

THE **EDIBLE**
SCHOOLYARD
PROJECT

**MAKING SENSE OF WHAT WE
READ**

Summary: In this lesson, students will use a text analysis practice to reflect on what makes a text “trustworthy”. The practice prompts students to think about their experiences and identities in relationship to the text’s creator, and to question the biases they may hold.

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Something to write with
- [Strategies for Reading Texts](#) [Student Resource]

Teacher Notes:

- The lesson does not explicitly cover all the vocabulary below, but these are all useful terms for media literacy that you might want to review as a class.
- For the “DO” section on page 2, we suggest using post-it notes to generate a list of sources on the board. Include traditionally “academic” sources, such as textbooks, articles, and documentaries, as well as other common sources of information, such as Tik Tok, blog posts, and podcasts.
- In a synchronous setting, the “READ” section could be spoken out loud by a teacher.
- Consider recording yourself reading the excerpt out loud and sending it to students. This adaptation offers a helpful differentiation strategy that supports all students, especially English Language Learners.
- For the “REFLECT” section, consider having a class discussion, letting students reflect on questions in small groups, or asking students to answer questions individually using something to write with.
- There are a lot of great resources available on media literacy. Check out the “References” section of this document for suggested articles, websites, and curriculum.



MAKING SENSE OF WHAT WE READ

Teacher Notes Continued:

- This lesson asks students to analyze articles. We provide recommendations on articles that are from reputable sources. You could also find articles to analyze from less reliable sources to showcase the difference between types of sources.
- This lesson is from the Edible Schoolyard Project's [Understanding Organic](#) curriculum and is part of the preparatory lessons of the curriculum.

References:

Analyzing How Words Communicate Bias (n.d). Learning For Justice. Retrieved from

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/analyzing-how-words-communicate-bias>

BBC game challenges young people to spot "fake news" (2018, March 14). The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/school-report-43391188>

CRAAP TEST (n.d). Medium.com. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/@RefME/the-craap-test-an-easy-fun-way-to-evaluate-research-sources-a2755126b6b2>

Resources (n.d). *News Literacy Project*. Retrieved from <https://newslit.org/educators/resources/>

Resource Center (n.d). Commonsense.org. Retrieved from

<https://www.commonsense.org/education/news-media-literacy-resource-center>



MAKING SENSE OF WHAT WE READ

Vocabulary:

- **Trustworthy:** able to be relied on as truthful, honest, and/or honorably intentioned.
- **Influence:** impact or nudge in a certain direction.
- **Bias:** prejudice in favor of or against something.
- **Primary Source:** firsthand accounts of a subject from someone with direct experience (e.g.: journals, speeches, oral histories).
- **Secondary Source:** a source that discusses or informs on a subject from someone without direct experience (e.g.: textbooks, articles, biographies).
- **Fact:** something known and proven to be true.
- **Assumption:** something accepted to be true without proof.
- **Opinion:** a belief or judgement about something.

READ: When we engage with a text (such as a book, article, movie, essay, podcast, or photograph), there are several factors that influence how trustworthy we see the text to be. It's helpful to have practices that encourage us to reflect and analyze.

Today, you will be looking at different articles and using your critical thinking skills to analyze those articles.

DISCUSS: Think about where you get your information on a range of topics. What are some of the sources of that information?

DO: Make a list of the different sources. You might include things like newspapers, magazines, blogs, Tik Tok, etc.

DO: On chart paper, a blackboard, or a piece of paper, copy down the following scale:

Not Trustworthy

Very Trustworthy

DO: Now, think about all the different sources of information you listed. Rate them according to the above scale and discuss why you rated each source the way you did.

DISCUSS:

After making your list, reflect on these questions:

- What does it mean for a source to be “**trustworthy**” for you? What do you look for?
- How do you decide if you trust a source?
- Sort your list of sources into 3 columns: “Trustworthy”, “Not Trustworthy”, and “It Depends”. For each source that you place in the “It Depends” column, write a brief note to explain your thinking.

Now, look at the sources in the “Trustworthy” column. Can you always trust these sources? Think of some examples of when “trustworthy” sources might not be so trustworthy. Look at the sources in the “Not Trustworthy” column. Are there situations when these sources might be worth trusting? Think of some examples.

READ: The “trustworthiness” of a source can depend on a range of factors, including word choice, sources used, the identities and experiences of the creator(s) of the source, and the reader’s experiences and prior knowledge. Strategies that support us to critically think about a text can help us decide for ourselves whether or not we should trust a source.

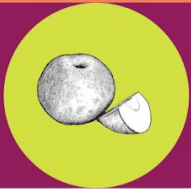
GATHER: Choose an article or excerpt from an article on organic. You could decide to do an internet search and choose one that pops up, as a way of seeing what kinds of resources come up based on certain search terms. However, we encourage you to use our resource, [Articles and Resources for Further Extensions](#). This resource has a number of articles on different topics connected to organic.

DO: Read your article or excerpt. The first time you read, just focus on what it’s about. Then read it again, using the [Strategies for Reading Texts](#). Fill out the Says Who? Chart. Consider the ways that your identity, knowledge, and experiences influence your ideas about whether or not the source is “trustworthy.” Then, think about how the source creator’s identity, audience, use of evidence, and intention influence how “trustworthy” you find the source.

REFLECT: Consider the following questions:

- How trustworthy did you find the source?
- Are you more likely to find a text trustworthy if you agree with what the text is saying?
- Is there ever a time with a source being less trustworthy isn't as important?

READ: The reality is that it's not always simple as something being objectively true and false, "trustworthy or not trustworthy". There are many ways that we make determinations of whether something is true or not true, trustworthy, and not trustworthy. What is important is for you to learn the skills of critical thinking so that you can decipher and make sense of the information you hear and read.



Says Who?

Chart

Name _____

Who Am I?

How does the text make me feel?	
Do I “agree” or “disagree” with the text? How does the information in the text challenge or support my beliefs?	
What biases might have influenced my thoughts and feelings about the text?	

Who Are You?

Who created the text? How do you know if the author(s) are trustworthy?	
Who is the author(s) talking to?	
Why might the author(s) have created the text?	
What evidence to the author(s) use? Do they reference primary or secondary sources? Do they back up their claims with evidence?	