

Digital Citizenship: **Hillary**

Lesson Title: **Website Reliability Scavenger Hunt**

Grade Level: **High School**



Lesson Topic

Evaluating the reliability of web resources

Essential Question

How do we assess the reliability of an online resource?

Materials

- Website Reliability Scavenger Hunt worksheet
- Student computers (if available) or copies of a printout of a website or article for students to examine
- Writing utensil

Procedure

1. Put the following prompt up at the front of the room and ask students to respond on paper: Imagine you are a detective in a murder case, and you are responsible for finding the murderer:
 - What would be the most reliable sources of evidence to identify the murderer? How would you know whether or not you could trust a particular source?
 - What would be an example of an unreliable source? Why do you think that source would be unreliable? How could you tell that it was unreliable?
2. Ask students to share their responses with a partner.
3. Bring the class back together and cold-call several students to get responses about reliable sources and responses about unreliable sources – list examples of both that students give at the front of the room.
4. After the class has generated a robust list of reliable and unreliable sources, develop a definition as a class of the term “reliable.”
 - Then introduce the term “bias” — ask students if they know what the word bias means. Generate a class definition for the word bias: prejudice in favor of or against one thing compared with another.
 - Generate a list of concrete examples of bias with students.

5. Remind students that in the video, when Hillary talks about her battle with anorexia she discusses the harmful role that the internet played. “No one should ever try to promote something that is life-threatening. It’s sad because I think that the internet was originally made to help people out, but that now it’s just hurting them” [from 2:40 in the video]. The pro-ana (pro-anorexia) websites that Hillary began reading were not credible sources. Had Hillary known that the sources were not credible, perhaps she would not have relied so deeply on their messages, allowing her to fall deeper into her illness.
6. Explain that the internet can be a helpful and powerful tool for learning, but since it is a tool that is open to anyone to post about anything, we must constantly be evaluating the reliability and credibility of the internet sources that we are using. Whether it is for a school or work project, or for one’s own personal research, we must always assess the credibility of the web resources that we rely upon.
7. Invite students to log onto their computers (or distribute printed handouts of an internet article or home page).
8. Distribute and review with students the Website Reliability Scavenger Hunt worksheet. After reviewing the directions and sections of the worksheet, invite students to complete the worksheet on their own or in groups of two.
9. After students have completed the worksheet, bring the class back together and ask them: What was one thing that surprised you as you conducted the website reliability scavenger hunt?

Conclusion

To close out the lesson, bring students back to the essential question of the lesson: how do we assess the reliability of an internet resource? Why is assessing reliability important? Hillary became dependent on pro-ana websites throughout her battle with anorexia. Do you think that the pro-ana websites that Hillary consulted were reliable? Why or why not?

Notes

Worksheet: Website Reliability Scavenger Hunt

Directions

Look up a topic of your choosing on an internet browser and choose one of the sites that is listed to analyze.

1. What is the site's domain?

- ☐ .org – a not-for-profit or advocacy organization
- ☐ .com – a business or commercial site
- ☐ .net – a network, organization, or internet service
- ☐ .edu – a higher education institution
- ☐ .gov – a federal government site
- ☐ other _____

2. Is there an author of the webpage?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. What are the author's credentials (e.g.: certifications, degrees, other relevant affiliation, etc.)

4. Is the information on the page current? What is the date of publication? _____

5. How accurate is the information on the web page? Are statistics or other factual information cited?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. Is there a bibliography of sources cited?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Is there evidence of bias or a particular point of view on the site?

☐ Yes

Example: _____

☐ No

8. Is this site credible? Why or why not?
