MODULE:

INFORMATION QUALITY: THE GAME

DRAFT
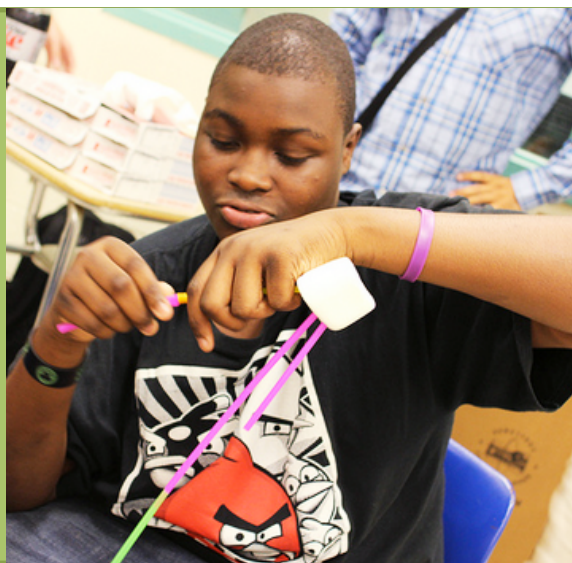
Youth and Media

Overview

This module familiarizes participants with the different factors which are important for consideration when searching for and evaluating information.

From there, participants can create promotional campaigns for their projects in order to engage in the creation process and put into action those elements which they identified as compelling during search and evaluation.

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Explore how search and evaluation processes play a role in online information quality.
- Understand that different information sources offer varying qualities which may be more or less useful to answer a given question in a particular context.
- Explore how social media campaigns work.
- Apply what participants have learned about the search and evaluation phases to shape their own content creation activity

Age/Grade

13-18 years old
Grades 8-12

Audience

Entry level and up (no experience necessary)

Duration

120 minutes

- Marshmallow Challenge (25 minutes)
- IQ Game (45 minutes)
- Social Media Campaign (30 minutes)
- Debrief/Closure (20 minutes)

Materials

- Measuring Tape
- IQ Game Cards **(to create more cards, go HERE)**
- Art supplies
- Timer

Marshmallow Challenge Supplies (per team of 2-3 participants)

- 20+ straws
- 1 marshmallow
- Masking tape strips (1 yard)
- 1 brown paper lunch bag

Marshmallow Challenge
(25 minutes)

Note: This warm-up activity was adapted from the Marshmallow Challenge TED talk. More elaborate instructions can be found at http://marshmallowchallenge.com.

Goal: This activity is about evaluating a set number of resources and creating something out of those resources.

Materials: Marshmallow challenge supplies, timer, measuring tape

[*Divide participants into teams of 2-3.*]

Say: When I say "Go!", you can open your team's paper bag. In **eighteen** minutes, your team must build the tallest structure out of the resources you will find in this bag. Your marshmallow **must** be at the top, and your tower needs to be able to **stand on its own**. Keep in mind that you don't have to use all of the resources.

[*Afterwards, compare tower heights.*]

Say:
- What was the most challenging part of this activity?
- What was the easiest part of this activity?
- Did your strategy change as you did the activity? Why? How?

Say: So, in the marshmallow challenge, you used the resources available to you to create something to meet the goal of the project. Some groups might have **changed their strategies** as they worked through the problem and found different elements that worked differently than the way they originally planned. In the next activity, you'll be going through a similar process as you navigate the online maze of search and evaluation.

IQ Game
(45 minutes)

Goal
For each round, the team with the "best" link (and accompanying supporting argument) wins the point. The goal of the game is to explore how we search and evaluate information in the world.

Number of players
2+ teams (preferably of 2-3 students)

Game Components
- Cards for each round (10+)
- Copies of the starting "link" for each round – 1 per team
- Cards for sample round (3-4)
- Timer

Setup
- Before each round, distribute the cards around the room so that the side with the search engine result is face up (the content should be on the back).
- Set the timer. For the first round, teams should have 7 minutes, for the second round, 6 minutes, etc. *Time limits can be changed.*

Rules for Each Round
Note: The facilitator can demonstrate the game with the **sample round**.

- At the start of each round a new question and context will be presented.
- The Google Search will be read by the facilitator.
- Each team will receive the first card, which is the first search result. *Youths often click on the first search result in a Google search.*
- There are 9+ other cards placed around the room. The top side looks like the information on the Google Search result page, and the down side is the page content when a search result is clicked on.
- Each team decides if they like the search result (the one they are given), and if they want to click on it (flip it over), and if they want to use the information (keep the card) or not (turn the card back over and continue searching). As teams move around the room in a physical Google "search," **they must never be holding more than one search result card at a time.**
- When time runs out, teams have 1-2 minutes to discuss and prepare their argument.
- At the end of the round, each team needs one card they use to
    - answer the original search query
    - explain why they chose the source
    - why their source should be trusted
- The facilitator will judge the "winner" of each round.

Post-Round Discussion Questions

- Why did you choose this card? Why do you think it's the best result?
- Which factors did you think influenced your decision?
- When you search for things online, do you look for some of these same factors?
- What else do you look for?
- Why is your card better than Team X's?

Post-Game Discussion Questions

- As you played this game, did you change your strategies? How so?
- Which factors do you think are more important than others when you search for information?
- Are there any things which aren't on the cards which you think about when you decide if information is good?
- What would you include in your own media in order to attract other people and look legit to them?

Say: As each team played the game, their strategies changed. [*Link back to the Marshmallow Challenge.*] Also, we decided that certain things about websites can make us more likely to use or trust a site, such as... [*recap what participants said*]. So, keeping all of that in mind, now, *you* are going to pitch an idea for creating interesting, relevant, and reliable information online.

Media Campaign

(30 minutes)

Note: If participants do not have projects prepared, ask them to imagine that they are advertising a new film/band album/ media project of their choice. Having Powerpoint slides prepared for the social media campaign content is also helpful for visual learners. Additionally, although this activity is designed for three groups, it is easily adaptable for a different number of groups.

Goal: To explore how participants can leverage social media outside of a personal context. In order to "make it big" online, reaching out to real, individual people is critical. Remember to post regularly/schedule new content to be posted!

Materials: Flipchart, markers, art supplies, Powerpoint slides (optional)

Say: We've talked about how to search and evaluate information and the ways that people view that information. In this next activity, you'll be creating information and social media to promote your projects and build community online.

Things You Can Do in a Social Media Campaign:

- Create a **Facebook Page** & **Group**
- Use **Twitter** – engage in conversation & respond to followers, introduce #hashtags
- **YouTube** video – if you create a video on YouTube, post some behind-the-scenes material and other "bonus" content
- **Mentors** – contact mentors/role models with personal e-mails, because you never know when they might respond and help you out, give advice, or promote your work
- **Change.org** – A social networking site that connects people, empowering local groups to fight for causes that they believe in. (Notable example: the Trayvon Martin case:
  http://articles.latimes.com/2012/mar/26/nation/la-na-nn-trayvon-martin-case-poll-petition-20120326
- **Kickstarter.org** – People go to Kickstarter to build community around their projects. It's inspiring to be supported by strangers who are discovering your ideas for the first time. The community can give you feedback, press, and support.
- **Interlinking** – within your online content, link to other content you've created, in order to keep people looking at your content for a longer period of time.

Say: Are there other social media strategies that you've seen or liked which might be useful to think about for this activity? For this activity, you'll be working in three different groups to use social media to promote your work for three different audiences: **peers in your community, government,** and **parents/teachers/adults in the community.**

[*Divide participants into groups and assign them to different audiences.*]

Say: Each team is going to create a plan for how to get the word out about your project to that audience! Remember to think about Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. Each group has a pad of paper, markers, and art supplies. In **18 minutes**, we'll come back together, and each team and present their media promotion idea.

Debrief/Shareout

(12 minutes)

[*Ask participants to share their designs/artwork/new media.*]

Say:
- Would the same "plan" work for all three audiences? Why/why not?
- What are other ideas you can think of?
- How will you actually make these ideas happen in the future?
- In the Marshmallow Challenge, and the IQ Game, we used **teamwork** to solve challenges. How can teamwork help you improve the way that you use social media to promote your ideas online?

Closure

(8 minutes)

Say: Thank you *so* much for participating in all of today's activities! What is one thing you learned from the Google game we played today? [*Wait for response.*] That's awesome! We also talked about different things which are important to think about when you search for information. What are some of those factors? [*Wait for response.*] Don't forget that it's important to not just consider the content of a website, but other things too, such as when it was **last updated, the source** of the information, **relevance**, and **accessibility**.

After we talked about searching and evaluating information, we also talked about ways for you to promote your ideas and build communities online. What were some of those ways? How will you actually use these ideas?