

Project APRICOT:

Attentive parental education for wise being and co-being in changing times

Media literacy program and material for adult educators



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

This intellectual output has been conceived and developed by the Strategic Partnership in APRICOT project under the coordination and responsibility of *Šiuolaikinių didaktikų centras/ Modern Didactics Centre* (LT).

Thanks to all partners for their precious contributes:

Apricot Training Management Ltd. (UK)

ItF Institut Kassel e.V. – Frauencomputerschule (DE)

Planeta Ciencias (ES)

Editorial coordinator: Daiva Penkauskienė

Authors: Hilary Hale, Beate Hedrich, Betül Sahin, Alejandra Goded, Anca Dudau, Daiva Penkauskienė

Editorial Board: Sophy Hale, Seda Gürcan, Konrad Schmidt, Cihan Sahin, Josafat Gonzalez Rodriguez, Roc Marti Valls, Virgita Valiūnaitė



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Month/ Year: November 2021

@ INFORMED DECISIONS

(for distance teaching & learning)



The objective of this learning activity is to practice and reflect upon using the internet to search for information and the use of this information to make informed decisions.

AE will learn how:

- to discuss and present the concepts and activities with adult learners;
- to use framework methodology for teaching target groups in practice;
- to reflect upon content and learning process;
- to plan their own teaching-learning process, while introducing the course material for specific target groups

How it works:

- The learning is based on the Experiential Learning approach;
- The activity is introduced in a funny way with a group dynamics as an introduction;
- The learning uses a practical activity in small groups to encourage questions and reflections;
- The discussion is a whole group discussion;
- The duration of delivery of this theme is 3 hours

Part I Presentation of model activity

Context of the activity:

We start introducing the topic of informed decisions and their importance in the world of information and social media in which our children are growing up. We provide persuasive arguments that encourage parents and grandparents to consider the importance of being able to determine the reliability of online information.

Ice breaker: Presentation of the topic

We show the participants slides with pictures of two people. We ask participants to get up from their chairs and, from their homes, show by miming which of the two people they would choose to ask certain questions to. All participants can see the faces and gestures of the other participants, serving as an ice breaker and helping to reduce some of the barriers common with distance learning.

The questions are:

1. Which steps should the government take to deal with the coming economic crisis?
2. Does our perception of luck affect the events that happen to us?

3. Where is the home appliance section?
4. Where is the nearest bus stop?
5. For how long should I boil the rice?
6. How does a brain tumor grow?
7. How to treat breast cancer?

And the answers:

1. Paul Krugman (Nobel Laureate in Economics) vs Brad Pitt (actor)
2. Paul Krugman (Nobel Laureate in Economics) vs Richard Wiseman (psychologist expert in cognitive biases)
3. Richard Wiseman (psychologist expert in cognitive biases) vs supermarket clerk
4. Rita Levi-Montalcini (Nobel laureate, honored for her work in neurobiology) vs young man (Both answers are right, but we tend to trust older women more than younger men.)
5. Karlos Arguiñano (professional cooker) vs Rita Levi-Montalcini (Nobel laureate, honored for her work in neurobiology)
6. Unknown doctor vs Rita Levi-Montalcini (Nobel laureate, honored for her work in neurobiology)
7. Josep Pàmies (farmer who claims to know the cure for a number of diseases, including cancer) vs Unknown doctor. (But a growing number of people in Spain trust Josep Pàmies more than their own doctors).

We often use intuition in everyday life to help us identify which people are reliable and which are not. Of course, we can make a lot of mistakes when we do this, but it can also be very useful..

We can also train our intuition to tell which websites and posts are reliable when looking for accurate information to make decisions that can affect us and our environment.

Realisation of experience: “Shopping basket”. Group task

The participants are divided into groups of 3 or 4 people in break out rooms. Each group receives a table in Google Drive to complete and some instructions on how to complete it in 40 minutes. The trainer moves through the rooms to check if everything is fine and solve any doubts that arise during the activity.

The group completes a table with information on a chosen substance from a list.

These are the directions they get:

- *On the label of these products you can find the following substances. Choose one of them:*
IODOPROPYNYL BUTYLCARBAMATE
PARABENS
PHTHALATES
BISPHENOLS

TRICLOSAN
 ALUMINIUM
 BHT (BUTYLATED HYDROXYTOLUENE)
 PESTICIDES-CHLORPYRIFOS
 BENZOPHENONE
 FLAME RETARDANT

- Look for information about the substance on the Internet and complete the table.
- Add any information to the table that may be relevant to the decision or complement that already provided.
- Discuss and make a decision: would you consume this product or not?
- Go back to point 1

SUBSTANCE EXERCISE:		
Name of substance		
What is this substance used for?		
What kind of products contain this substance?		
	INFORMATION A (And other information supporting A)	INFORMATION B (Not supporting A)
Is it harmful for the health, the environment or both?		
Link(s)		
Some relevant information necessary to make the decision		

Decision: Would you buy it?		

Sharing and reflection in whole group

Back in the main session, every group shares their findings about the chosen ingredient or substance, the trainer tries to give special importance to the doubts that may have arisen during the activity and to the new questions each group has asked. The trainer explains Critical Thinking is about questioning and analysing information from different points of view.

After each presentation, participants are invited to share their thoughts and any relevant information they know about the chosen ingredient or substance .

The trainer leads the discussion by organising speaking turns, focusing the debate on the main issues that arise and summarizing from time to time.

Final reflection on Critical Thinking

The trainer gives some key points for the final reflection in a presentation. There are two main different points of view in this activity: **scientific and naturalistic**.

Naturalistic point of view:

It is based on the idea that natural is always better than artificial.

According to this approach:

- All chemicals are harmful.
- The use of chemicals in consumer products is excessive and unjustified.
- Our responsibility as citizens is to be critical of the products we buy and not to be misled by scientists and companies.

What they lose sight of:

- Natural is not always synonymous with good.
- Scientists do not always have economic interests. There are scientific bodies that make objective analyses of the impact of substances.
- The amount of substance is relevant.

- Often the level of toxicity is much higher than the amount contained in the product.

Scientific point of view:

It is based on the idea that the critics and fears of society are the result of ignorance and lack of knowledge about scientific terms and regulatory authorities.

According to this approach:

- All chemicals are good, because they are useful and have been proven to be unharmed.
- The use of chemicals in consumer products is well regulated and justified.
- Citizens can trust scientist, because they are objective, and companies, because they are regulated.
- All substances can be harmful in excess, it is the amount of substance in a product that determines its toxicity.

What they lose sight of:

Science is a work in progress. New evidence about the harmfulness of a product can appear at any time.

Regulations often do not take into account the environmental impact of products.

Scientific studies are not always impartial. Sometimes they can be compromised by the companies that fund them.

In some cases, substances are used that are not necessary and for which there is a better known, natural or environmentally friendly alternative, but which is more expensive for the manufacturer.

Society – and debate within that society – can often appear polarised, with people taking one of two opposing views on a topic. Debates that focus solely on these opposing views miss many important elements of a discussion. In order to think critically, a person must know where they stand initially on an issue in order to be aware of their own biases when presented with new information. They must also be willing to try to understand an alternative point of view in order to be as objective as possible.

The trainer presents some of the most interesting ideas that each point of view can add to the debate.

Part II. Analysis of the Process

8. Recalling all steps of a model activity/ lesson
9. Analysis of a model activity/ lesson from learner's perspective
10. Analysis of a model activity/ lesson from adult educator's perspective
11. Discussions: how did we learn? /what did we learn?

Part III. Planning for Implementation

1. Discussions about how & to whom this lesson/ activity can be applied at local contexts
2. Development of a draft plan for implementation

Possible adaptations

Content: look for any other information that is new and polarised, for example, healthy food, animal rights, environment, migration, etc.

Time: schedule work in accordance with group size; take breaks if necessary; leave enough time for reflection, analysis of the process and planning for implementation.

Work in the main session/break out rooms: if the group of learners is small, there is no need to work in breakout rooms. If the group is big, it is recommended to work in pairs of trainers/adult educators.

References

ECHA (European Chemicals Agency): <https://echa.europa.eu/home>

Chemical Safety Facts: <https://www.chemicalsafetyfacts.org/>

American Chemistry Council: <https://www.americanchemistry.com/>

Snopes (English): <https://www.snopes.com/>

Maldita Ciencia (Spanish): <https://maldita.es/malditaciencia/1>