked to summarize their experience of the activity by briefly answering the following questions (they can also be asked to write their feedback on different sheets of paper):

- How did I feel doing the activity?
- What knowledge/skills would have helped me to do this task better?
- What difficulties did I encounter?
- What did I like about doing this task?



## 2. Surrounded by media: the role of information objects in everyday life

### FOLLOW-UP (HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT)

Students prepare a presentation. The project (media product) created by the group can be a photo narrative (photos with explanations/quotes, diary, drawing). All creative methods are suitable if the assignment is to prepare for the next lesson; it can be a podcast, video, poster, etc.

### PLACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS





### 3. Bias thinking: why is it dangerous?

We tend to have a **dichotomous mindset** – that is, we see things as black or white, good, or bad. We see ourselves on the “white” side, and from this “white” perspective, we see and judge others. This is usually an unconscious tendency of thinking that makes everyday life easier (no need to think deeply and waste energy). It is also a defensive reaction. This is why dichotomous thinking is particularly prevalent in conditions of high uncertainty. The brain calms down when it knows the answer to whether it is a threat, whether it is safe, whether it is a friend or an enemy.

However, this mode of thinking can also be risky. Dichotomous thinking, at its core, is the catalyst for society’s **polarization**. It subtly nudges us towards conflict and hate speech, often resulting in divisive communication and actions that propagate hate and abuse.

Reality is not black or white. It is grey – lighter or darker, but grey. A quick answer equals a polarized answer, and critical thinking starts in the grey area.

This greyness is the hallmark of critical thinking, which is challenging, requires more mental effort, and increases uncertainty. However, training oneself to tame uncertainty and the grey area (between black and white) is possible.

**Critical thinking** is about adopting another perspective without losing one’s identity. Being conscious about thinking is one of the golden rules of critical thinking. Therefore, we should be bold and question sources or individuals who are nice to us, popular, and trusted so far. Let us ask ourselves whether I have factual evidence for this? Perhaps we will realize that, on the face of it, white is actually light grey.

#### LESSON TOPIC

**The categorization (polarization) of opinions and the fragmentation of society due to the impact of disinformation.**

#### GRADE (YEAR)

9–12



### SUBJECTS FOR WHICH THIS LESSON PLAN CAN BE INTEGRATED

Native language lessons (Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian), English or other foreign languages, history, geography civics, information technology (IT), or as a non-formal education activity.

### AIM OF THE LESSON

The lesson aims to introduce students to the categorization (polarization – grouping into two opposite poles) of opinions, covering different issues or current problems. To help students understand how categorization divides society, whereby when a topical issue arises, it splits into two “camps”, and people’s opinions become polarized. Explain that this can be a consequence of the effects of disinformation – one of the most significant effects is the polarization of views, attitudes, or even values.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Introduce the basic concepts of information, disinformation, and their impact on society.

- 2 Gain a deep understanding of the “Categorizing Opinions” method, a crucial tool for comprehending the intricacies of issues and steering clear of simplistic judgments.
- 3 Understand what has led to one or another assessment of the issue or subject under discussion in the context of the tasks.
- 4 Grasp the risks of making judgments solely in terms of “black” or “white”, “good” or “bad”, and the potential for such judgments to lead to disinformation and misunderstanding.
- 5 Understand and be able to comment on the dangers of disinformation and what constitutes a reliable source of information.
- 6 Summarize and reflect on the experience, identifying what they understood from the lesson, what they liked, what was most valuable, and what was challenging.

### APPLIED ACTIVITY

Interactive activity “**Categorizing opinions**” (“black” or “white” test).

### DURATION

1–2 hours (depending on the number of students and how much detail is given to each question).



## 3. Bias thinking: why is it dangerous?

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- For the teacher: presentation, handout with prepared questions.
- For students: pen and paper (the number of sheets of paper depends on the number of students) or a smartphone with internet connection.

### POSSIBLE WAYS TO ADAPT THE TASK

If all students have smartphones with an internet connection, the task can be done anonymously using live polling apps such as “Slido”, “Mentimeter”, etc. However, the teacher needs to make sure of this and prepare in advance. It is also possible to warn students in advance that the activity will require mobile phones with internet connection.

### PREPARATION

Write down questions on a paper (e.g., 10 questions), all starting with “What do you think about ...?”. For example:

- What do you think about global warming?
- What do you think about the education system in your country?

- What do you think about the TikTok app?
- ...

etc. (it is advisable to include questions that are relevant on the day of the session and avoid questions that are sensitive to students).

### STRUCTURE/ACTIVITY

#### INTRODUCTION (~ 10-15 MIN.)

- 1 Briefly discuss the basic concepts of information, disinformation, and their impact on society.



Information’s impact on society or individual consciousness has been studied for decades from different disciplinary perspectives, such as psychology, sociology, or anthropology.



Determining the effects of disinformation on society is one of the most significant challenges for researchers studying this form of communication. Although social surveys, experiments, data from social networks, or observing people in their natural environment have advantages and disadvantages, one of the notable downsides is that the researcher has a stake in the final results. It is worth noting that the impact of disinformation on people is different, i.e., various effects on perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, or opinions and the behaviour that is triggered by these effects. This depends on **people's resilience** to manipulative communication, influenced by education, social, economic, demographic, or psychological vulnerability.

- Students are introduced to the interactive activity “Categorizing opinions” (“black” or “white” test) and the aim of this lesson.

## GROUP WORK (~ 30-40 MIN.)

- The audience is shown a slide with only the beginning of the question: ‘What do you think about ...?’ A slide showing a spectrum of colours and shades from black to white is recommended for visualization. For example:



- All the prepared questions are then read aloud, and the students write their answers on their sheets.
- After the students have answered all the questions, the first question is read, and each student reads their answer aloud. The teacher aims to identify the answers associated with positivity (good) and negativity (bad).

It is recommended to ask the audience to indicate where they would “place” their opinion on the issue under discussion on the slide. Suppose the audience tends to point close to the centre (which is extremely rare in practice), but the answer is clearly “white” or “black” in its meaning or connotation. In that case, asking them to provide a word to further polarise the opinion is recommended.

**N.B.** In this exercise, the audience's opinions may diverge, leading to confrontation. Therefore, the teacher(s) must moderate the audience. In the event of divergence of views, it is necessary to emphasize the natural existence of divergent opinions in society and, if required, to show a slide in which two characters looking from different sides disagree on which number they see: 6 or 9.

- Once the answers are known, the audience is asked, "Who formed your opinion?" and "Who is the source of the information?" Write down one reason (a maximum of three).

## ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

### DISCUSSION (~ 15 MIN.)

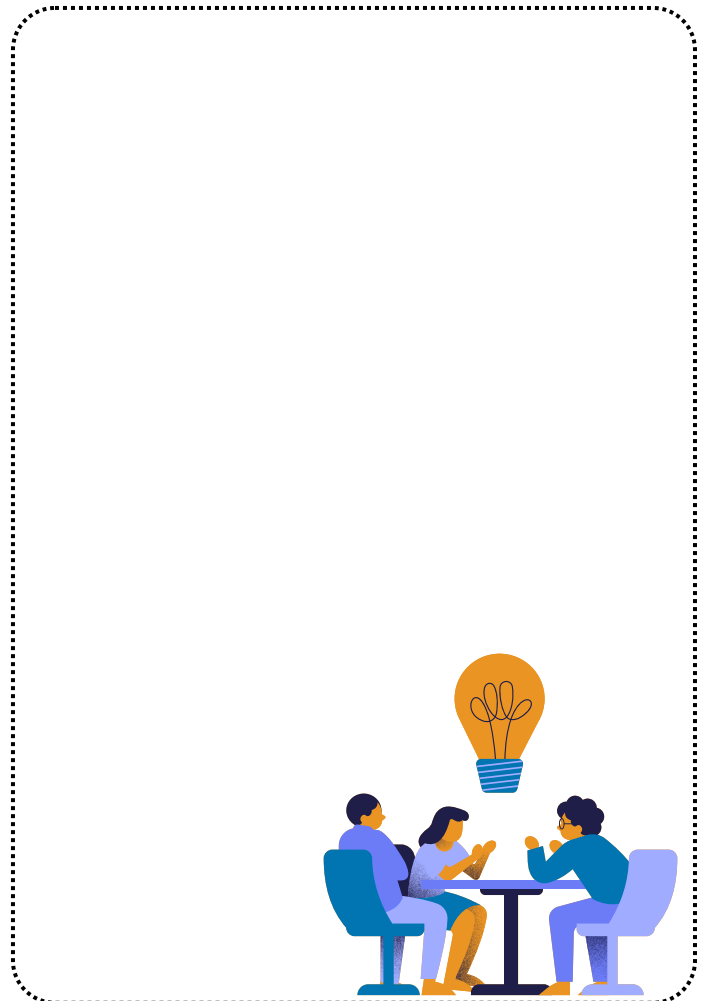
- What did you learn from this experience?
- How does the information we receive influence our opinions and judgments?
- Why do different members of society have different opinions?
- How dangerous is an opinion formed by disinformation?
- Why is it dangerous to judge things only as "black" or "white", "good" or "bad"? What encourages such judgments?

- Why is it essential to have a reliable source of information? What is a reliable source of information?

### REFLECTION (~ 10 MIN.)

- What did you like?
- What was challenging?
- What was difficult to understand?
- What was the most memorable?

## PLACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS



## 4. Information search: how do we survive under uncertainty?

Manipulation and information disruption, such as disinformation, fake news, or propaganda, are prevalent and work best in times of crisis and uncertainty when people are most vulnerable. Humans have a subconscious desire to control the future, and **uncertainty** is associated with the unknown, which makes predicting the future complex. Under such conditions, we begin to feel fear and anxiety. We start looking for answers in the media and on social networks. We become receptive to any information that helps us “feel the future” – to regain control. Unfortunately, this is often disinformation – quickly produced and devoid of facts. The consequences of falling for such disinformation can be severe, leading to misguided decisions and further perpetuating the cycle of uncertainty.

When we make important decisions (e.g., health, finance, security, or politics), we rely on existing information and personal and collective preferences. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to disinformation that emerges when a new or sensitive issue arises in society.

Moreover, we tend to react primarily with our emotions and make many cognitive mistakes when looking for answers.

As a result, we only sometimes reduce uncertainty (often, we only increase it).

For example, we look for information that confirms our beliefs and opinions; we pay attention to what is obvious first; we rely on information that is easily accessible, but not necessarily reliable, on the internet or social networks; we are used to forming our opinions based on the information that reaches us first and then find it difficult to change them, etc. Understanding the role of emotions in our decision-making process is crucial to be more critical of the information we consume.

Therefore, when reading a source, ask yourself the following questions: 1) Why should this information be important to me? 2) What emotion does it evoke in me? 3) Why am I reacting the way I am reacting? 4) Who is the author of the message? 5) Does the message contain arguments, or is it just opinion?

### LESSON TOPIC

Emotions, behaviour and information seeking under uncertainty.

### GRADE (YEAR)

9–12



## 4. Information search: how do we survive under uncertainty?

### SUBJECTS FOR WHICH THIS LESSON PLAN CAN BE INTEGRATED

Native language lessons (Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian), English or other foreign languages, history, geography civics, information technology (IT), or as a non-formal education activity.

### AIM OF THE LESSON

To familiarize students with the uncertainties that follow significant events/situational changes or crises.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 To familiarize with the method “Understanding Uncertainty” and its purpose.
- 2 To understand and be able to identify how one feels in each situation of uncertainty, how one behaves, where one looks for information, and why.
- 3 Summarize and reflect on the experience by identifying what they understood from the lesson, what they liked, what they remembered most, and what was challenging.

### APPLIED ACTIVITY

Interactive activity “[Understanding Uncertainty](#)”.

### DURATION

1 hour.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Large sheets of paper, coloured markers (a projector may also be available).

### PREPARATION

In a few sentences, describe a hypothetical situation reflecting a critical event. This could be a national event (e.g., false emails about hidden explosives sent to schools en masse) or a regional event (depending on where the activity is taking place) (e.g., a case of violence or harassment or the discovery of drugs in school).

### POSSIBLE WAYS TO ADAPT THE TASK

The hypothetical event can be visualized using infographic symbols and presentation effects to increase engagement.



Alternatively, the answers to the questions can be presented using live polling applications such as “Slido” or “Mentimeter”. This will increase anonymity and, hopefully, openness and audience engagement. However, it is necessary to ensure internet connectivity and that students have smartphones with internet connection.

### STRUCTURE/ACTIVITY

#### INTRODUCTION

(~ 5-10 MIN.)

Students are introduced to the interactive activity “Understanding Uncertainty” and the aim of the lesson.

#### GROUP WORK

(~ 30-40 MIN.)

- The students are introduced to the situation. It can be read aloud or presented on a slide.
- Questions are then asked, and the student’s answers are recorded on a large sheet dedicated to each question:

1 How do you feel in this situation? Why?

**The first question** should capture emotions and, when looking for the reasons for these emotions, refer to the lack of information that leads to uncertainty.

It is advisable to discuss the feeling/state of uncertainty (when was the last time the audience had this feeling/state, etc.).

2 What do you do in this situation? Why?

**With the second question**, the teacher tries to convince the audience of the importance of quick, clear, and understandable information for people to act.

3 Where will you look for information? Why?

**The third question** encourages critical thinking, asking students to assess the expertise of information sources. The audience is presented with a hypothetical situation where official information is unavailable, and pseudo-experts are sharing advice on social media. This question should focus on the expertise of the source of information and the assessment of this expertise (position of the expert(s), education, experience, etc.), empowering students to make informed decisions.

## 4. Information search: how do we survive under uncertainty?

### ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

#### DISCUSSION (~ 10 MIN.)

- What did you learn from this experience?
- How do people react under uncertainty and why?
- Why does disinformation appear before factual information under uncertainty?
- What defines the expertise of an information source?

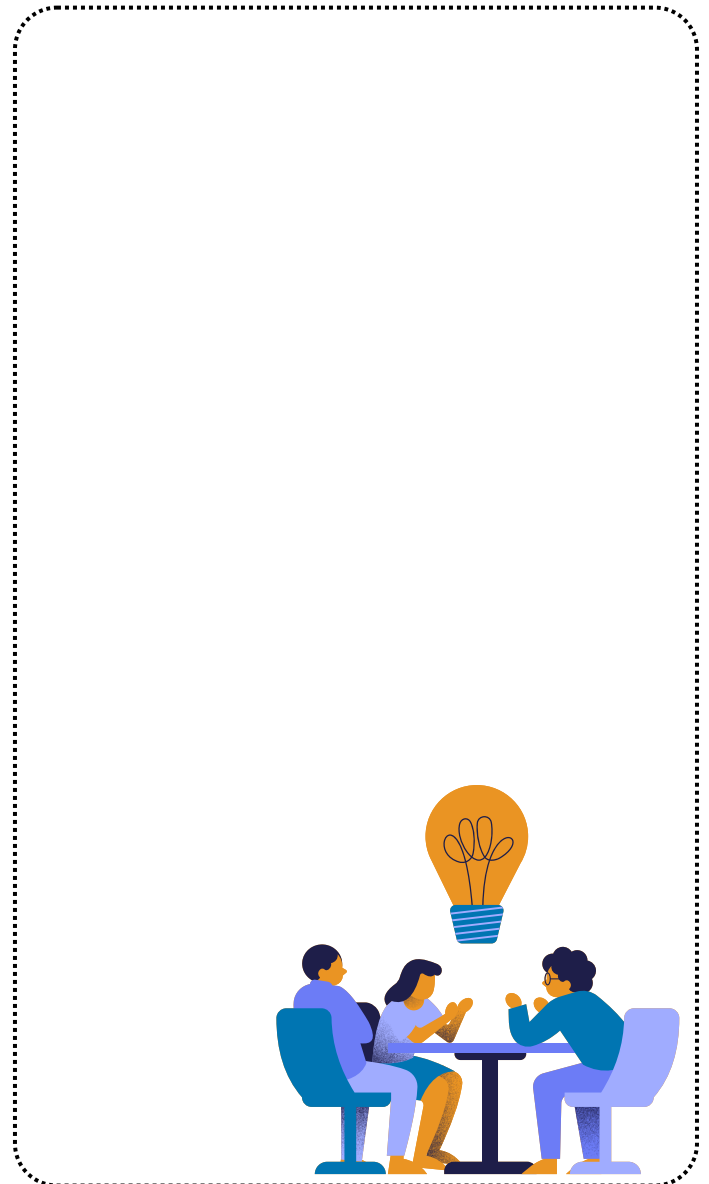


The natural human response to uncertainty seeks quick, clear, and understandable information. This reaction to uncertainty is driven by the desire to know the extent of the threat, how it will affect each individual, and how to protect oneself. Reducing uncertainty is about regaining control. Because disinformation does not take time to assess the facts or investigate the situation, it tends to come first, falsely decreasing uncertainty in crises or significant events.

#### REFLECTION (~ 10 MIN.)

- What did you like?
- What was challenging?
- What was difficult to understand?
- What was the most memorable?

#### PLACE FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS



## CONCLUSION: WHAT'S NEXT?

The information circulating in today's media is far from a quiet and calm river. It is a mix of highly credible, expert-generated information and manipulative content that can threaten society. The good news is that with a little effort, we can all develop critical thinking, resilience to digital disruption, and the ability to distinguish between quality content. We, therefore, invite you to continue to deepen your knowledge of media and information literacy and to put it into practice with our selection of valuable resources and tools.

## USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

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## ABOUT BECID

The Baltic Engagement Centre for Combating Information Disorders (BECID) is a network of experts in fact-checking, media literacy, media practice, and academic research combating information disorders and promoting media literacy in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. BECID focuses on regular fact-checking, research on the perception of disinformation, and media literacy campaigns that aim to increase information resilience and media literacy. BECID is part of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) network.

For more information on BECID activities and produced content, please visit [www.becid.eu](http://www.becid.eu).

## ABOUT DIGIRES

The Association Baltic Digital Resilience Research Centre DIGIRES is the first example of collaboration in the field of digital resilience not only in Lithuania but also in all three Baltic States. DIGIRES aims to bring together experts and organizations working on similar themes of media literacy, digital resilience, and sustainable democracy development and to show ways to develop resilience in a coherent and targeted way by finding new forms of resilience through agreements and cooperation between national organizations, institutions, and public authorities representing different sectors.

For more information on DIGIRES activities and produced content, please visit <https://digires.lt/en/>.

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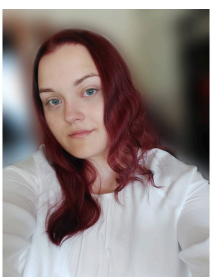
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# ANNEX

## “Unlocking the Meaning of Signs” handout: questions to be discussed by the groups



How would you describe the environment? Is it quiet, noisy, friendly, aggressive, dominant? What are the signs (media and information objects) that indicate this? For example, on a bulletin board, you may see many different messages; some messages may be friendly and attractive (e.g., an invitation to join a debating club), and others may be more aggressive (e.g., instructions not to litter in school grounds).

What is visible and what is not visible in the media and information object? For example, if the chosen information object is a “photocopier,” – what data does it collect, who archives and stores it, what is its purpose, what is it used for, etc.?

