Media literacy methodology and material for parents (grandparents)

Methodological Framework

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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 contributions:

ItF Institut Kassel e.V. – Frauencomputerschule (DE)
Planeta Ciencias (ES)
Apricot Training Management Ltd. (UK)

Editorial coordinator: Daiva Penkauskienė

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

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

Month/ Year: November 2021

2 Methodological framework

2.1 The choice of our approach

Target group

The activities proposed in this project are designed to serve as guidance and support to parents and grandparents who, concerned about the dangers of the use of information and communication technologies, want to teach their children to deal with them in a safe and thoughtful way.

The adults (parents and grandparents) will be responsible for directing the activities and experiences and so are a key focus of the program. The children and grandchildren must benefit from the activities and experiences.

We can therefore define two target groups, each with different characteristics:

1) Primary target group: Parents and grandparents
2) Secondary target group: Children and grandchildren 6 - 15 years old

	Primary target group **Parents and Grandparents**	**Secondary target group** **Children**
Digital skills	- Different levels of digital skills depending on their experience[1]. - More likely to understand the risks associated with use of technologies. - Less likely to have personal experience of dealing with problems associated with the use of technologies. - 75% of parents use Social Media and use it for parenting support[2].	- Digital natives. - Greater vulnerability to the risks of life in general and of the digital world in particular - They are less aware of the digital risks - They teach themselves how to find information on the internet[3]. - They are not able to gather and manage information independently with precision and evaluative judgment. (International Computer and Information Literacy)
Attitude and motivation	- Possible lack of confidence in their command of the subject. - Need support to gain experience	- Possible overconfidence in their mastery of the subject. - Interest in technology-related work. - Low or no concern on possible

[1] YORAM ESHET-ALKALAI AND ERAN CHAJUT. (2009) *Changes over time in digital literacy*. Cyber Psychology & Behavior.713-715.

[2] PEW RESEARCH CENTRE. (2015) *Parents and Social Media* https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/07/16/parents-and-social-media/#fn-13802-1

[3] NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND STATISTICS. *International Computer and Information Literacy Study 2018* https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/icils/

	Primary target group Parents and Grandparents	Secondary target group Children
	and comfort with technology[4]. - Little concern in two out of three families[1]. Parents and grandparents looking for activities on digital safety may already be more aware of risks/more proactive in keeping children safe online - Concern grows when children are from the age of five onwards and is greatest in adolescence. - Depending on the issue, parents can show relatively low levels of concern.	risks. - Where adults tend to see risks, they tend to see as opportunities.
Critical thinking	- More experience allows them to think more judiciously, even if they have less training on the subject - Older people may be less likely to change their minds or think flexibly - The peak of an adult's critical thinking development is around the mid-thirties[5].	- They are in the process of acquiring these skills

Parenting education

Parents and grandparents play a vital role in the development of children, but they are not always equipped to deal with the challenges that their children face in the digital era. Support needs to be available to parents and grandparents to help increase awareness and understanding of the risks.

Parents and grandparents may not always be as skilled in digital literacy as their children, but they are much more experienced when it comes to everyday life problems, risks, and dangers, and are more judicious when dealing with a new problem.

Very often they can feel lost and disoriented when dealing with a digital problem, lacking confidence in their abilities to find a solution or guide their children.

The main purpose of educating parents and grandparents on digital issues should be increasing their empowerment and giving them some skills and tools that are easy to apply.

[4] SCHLEURS, K., QUAN HAASE, A. & MARTIN, K. (2017). *Problematizing the Digital Literacy Paradox in the Context of Older Adults' ICT Use: Aging, Media Discourse, and Self-Determination*. Canadian hournal of communication. https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2017v42n2a3130

[5] FRIEND & ZUBEK. (2016) *The efects of age on critical thinking ability*. Oxford Journal of gerontology. doi=10.1.1.1033.6915&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Playful methodologies

A play-based methodology results in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, where time passes quickly and the ego is diluted. Well-being is fundamental to all learning, and play is one of the best ways to facilitate it.

Any mistakes made are easier to accept in a game format as they are an inherent part of any game. It is can be a particularly helpful way of learning about an unfamiliar subject. In playful activities, participants are more comfortable taking risks, and risk-taking can lead to more learning. Therefore, it can be very helpful for parents and grandparents who feel uncomfortable discussing technology issues with their children and grandchildren, as both are learning from their mistakes and discovering more as they work through the challenges.

Embedding fantasy, role-play, or humor in the exploration of ideas and materials increases engagement in learning[6]. Playful activities allow the learners: To concentrate on an activity in which he or she can use his or her skills to meet clear demand, thereby, forgetting his or her own problems, and his or her own separate identity[7].

Moreover, playful family activities result in a better parent-child relationship and promotes children's emotional skills[8].

For an activity to be playful it must:

- Be informal. Take place in a familiar and relaxed atmosphere.
- Be motivating in itself, fun, interesting or engaging.
- Challenge or difficulty must be appropriate for the level of the participants.
- Individual, collaborative or competitive.
- Have a simple reward, i.e. when a task is completed correctly, the game should make it evident.

Family activities

One of the main risks of the use of technologies by young people is isolation from their families. Young people have a window open to the outside world where information of all kinds can come in and out, while they are in a room with the door closed.

Whether it is a metaphorical or a real door, it is a problem. Young people are very vulnerable and need the support of adults who can educate them about using technologies responsibly, efficiently and without risks to their emotional health.

This is why family activities within this context are particularly appropriate. The conversations, queries, debates or discussions that may arise from them will help to facilitate family communication, identify where each young person is most vulnerable, and create a routine of dialogue between parents or grandparents and their children.

---

[6] WAINWRIGHT, N., GOODWAY, J., WHITEHEAD, M., WILLIAMS, A. & KIRK, D. (2019) *Playful pedagogy for deeper learning: exploring the implementation of the play-based foundation phase in Wales.* Early Child Development and Care. Volume 190, Issue 1, 2. Pages 43-53

[7] CSIKSZENTMIHALYI, M. (1975) *Play and intrisic rewards*. Journal of Humanistic Psychology Volume 15, Issue 3, Pages 41-63 https://doi.org/10.1177/002216787501500306

[8] SHORER, M., SWISSA, O., LEVAVI, P., & SWISSA, A. (2019) *Parental playfulness and children's emotional regulation: the mediating role of parents' emotional regulation and the parent–child relationship*. Early Child Development and Care, DOI: 10.1080/03004430.2019.1612385

Play-in-family approach

Our approach is the result of a playful methodology applied to the practice of activities in family.

This combination leads to the use of practical activities based on challenges, games, riddles and creativity that provide a pleasant family moment and open a channel of communication between generations. In these activities, both, adults and children should get involved and cooperate to find solutions to the challenges proposed.

The activities should be led by the adults in the family to help increase their confidence in their own ability to support their children on the use of technologies. To facilitate this, the language used must be targeted at adults. It is also useful to include a section addressing any doubts, questions or difficulties that might arise for the adults in the course of the activity.

Although the parents will be leading the activities it should be noted that they are not trained educators. It is important to use informal and non-technical language to make the activities more approachable. Propose playful challenges in which it is assumed that they don't know the answers.

Interesting and meaningful

Often adults, as well as children, need some help to improve their critical thinking skills. Therefore, the activities should also be of interest to adults, allowing them to learn while they teach. The activities proposed should be easy, or when they are not, it should be made clear that they are not expected to know the answers.

To make activities more interesting for adults, we can use real life problems that we know they are interested in and their personal experience. This can also help them feel more confident, as it uses their existing knowledge. Practical and real-life activities are also more meaningful. It is important to include reflection at the end that helps strengthen the knowledge acquired.

Young children may only be able to concentrate on a task for a short period of time. We can plan activities that involve a variety of short tasks to help children concentrate.

Critical thinking, digital and media literacy

Of course, we must not forget the ultimate purpose of our activities, which is improving critical thinking skills applied to the use of technologies.

The best activities for this purpose are hands-on activities that are as close as possible to real life problems. In these activities, the children (and their families) must:

- Identify, analyse and evaluate information in different formats and sources
- Question, challenge and evaluate meaning of any information in any form and use it accordingly
- Understand the risks of the use of technologies for their privacy, health, and social skills.
- Rationally consider evidence, context, methods, standards and conceptualisation in deciding what to believe or what to do.

The competences we aim to develop in the children are:

Competence	Description
Communication & cooperation	Fluent communication between family members, establishment of communication routines, trust that they can communicate with adults about digital technologies.
Increased knowledge	Understanding/awareness of main concepts, themes, issues
Developed personal abilities	Providing CT skills: comparison and analysis of information, data, evidence and experience, asking the right questions, ethical reasoning skills, understanding of hidden intentions, skills to detect media bias and propaganda in National and World News, gaining intellectual autonomy

2.2 Methodological recommendations

We have shown how family activities with a playful approach can contribute to improving communication and building a good learning environment. With this in mind, we can propose some recommendations based on existing methodologies that will make them more effective and suitable to the objectives and target group of our project.

2.2.1 Experiential learning

Experiential learning is a teaching method based on the theory of David A. Kolb in the 1970's. This learning model states that people learn best when they actively participate in a reflective process based on real-life experiences. It proposes that teaching should be adapted to the way different individuals process and understand information.

Kolb's and Fry's learning cycle for experiential learning is composed of four stages that describe how one person processes and applies information. The four stages are: **concrete experience, observation of and reflection on that experience, formulation of abstract concepts based upon the reflection and testing the new concepts**.

Learning can begin at any stage of the cycle. However, to maximise learning opportunities it is ideal to complete all four stages. It typically begins with the individual experiencing an activity and reflecting on what has happened. From that reflection, the mind extracts a meaning that is finally put into practice when the individual changes his or her behaviour or attitude. From this change, the individual can make new experiences that begin the cycle again.

Kolb's cycle is actually a natural cycle, experiential learning occurs spontaneously and continuously in the lives of individuals. However, if an educational experience is to result in effective learning, Kolb's theory shows that reflection and the formation of new concepts are the phases that make a learning experience complete.

Therefore, we can use the cycle as a guide to make our activities more effective by including sections that lead to each of the phases of experiential learning. Much experiential learning can occur naturally in daily life. It can also be configured or structured to guide students through an experience and maximise learning outcomes.

Concrete Experience: Learning by experiencing. People learn by being involved in an activity or experience and remembering how they felt. This is the primary way in which we learn and can serve as the basis for all other stages in the learning cycle.

Reflective Observation: Learning by Processing. Using a concrete experience as a basis, the student reflects on the experience to obtain more information or deepen his or her understanding of the experience. To help this stage to be effective, Kolb proposes some reflective questions:

- *Did you notice?*
- *Why did that happen?*
- *Does that happen in life?*
- *Why does that happen?*
- *How can you use that?*

Abstract Conceptualization: Learning by generalizing. Based on the reflection of an experience, the student consciously or unconsciously theorizes, classifies or generalizes his or her experience in an effort to generate new information. This "thinking" stage serves to

organise knowledge, allowing students to see the "big picture" and identify patterns and norms. This stage is critical for students to be able to transfer their knowledge from one context to another.

Active experimentation: Learning by doing. The student applies or tests his or her newly acquired knowledge in the real world. The application of learning itself is a new experience from which the cycle begins again.

At each stage of the cycle, a specific type of learning takes place: experiencing, reflecting, thinking or doing. The experiential learning cycle is commonly represented by two continuums that are useful for the production of information. In the 'y' axis, also known as the perception continuum, there are the two possible ways of facing an experience, Concrete Expression (CE) or Abstract Conceptualisation (AC). The concept of learning is basically our emotional response to learning, how we think and/or feel about it.

The processing continuum that includes two different ways of processing an experience through 'observing' or 'doing', Reflective Observation (RO) or Active Experimentation (AE) is situated on the 'x' axis. The processing continuum is basically how we approach a specific task. Kolb argues that students are not able to perform both actions on one axis at the same time (e.g. thinking and feeling) and for that reason we have a tendency to perceive and process learning in a particular way. This tendency to rely on certain ways of perceiving and processing information is what Kolb refers to as a learning preference or learning style, which can vary based on content and context.

There are four different learning styles based on the four-stage experiential learning cycle. Each has a unique learning style or preference, but to achieve a balanced learning experience it is important that learners use all four learning styles.

2.2.2 Bite-sized learning

Micro-learning is a teaching strategy defined by short-term, complete and independent content. Normally, this content is focused on advice, tips or interesting and didactic data. In other words, content that can be easily captured and assimilated by people. For this reason, Microlearning is positioned as an extremely efficient strategy for sharing relevant information.

Micro-learning is also an extremely efficient method for reinforcing previously taught content or for extending information on a subject that people already have knowledge of. It can be carried out in various ways: exercises, small videos or even feedback.

What benefits does it provide to students? The assimilation of the content is improved from the moment the student takes advantage of these small pieces of information on a specific subject and in a structured way. Likewise, micro-learning facilitates the review of concepts and ideas because it allows for complementary and reinforcing exercises and content with which to deal with diversity. It offers access to ubiquitous and instantaneous education thanks to new technologies

Target group: Parents, grandparents AND, secondarily, their children	
Challenges/ Characteristics of our target group	**Possible solutions / Our approach**
We find very often that adults as well as children, need some help to improve their critical thinking skills	Activities should be interesting for adults too, helping them to learn while they teach Family activities in which both adults and children get involved
Some adults struggle to understand the subject	Make them feel confident with easy activities. Activities in which it is assumed that they don't know the answers
Some adults don't have time to read	Short activities Family activities to spend time together
Low self-esteem, self-trust in their capacity to support children on how to use technologies	Adults should be directors of the activity The language used must be targeted at adults Playful challenges in which it is assumed that they don't know the answers Prevent parents from developing doubts, questions or difficulties in the course of the activity
Adults educate, but they are not educators	We should use everyday and non-technical language
Young children have short concentration spans	Activities that involve a variety of tasks
Children's lack of confidence in their parent's technological knowledge	Family activities Adults should lead the activity Show children some clear examples of things they should not trust
Meaningful learning	Hands-on activities Real life problems Evocate prior or personal experience Reflections at the end of each activity
The best activity is the one that takes place	Short and easy activities Playful challenges No need for special materials or apps

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

To improve Media Literacy (ML)	Hands-on activities in which the children must: • Identify, analyse and evaluate information in different formats and sources • Question, challenge and evaluate meaning of any information in any form and use it accordingly
To improve Digital Literacy (DL)	Hands-on activities in which the children must: • Understand the risks on the use of technologies for their privacy, health, and social skills.
Critical Thinking	Hands-on activities in which the children must: • Rationally consider evidence, context, methods, standards and conceptualisation in deciding what to believe or what to do
Help parents and grandparents to protect their children	Family activities that initiate a communication routine

Characteristics of APRICOT project	
Our objectives	**Possible solutions / Our approach**
Meaningful learning	Hands-on activities Real life problems Evocate prior or personal experience Reflections at the end of each activity
The best activity is the one that takes place	Short and easy activities Playful challenges No need for special materials or apps
To improve Media Literacy (ML)	Hands-on activities in which the children must: • Identify, analyse and evaluate information in different formats and sources • Question, challenge and evaluate meaning of any information in any form and use it accordingly
To improve Digital Literacy (DL)	Hands-on activities in which the children must:

Characteristics of APRICOT project	
Our objectives	**Possible solutions / Our approach**
	• Understand the risks of the use of technologies for their privacy, health, and social skills.
To improve Critical Thinking (CT)	Hands-on activities in which the children must: • Rationally consider evidence, context, methods, standards and conceptualisation in deciding what to believe or what to do
To help parents and grandparents to protect their children	Family activities that initiate a communication routine

Methodological recommendations

Title:	**APRICOT** **Attentive parental education for wise being & co-being in changing times**		
Purpose	To improve the competency of parents and grandparents to develop the critical thinking (CT) & media literacy (ML) skills of their children or grandchildren.		
Participants	Parents & grandparents		
Scope	12 Bite-sized learning units		
Time	1 day of national training (or two half days)		
Objectives	1. To get acquainted with the topics of critical thinking, media literacy and digital literacy 2. To learn new hands-on techniques and exercises on CT & ML (Bite-sized learning tools) to do with their children/ grandchildren 3. To explore interactive, participative approaches to parental education regarding CT & ML	**Results**	1. Well acquired & received main project idea, concepts, outcomes & expected results 2. New knowledge and skills acquired regarding CT & ML by parents/grandparents and their children/grandchildren. 3. Bite-sized learning tools learnt and tested in practice with children and grandchildren 4. New suggestions, ideas & tips for the project outputs received from the partners

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Title:	APRICOT Attentive parental education for wise being & co-being in changing times		
	4. To contribute to the project outputs development 5. To share & learn from each other		and grandparents attending national courses 5. Increased network and support from other parents and grandparents attending national courses
Methodology	The methodology will be based on a mix of approaches: 1. Experiential learning and learning by doing 2. Bite-sized learning 1. **Experiential learning and learning by doing** approaches will be used in order to place the parents and children at the center of the learning, making them active actors of the learning. The methodology will be based on David Kolb's experiential learning model. **I. Concrete experience.** The parents and children will read together the instructions of the challenge / step-by-step guidelines. **II. Reflection observation**. Guiding questions to encourage reflections during and after the experience. **III. Conceptualization -** Guiding questions to reach conclusions. **IV. Active experimentation.** Suggestions on how to implement the learning in future real-life situations. The "5 Questions" model can be used: • Did you notice? • Why did that happen? • Does that happen in life? • Why does that happen? • How can you use that?		

Title:	APRICOT Attentive parental education for wise being & co-being in changing times
	2. Bite-sized learning Teaching by means of bite-sized learning tools is related to the trend of microlearning, which is an emergent informal learning strategy intended to quickly close gaps in knowledge and skills, in the context of completing a task. The BSL tools and microlearning have emerged to adapt to the lifestyles and rhythm of life in modern society. Each Bite sized tool created will contain a small piece of content and will focus on one learning objective only, as it is intended to reflect a single concept or idea by means of a range of sources such as: varied media format ranging from a YouTube video to a Wikipedia entry, blogs, wikis, video courses and lessons, tutorials, infographics, TEDTalks, Slideshare presentations and other Open Educational Resources (OER) collected from the Internet. Some will also be worksheets, real-life examples and step-by-step guidelines. The Bite sized tools will engage learners in self-paced learning activities to find immediate answers to questions that arise in completing a task such as “how does this work?”, or “what does this mean?”, or “who said that?”. Some of the BSL tools will have the format of challenges, so that learners can follow some step-by-step guidelines to reach a goal. The BSL tools will therefore encourage learners to ask themselves more questions and increase their critical thinking skills. The BSL tools are facilitated through Web 2.0 and mobile access and the communication through social media technologies (e.g., Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter) provides new ways of learning through collaboration and cooperation, which is very important especially for the disadvantaged parents and grandparents, who might be reluctant to enroll in a formal online course.
Methodological recommendations	• The exercises and Bite-sized learning tools chosen should be motivating and interesting to do, to learn by doing. • The format of the BSL tools should put the parents at the same level as their children/grandchildren, so they don't have to pretend they know something they don´t. • The BSL tools chosen will indirectly improve the family relations as the activities should be implemented by parents/grandparents together with their children. • **Everyone is a learner**. Parents/grandparents and children actively share the responsibility for creating and participating in the learning experience (the preparation, workload etc.). The parents have now the freedom to learn together with their children, while still taking responsibility for a successful learning experience. Children continue to learn but now can take the lead in defining how to solve the task/challenge, searching for extra information etc. • **Time:** the activities should be short, simple and easy to read and understand by all types of parents and grandparents (max 15 minutes to read).

Title:	APRICOT Attentive parental education for wise being & co-being in changing times
	• **Content:** small or very small units, narrow topics, simple issues (one issue at a time) • **Curriculum:** sub-topics. The activities should be based on current topics that don't become obsolete or can easily be updated by parents. • **Form:** challenges, tasks, step-by-step guidelines. The activities should be flexible, customizable. • **Process:** Read the instructions to follow. Act. Reflect. Self-assess. • **Media:** text, text files, videos, links, infographics, images, etc.
Evaluation, assessment & improved competencies	Each bite-sized learning unit will include questions for self-assessment and reflection on the knowledge and skills acquired.
Certification	The participants on the national pilot courses will get course attendance certificates issued by the partnership.
Registration	Parents and grandparents (and the general public) don't need to register in order to access the materials available as OER (Open Educational Resources). The registration for national courses is upon decision of national project teams
Materials and initial preparation	The material for the national courses will be provided by each partner in their language. The specific requirements for national course participants are going to be set by national teams.

2.3 Structure of the Guide. Main themes and activities

THEMES	SUB-THEMES FOR BSL TOOLS	AGE GROUP
Introduction to the "Play with your children" guide	**Methodological framework**	Adult educators
	"Play with your children" guide for parents and grandparents	Parents and grandparents
Moral Dilemmas in the Contemporary World	**Introduction into the theme:**	GENERAL
	Sub-theme 1. Fair personal, interpersonal & social decisions	12+ years old
	Sub-theme 2. Society of appearance/image	6-10 years old

THEMES	SUB-THEMES FOR BSL TOOLS	AGE GROUP
	Sub-theme 3 Role model promoted by the digital culture	From kindergarten to upper secondary school.
Informed decisions Planeta Ciencias, ES	**Introduction into the theme**	GENERAL
	Sub-theme 1. The environmental impact of your actions	9 - 15 years old
	Sub-theme 2. Who is right?... and why? Should you believe everything you read?	15 - 18 years old
	Sub-theme 3. "Screens-free corner" Find information on how much time you should spend with technologies and create a corner in the house with attractive, alternative activities.	All ages
Misinformation & disinformation APRICOT, UK	**Introduction into the theme:**	GENERAL
	Sub-theme 1: What is 'Fake News'? - a Parents/Grandparents Guide What is fake news? Why do people create it? How can fake news impact children and young people?	9 -11s 11-13s 14+ + Parents and Grandparents
	Sub-theme 2: Spot the Difference- Fact or Fake Strategies to help children develop their critical digital literacy skills to spot the difference between fact and fiction online.	9 - 11s 11-13s 14+ + Parents and Grandparents
	Sub-theme 3: Fact Checking and Reporting	9 - 11s 11-13s 14+ + Parents and Grandparents
Safety & privacy ItF Institute, DE	**Introduction into the theme:**	GENERAL
	Sub-theme 1: Media competence Media professional or media junkie? Sensitisation of media use.	from the age of 12 up
	Sub-theme 2: Cyberbullying The facets of Bullying. How can you help? How can you protect your child?	from the age of 12 up

THEMES	SUB-THEMES FOR BSL TOOLS	AGE GROUP
	Sub-theme 3: Protection on internet Strategies to recognize and avoid dangers, Critical use of social networks Tips for parents / grandparents / children	from the age of 10 up

2.4 Evaluation

In order to carry out the evaluation of the different activities contained in this document, each partner of the APRICOT project will conduct a pilot course with parents and grandparents. At the end of these pilot courses, feedback from the participants will be collected. The feedback will evaluate if the activities have been motivating, useful and relevant, and if participants believe that they are possible to carry out in their own family environment.

Once the pilot courses have been carried out and the feedback from the families has been collected, it has been incorporated into this document.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union