Project Prometheus – A Guide to Spotting Digital Misinformation

📚 Lesson Titles + Descriptions

1. What *Is* Misinformation, Really?

Good question! Not all wrong stuff online is a lie on purpose. This lesson breaks down the difference between misinformation, disinformation, and just plain confusion.

2. The Algorithm Doesn't Love You

Your feed isn't neutral. It's designed to keep you scrolling, not to keep you informed. We'll look at how platforms decide what you see and why that matters.

3. Follow the Money

It's all about the Benjamins baby. Everyone's got a hustle, and media is no different. Learn how financial incentives shape what gets published and what doesn't.

4. That's Cap (Screenshots Lie)

Just because it looks like a tweet doesn't mean it's real. We'll break down how easy it is to fake screenshots and what to do instead of just hitting "share."

5. Echo Chambers: Your Internet Bubble

If everyone you follow agrees with you, that's not a coincidence. This lesson unpacks how people (and platforms) create filter bubbles (and how to pop them)

6. Fear is the Mind Killer

Outrage, fear, awe: these are buttons misinformation loves to press. We'll teach you how to notice when you're being manipulated and pause before reacting.

7. Fact-Checking Isn't Just for Nerds

Knowing how to double-check things is power. We'll walk through real, simple tools that can help you tell what's real without needing a PhD.

8. Go Ahead and Log Off for Me

Sometimes the smartest move is to step away. Learn when it's worth your time to engage and when to let the noise go. Stop getting ragebaited!

🧠 LESSON 1: *What Is Misinformation, Really?*

◆ **Slide 1: Terms That Actually Mean Things**

- **Misinformation** = false info shared *without* knowing it's false

- **Disinformation** = false info shared *on purpose*

- **Malinformation** = real info, but shared in a harmful or misleading way
   Examples:

- Misinformation: Your aunt sharing a fake vaccine stat she saw online

- Disinformation: A troll farm posting fake election results to confuse people

- Malinformation: Leaking someone's private texts to ruin their rep

◆ **Slide 2: Why It Spreads So Fast**

- People love stuff that confirms what they already believe
  - "Lies run the world before truth can tie its shoes" - Rapsody

- Anger, shock, or fear = more clicks, more shares

- Most people don't pause to fact-check, especially if it *feels* true

◆ **Slide 3: Why It Matters**

- Decisions (votes, health, school safety) get made based on bad info

- Misinformation isn't just annoying—it can be dangerous

- Understanding the *why* behind false info is the first step to resisting it

❓ Quiz (4 Questions)

Q1: What's the difference between misinformation and disinformation?
A) There is no difference
B) One is accidental, the other is on purpose ✅
C) Misinformation is about politics only

Q2: Which of these is malinformation?
A) A satire post
B) Sharing someone's private DMs to embarrass them ✅
C) Accidentally reposting a fake article

Q3: What emotion helps misinformation spread fastest?
A) Boredom
B) Surprise
C) Anger ✅

Q4 (T/F): Misinformation can still be harmful, even if someone didn't mean to share false info.
✅ True

🧠 LESSON 2: *The Algorithm Doesn't Love You*

- ### Slide 1: Algorithms Are Not Your Friend

  - Social media sites make money from your attention

  - They show you content you're most likely to click, not what's most accurate

  - That's why you'll see drama and controversy before facts

- ### Slide 2: The Feedback Loop

  - You like one conspiracy video → you get more

  - Your feed isn't reality—it's a reflection of what the app *thinks* you like

  - It's easy to end up in a loop of extreme or false content

- ### Slide 3: Take Back Control

  - Turn off autoplay

- Follow people who challenge your views

- Use search engines, not just feeds, to find info

❓ Quiz (4 Questions)

Q1: What do platforms like TikTok and YouTube want most from users?
A) To keep you informed
B) To make you laugh
C) To keep you watching ✅

Q2: What happens when you interact with one type of content?
A) You stop seeing it
B) The platform shows you more of it ✅
C) You get banned

Q3 (T/F): Algorithms show you the most truthful information first.
❌ False

Q4: What's one way to break the algorithm's influence?
A) Delete your account
B) Only use one app
C) Follow people with different opinions ✅

🧠 LESSON 3: *Follow the Money*

◆ Slide 1: The Media Has Bills Too

- News sites make money from ads, subscriptions, or products

- That means their content can be shaped by what gets clicks or sells

◆ Slide 2: Real Examples

- The Daily Wire pushes outrage because it sells memberships

- Steven Crowder jokes while selling merch (those mugs aren't free)

- The Washington Post? Owned by Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon

◆ **Slide 3: What to Look For**

- Who owns the site?

- What's being sold—ads, products, an idea?

- Do they benefit if you believe them?

❓ Quiz (4 Questions)

Q1: Why might a media company post something sensational?
A) To be helpful
B) To go viral and make money ✅
C) To avoid controversy

Q2: Who owns The Washington Post?
A) Elon Musk
B) Jeff Bezos ✅
C) Mark Zuckerberg

Q3: Which of these is a financial incentive?
A) Being verified
B) Selling merchandise ✅
C) Getting likes

Q4 (T/F): Knowing who profits from a post can help you judge its bias.
✅ True

🧠 LESSON 4: *That's Cap (Screenshots Lie)*

◆ **Slide 1: Screenshots, Deepfakes, and AI—Oh My**

- Anyone can fake a screenshot using free tools. It's super easy.

- But now we've also got **AI-generated images** and **deepfake videos** that can show people saying or doing things they never did.

- It looks real. It spreads fast. It's often fake.

   Example: A fake image of the Pope in a designer puffer coat went viral before people realized it was made with AI. Same with fake videos of celebrities or politicians saying things they never said.

- ◆ **Slide 2: Spot the Fakes**

  - **Screenshots**: Blurry? Weird font? No link to the real post? Red flags.

  - **AI images**: Look for messed up hands, too-perfect faces, weird backgrounds, or text that looks like gibberish.

  - **Videos**: If a video seems off, check the source—deepfakes often spread without context or come from shady accounts.

    Tip: Reverse image search. Tools like Google Lens or InVID (for videos) can help check where a file came from.

- ◆ **Slide 3: What You Can Do**

  - Don't trust a post *just* because it has a picture or video.

  - Always look for a **real source**—can you find it on a trusted site, or is it only showing up on Twitter/X or TikTok?

  - If something feels *too* perfect or wild to be true, stop and ask: *Who made this, and why?*

❓ Quiz (Updated)

Q1: What's one clue a screenshot might be fake?
A) It's from a famous person
B) The font looks off or there's no real source ✅
C) It has a lot of comments

Q2: Which of these is a common flaw in AI-generated images?
A) Bad lighting
B) Strange-looking hands or backgrounds ✅
C) Black and white coloring

Q3: What's a deepfake?
A) A joke video
B) A real video edited for fun
C) A fake video that uses AI to make someone look like they said or did something they didn't ✅

Q4 (T/F): If a video is going viral, it means it's probably true.
❌ False