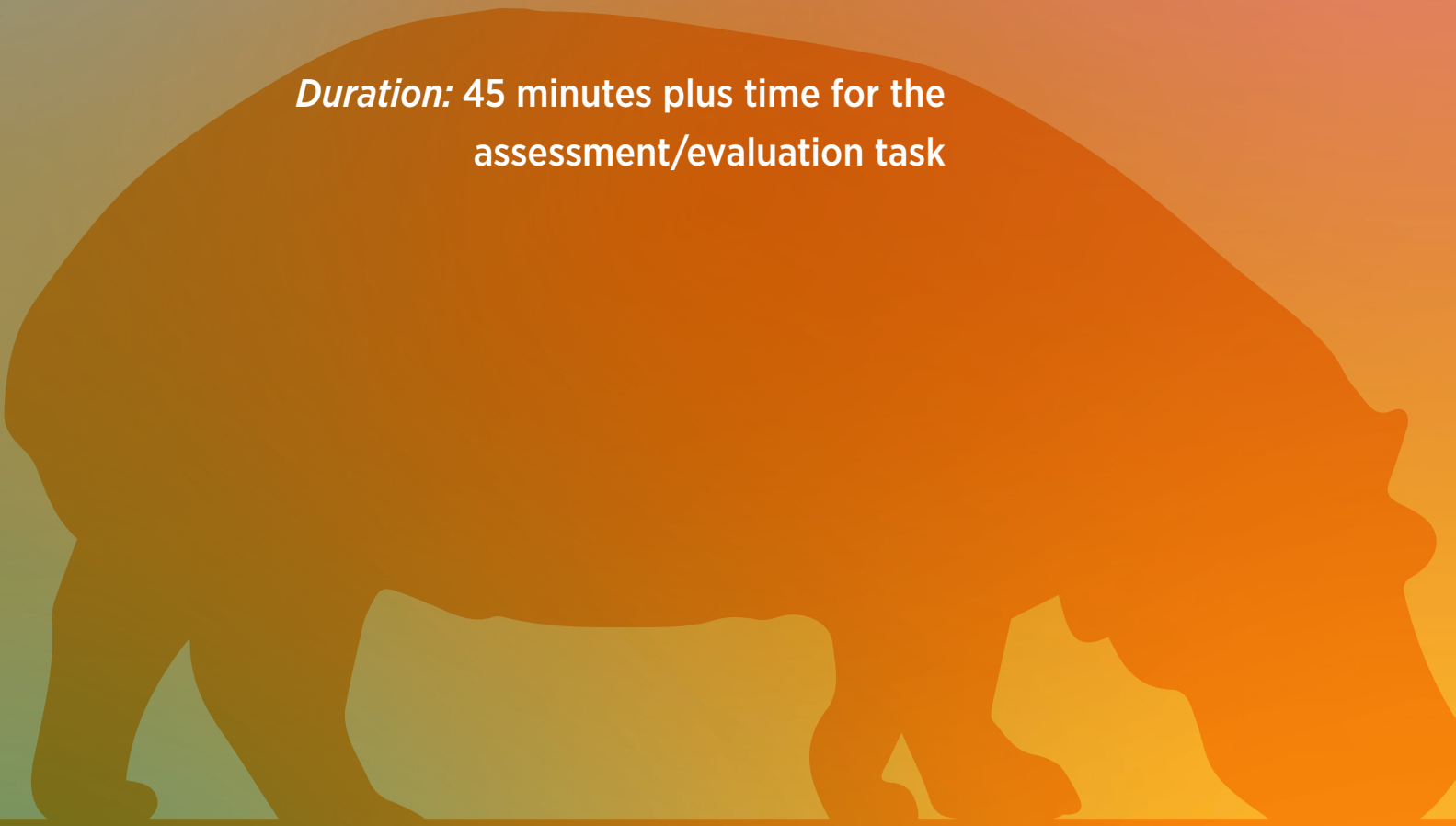




Break the Fake Lesson Plan:
What's real online?

Grades: 3-5

Duration: 45 minutes plus time for the
assessment/evaluation task





Overview

In this lesson, students are introduced to the challenges of identifying what is real and what is fake online. After learning some simple steps to verify online information they create a poster that communicates the importance of questioning and double-checking online content.

This project has been made possible
in part by the Government of Canada.

Canada

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Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Learn simple steps for verifying online information
- Practice verifying online information
- Understand *media literacy key concepts*:
 - [*Media are constructions*](#)
 - [*Each medium is a unique aesthetic form*](#)
- Understand *digital literacy key concepts*:
 - [*Digital media are networked*](#)
 - [*Digital media are shareable and persistent*](#)
 - [*Interactions through digital media can have a real impact*](#)
 - [*Digital media experiences are shaped by the tools we use*](#)
- Create a media text

Preparation and Materials

Prepare to show the video [*House Hippo 2.0*](#)

Prepare to project the slideshow [*Real or Fake?*](#)

Photocopy the student handout [*Finding Out What's Real Online*](#).

Photocopy the assignment sheet [*Make Your Own House Hippo Poster*](#)

Make sure that students can access the Google Drawings document [*Make Your Own House Hippo Poster*](#)

This lesson is part of USE, UNDERSTAND & CREATE:
A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools:
<http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework>.



Procedure

House Hippo 2.0

Begin by asking showing students the video [House Hippo 2.0](#). Pause the video just after the narrator says “It looks like Canada has a house hippo problem.”

Ask students: Is this video real? Could it be real? Let them discuss for a few minutes without giving a firm answer.

Now ask: If it is fake, why might somebody want to make a fake video about house hippos? Again, let the students discuss for a few moments but don't give an answer.

Show the last part of the video. Ask students how they think the video was made, then show the first two slides of *Real or Fake?* Did any of them guess that the hippos were puppets and not CGI?

Real or Fake?

Tell students that it's even easier than that to fool people online, and show them the slide **3** of

Real or Fake?. Point out that just like with puppetry, something as simple as controlling how much of a scene you can see can give us a very different view of what's real and what isn't.

Now show slides **4** to **7** and ask students to guess which of the photos are real and which are fake:

Slide 4: The sign warning about blackbirds is real; the one warning about squirrels is fake.

Slide 5: The octopus is made of plastic; the animal on the right, a nudibranch, is real.

Slide 6: Both photos are real. The top picture, of a weasel clinging to the back of a woodpecker, was taken by a nature photographer in England; the second is of an animal called the Malabar Ground Squirrel.

Slide 7: The top photo, of a “cyclops shark,” is real (this is not a species of shark; sharks' eyes sometimes fuse into one while they're developing before being born); in the second photo the gorilla is real but the knitting needles and scarf were edited in.



Point out to students that in most cases, there was no way to tell which was real and which was fake just by looking.

Show slides **8 to 9** and tell students that just using a search engine like Google is not enough, because when you search for something – even if it's completely made-up like the house hippo or the tree octopus – the top results will often be the site that claims it's true.

What's Real Online?

Distribute the handout *Finding Out What's Real Online* and go through it with the class.

Show slide **10** and ask students how they would find out if this image, of the bare-hearted glass frog, is real or not.

After a brief discussion, show the remaining slides:

Slides 11 to 12: Reverse image search shows the photo has appeared at reliable sites like the *Telegraph* (a British newspaper) and the BBC.

Slide 13: Searching on sites that you know are reliable, such as National Geographic, shows that the photo (and the frog) are real.

Point out that for both of these steps, you need to know if the source is reliable.

Ask students for examples of websites or other sources that they know are reliable. How do they know these sites are reliable?

- The most important thing is to find out if they have a good “track record” of being accurate. For example, National Geographic has been publishing since 1888.
- It's usually a good idea to ask an adult, like your teacher, a librarian, or a parent or guardian, to help with this.



Slide 14: Doing a search for “bare hearted glass frog” with the words “hoax” or “fake” only gives you results from reliable sources saying that it’s real.

Assessment/Evaluation Task: Make Your Own House Hippo Poster

Distribute the assignment sheet *Make Your Own House Hippo Poster* and go through it with the class. (If you prefer, you may do this as a whole-class activity.) Have students create posters that communicate the need to question and verify what you see online, then share them with the rest of the class.

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Finding Out What's Real Online

It's easy to make things that look real online, but it's also easy to double-check them. Here are three questions you can ask to find out if something is real or not online.

1. Where did it come from?

Because it's so easy to copy and share things online, it's important to find out where something originally came from before you decide whether or not to trust it.

- On a website, follow [links](#) that lead back to the source.
- You can also use a search engine like Google or DuckDuckGo to find out where the story originally came from.
- To find the original source of a picture, you can use something called *reverse image search*.
- Start by right-clicking on the image. Then select the option "Copy Image Location."

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- **On a Mac, hold down Control while clicking instead of right-clicking.**
 - **On Chrome and Safari, select Copy Image Address.**
 - **On Edge, select Copy.**
-

Go to the website [Tineye.com](https://www.tineye.com) and paste in the address you just copied. Sort the results to show the oldest first.

2. Is it coming from a reliable source?

Whether you're looking at a website, a picture, a video or a news story, what matters is whether or not the source that *originally* created it are reliable.

- You can find out if a source is reliable by asking someone like a teacher, a librarian, or a parent or guardian.
- You can also do a search on the source. Check Wikipedia to see if the source has a good track record for being reliable.

Sometimes it can be faster to start with a source that you already know is reliable. If you're looking for information on animals, for example, you can go straight to National Geographic and search there instead of going through Google.

3. Has somebody debunked it already?

Sometimes a single search can Break the Fake if a professional fact-checker has already done the work for you.

- You can use a specific fact-checker website like [Snopes.com](https://www.snopes.com), or our custom search engine bit.ly/fact-search that will search eight fact-checkers at once for you.
- You can also do a regular search for the story and add the words "hoax" or "fake".

Make Your Own House Hippo Poster

To make your own House Hippo poster, open bit.ly/hippoposter and click on “Make a Copy.”

Pick one of the backgrounds on the right and drag it to the checkered area in the middle of the screen. Click on the squares around the edges to stretch it so it fills the checkered area.

Pick one of the hippos on the left and drag it to where you want it on the background. Resize it to the size you want using the squares around the edges and move it so that it looks right to you.

Double-click on the text at the top. Change it to a message that explains why it’s important to think twice and double-check anything you see online. If you need to, click on the squares around the edge of the text box to resize it.

When you’re happy with your poster, click on File and then Download. Pick PDF or JPG format and save it with your name as part of the file name.



Task Assessment Rubric:

	Learning Expectations	Achievement
<p>Use</p> <p>Skills and competencies that fall under “use” range from basic technical know-how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- using computer programs such as word processors, web browsers, email, and other communication tools- to the more sophisticated abilities for accessing and using knowledge resources, such as search engines and online databases, and emerging technologies such as cloud computing	<p><i>Finding and Verifying:</i></p> <p>determine criteria for rating informational websites and apply them to an assigned site and understands that all websites are not equally good sources of information</p> <p><i>Making and Remixing:</i></p> <p>communicates information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>

	Learning Expectations	Achievement
<p>Understand</p> <p>“Understand” includes recognizing how networked technology affects our behaviour and our perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about the world around us.</p> <p>“Understand” also prepares us for a knowledge economy as we develop information management skills for finding, evaluating, and effectively using information to communicate, collaborate, and solve problems.</p>	<p><i>Finding and Verifying:</i></p> <p>demonstrates understanding that anyone can publish on the Web, so not all sites are equally trustworthy</p> <p>judges the validity of content found on the Internet, how to find appropriate material, and what sources can be trusted</p> <p><i>Community Engagement:</i></p> <p>understands how meaning is produced through multimedia (text, images, audio, video) and how culture is produced through the internet and social media in particular</p> <p><i>Creating and Remixing:</i></p> <p>shows an understanding of the forms and techniques of the medium and genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the chosen topic, issue and solution were clear • the product displayed an insight into a topic 	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>

	Learning Expectations	Achievement
<p>Create</p> <p>Create is the ability to produce content and effectively communicate through a variety of digital media tools. It includes being able to adapt what we produce for various contexts and audiences; to create and communicate using rich media such as images, video and sound; and to effectively and responsibly engage with user-generated content such as blogs and discussion forums, video and photo sharing, social gaming and other forms of social media.</p> <p>The ability to create using digital media ensures that Canadians are active contributors to digital society.</p>	<p><i>Finding and Verifying:</i> applies existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes using digital technology</p> <p><i>Community Engagement:</i> uses digital media to communicate with real people within his/her school, family, and community</p> <p>identifies who produces various media texts and the reason for their production</p> <p><i>Creating and Remixing:</i> effectively applies the forms and techniques of the medium and genre</p> <p>creates original works as a means of personal or group expression</p> <p>produces media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques</p>	<p>Insufficient (R)</p> <p>Beginning (1)</p> <p>Developing (2)</p> <p>Competent (3)</p> <p>Confident (4)</p>