



Digital Literate

Digital and Media Literacy: Good Practice Catalogue for Schools

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1. Introduction

The Digital Literate project is an initiative aimed at enhancing digital and media literacy among educators and students by integrating these competencies into school curricula. As part of the Erasmus+ Programme, the project focuses on teacher training, student-led digital outputs, and school-wide engagement in digital literacy topics. By fostering a structured approach to digital education, it seeks to create an environment where both educators and students can critically navigate and contribute to the digital world.

At the heart of this initiative is the Good Practice Catalogue, a comprehensive resource that gathers successful approaches to digital and media literacy from various schools. This catalogue includes Learning Unit Plans (LUPs) designed by teachers and digital projects created by students, providing a valuable reference for other schools seeking to implement or enhance their own digital literacy programs. By compiling these best practices, the catalogue serves as a practical tool for educators, ensuring that digital literacy education is both accessible and adaptable.

Beyond its immediate impact on participating schools, the catalogue contributes to broader European efforts to advance digital and media literacy. It aligns with key initiatives such as the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027), which underscores the need for digital skills at all levels of education. Additionally, it supports the objectives outlined in the Guidelines for Teachers on Tackling Disinformation and Promoting Digital Literacy.

Schools can utilize this catalogue in multiple ways. It provides a structured framework for integrating digital literacy practices into the curriculum, offering adaptable strategies that can be tailored to different educational contexts. By following the examples within the catalogue, schools can engage students in creating digital content, fostering critical thinking and responsible digital engagement. Additionally, the catalogue serves as a guide for organizing digital literacy events, helping schools raise awareness within their communities and build stronger connections between educators, students, and external stakeholders such as journalists and digital creators.

2. The Digital Literate Project

The Digital Literate project is a European initiative funded under the Erasmus+ Programme with the goal of equipping educators and students with digital and media literacy skills. Led by Vilnius University in collaboration with schools and organizations from Italy, Portugal, and Romania, the project aims to empower teachers through professional development while fostering critical digital engagement among students.

By integrating digital literacy topics into school curricula, Digital Literate addresses the growing need for responsible online behavior, critical media consumption, and the ability to navigate the digital world safely and effectively.

One of the key objectives of the project is to capacitate educators by providing continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities. This is achieved through a structured Digital and Media Literacy training path, which includes a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), capacity-building programs, and live workshops. These training opportunities are designed to help educators integrate digital and media literacy topics into their teaching practices, ensuring that students are exposed to these essential competencies in a meaningful and engaging way.

In addition to teacher training, Digital Literate also promotes student-led digital content creation. Through the development and implementation of Learning Unit Plans, teachers piloted digital literacy activities in classrooms, enabling students to create their own digital outputs. This Good Practice Catalogue showcases innovative approaches to teaching and learning digital literacy and serves as a reference document for schools across Europe, providing practical examples of how digital and media literacy can be successfully integrated into different subjects and learning environments.

To further engage the school community, the project includes the organization of Digital and Media Literacy Community Events, dedicated to presenting the Digital Literate project and the Good Practice Catalogue. These events serve as a platform for discussion, skill development, and awareness-raising, encouraging schools to take an active role in fostering digital citizenship and critical media literacy.

Beyond its immediate impact on participating schools, the Digital Literate project is designed to have a long-term, sustainable effect. By making its resources open and accessible, the project ensures that its methodologies and best practices can be replicated and adapted by other schools and educators beyond the partnership. Furthermore, the initiative contributes to European efforts to combat disinformation, promote safe internet use, and enhance digital skills in alignment with the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) and other key European Commission strategies.

By combining teacher training, student engagement, and community involvement, the Digital Literate project represents a holistic approach to digital and media literacy in schools. Through its comprehensive framework, the project not only supports educators and students but also fosters a wider cultural shift toward responsible and informed digital participation.

3. The European and national context

Across Europe, policymakers have recognized the urgent need to equip citizens with strong digital and media literacy skills. The European Commission has developed a range of policies and initiatives to support this goal, ensuring that digital education remains a priority in an increasingly technology-driven society. There are various [initiatives across the EU](#), bringing together governments, businesses, and educational institutions to promote digital skills at all levels. Meanwhile, the [Media Literacy policies](#) aim to empower individuals to critically engage with media and combat the spread of disinformation. Schools can also benefit from tools, which help educational institutions assess and improve their digital readiness.

At the national level, each country implements strategies that align with these European policies, adapting them to local education systems. These strategies often include teacher training programs, aimed at equipping educators with the necessary skills to integrate digital literacy into their teaching. Additionally, many governments have worked to embed digital competence frameworks into school curricula, ensuring that students develop essential digital skills from an early age. Partnerships between public institutions and private organizations further enhance access to digital tools, enabling schools to implement innovative teaching methods.

The importance of digital literacy in modern education cannot be overstated. In an era where information is widely accessible but often unreliable, students must develop critical thinking skills to evaluate sources and distinguish between credible information and misinformation. Digital literacy also plays a key role in preparing students for the workforce, as many careers increasingly require proficiency in digital tools and technologies. Furthermore, understanding online safety and ethical digital behaviour is essential for ensuring that young people navigate the internet responsibly. By fostering these competencies, schools can empower students to become informed and responsible digital citizens.

4. Methodology

The process of compiling this Good Practice Catalogue follows a structured approach to ensure that the selected practices are effective, transferable, and relevant to the needs of schools across Europe. The catalogue is developed through an extensive collaboration between partner schools, where teachers contribute Learning Unit Plans (LUPs) and students provide digital outputs that showcase innovative digital literacy practices. These contributions are gathered through project submissions, but also through focus groups with educators, allowing for the exchange of experiences and the identification of best practices that can be adapted to different educational settings.

To maintain the quality and relevance of the catalogue, specific criteria are used to select the best practices. Each selected practice must address key digital and media literacy competencies, demonstrate measurable learning outcomes, and be easily transferable to other schools. Additionally, the practices present practical solutions to common challenges faced by educators when integrating digital literacy into their teaching. By applying these selection criteria, the catalogue ensures that only the most effective and impactful practices are included.

The information presented in the catalogue is drawn from multiple data sources, including school-based initiatives, their Learning Unit Plans and focus group conversation. Through these diverse sources, the catalogue captures a broad spectrum of approaches to digital education, allowing schools to learn from real-world examples. This process is further strengthened by collaborations with education agencies, ensuring that the selected best practices align with broader educational goals.

By following this methodology, the Digital Literate project ensures that the Good Practice Catalogue is a valuable and practical resource for schools seeking to strengthen their digital literacy education. Through the collective efforts of educators, students, and policymakers, the catalogue serves as a guide for fostering digital skills, critical thinking, and responsible media engagement in schools across Europe.

In the Annex of this document, we present several examples of Digital Literate project outputs (Learning Unit Plans) from three participant schools.

4. Shared practices across lesson plans

This catalogue compiles effective media and digital literacy practices across different disciplines, providing a robust framework for fostering critical thinking and digital awareness among students.

1. Critical thinking and source evaluation

One of the key skills students develop through the Digital Literacy project lesson plans is the ability to critically evaluate media sources. Lessons focus on teaching students how to analyse the credibility of news stories, identify bias, and recognise misinformation. This practice helps students distinguish between factual reporting and misleading content, empowering them to become responsible consumers of media.

Example: Lesson "*Truth - The First Victim of the Conflict in Ukraine*" engages students in examining news reports for bias and misinformation, fostering media scepticism and analytical thinking.

Example: Lesson "*EXTRA! EXTRA!*" had students compare real and fake news stories to recognize manipulation techniques in media.

Example: Lesson "*Climate Changes Between Myth and Reality*" focused on debunking misinformation in climate change reporting through guided research and classroom debates.

2. Digital literacy and AI awareness

With AI tools becoming more integrated into daily life, understanding their impact on media consumption is essential. Several lesson plans incorporate AI-assisted research and analysis, helping students navigate AI-generated content, fact-check information, and recognize deepfake technologies. By engaging with digital tools such as ChatGPT, Canva, and AI-powered research platforms, students enhance their media literacy skills and awareness of AI's role in content creation.

Example: Lesson "*Raising Awareness of AI-Generated Content*" helps students differentiate between AI-generated and human-created news, equipping them with strategies to verify authenticity.

Example: Lesson "*Friendship Recession*" had students use AI to simulate conversations from different time periods, helping them analyse social media's impact on friendships.

Example: Lesson "*Fundamental Interactions in Nature*" incorporated AI research tools to verify physics-related claims and assess the quality of AI-generated information.

3. Interactive and collaborative learning

Many of the lesson plans use interactive and collaborative activities such as role-playing, debates, and team projects to engage students. These methods promote engagement, active learning, and teamwork while reinforcing key media literacy concepts. By working in groups to analyse news, create reports, or present findings, students develop communication skills and learn to approach information critically and constructively.

Example: Lesson "*Something to Shout About*" immerses students in real-world media scenarios, requiring them to create and analyse news from multiple perspectives through role-playing activities.

Example: Lesson "*Are Electric Cars Saving the Planet?*" had students debate environmental claims made in the media, encouraging them to engage with real-world sustainability issues.

4. Ethical and social implications of media

Lessons explore the ethical and societal impact of media, misinformation, and AI, prompting students to reflect on responsible media use. Discussions focus on the consequences of misinformation, the responsibilities of content creators, and the role of technology in shaping public perception. By engaging in ethical debates and critical discussions, students develop a deeper understanding of the media's influence on society and personal decision-making.

Example: Lesson "*AI in Education: Navigating the Digital Future*" examines AI ethics, prompting students to assess the benefits and potential dangers of AI-driven content.

Example: Lesson "*Truth – The First Victim of the Conflict in Ukraine*" included ethical discussions on war reporting and media bias.

5. Hands-on media production

Many of these lesson plans incorporate hands-on activities where students create their own media content, such as digital posters, news articles, podcasts, and video reports. By engaging in content creation, students gain practical experience in storytelling, research, and digital design while reinforcing critical thinking about media messages.

Example: Lesson "*Digital Literacy and News Evaluation*" guides students through fact-checking exercises and digital poster creation, helping them develop a keen eye for evaluating online news sources.

Example: Lesson "*Friendship Recession*" engaged students in AI-supported digital presentations and surveys to analyze the social impact of digital media.

Example: Lesson "*Atomic Emission and Absorption Spectra*" required students to produce AI-powered presentations and present their findings on scientific topics.

6. Cross-curricular integration

These lesson plans integrate media literacy across various subjects, demonstrating its relevance beyond traditional media studies. By embedding media literacy in science, technology, social studies, and language learning, students develop interdisciplinary skills that help them apply critical thinking to different areas of study.

Example: Lesson "*Are Electric Cars Saving the Planet?*" combines environmental awareness with media literacy, requiring students to **analyse** media representations of electric cars and sustainability issues.

Example: Lesson "*Are Electric Cars Saving the Planet?*" combined environmental studies with media literacy, teaching students to analyze sustainability claims in media.

7. Real-world relevance and social impact

A strong focus on real-world applications makes these lesson plans particularly impactful. Students engage with current events, media trends, and real-life case studies, making their learning experience directly applicable to their daily interactions with media. By analysing current media narratives and their societal implications, students become more informed and responsible media consumers.

Example: Lesson "*Climate Changes Between Myth and Reality*" examines how media portrays climate change, helping students differentiate between scientifically verified information and misinformation.

Example: Lesson "*Friendship Recession*" had students conduct surveys on teenage social media use, analysing how friendships have changed in the digital age.

8. Use of flipped classroom and independent research

Several lesson plans adopt a flipped classroom model, where students engage in self-directed research outside class and bring their findings to discussions and projects. This approach fosters independent learning, research skills, and critical inquiry, allowing students to take ownership of their learning process.

Example: Lesson "*Fundamental Interactions in Nature*" requires students to conduct independent research on physics concepts, verifying information through AI tools and group analysis.

5. Best practices for media and digital literacy education

This catalogue compiles effective strategies, results, and best practices in media and digital literacy education, providing educators with a framework for developing critical, informed, and responsible digital citizens.

1. Use real-world case studies and examples

Integrating current events, viral fake news stories, and deepfake videos makes lessons more relevant and engaging. By analysing real-world misinformation, students develop practical skills in recognizing media bias and manipulation. This approach also fosters discussion on how digital media shapes public opinion and influences decision-making.

2. Incorporate AI and digital tools

Using fact-checking platforms, AI chatbots, and multimedia editing software enhances students' ability to navigate the digital landscape. AI-driven tools such as reverse image search, deepfake detection, and automated fact-checkers equip students with cutting-edge media literacy skills. These tools also help educators demonstrate how AI is used in both content creation and misinformation.

3. Encourage collaborative and peer learning

Group work, debates, and peer evaluations improve critical thinking and communication skills by allowing students to engage in active learning experiences. Collaboration fosters deeper understanding as students discuss multiple perspectives and challenge each other's views. Peer-led learning also increases engagement and retention. Lessons should emphasize ethical responsibility in content sharing, helping students understand the societal impact of misinformation. Teaching media ethics encourages responsible consumption, the ability to spot manipulative tactics, and the development of critical awareness when engaging with digital content.

4. Embed media literacy across different subjects

Rather than being a standalone topic, media literacy should be embedded in multiple disciplines, from social sciences to STEM fields. This interdisciplinary approach ensures that students learn to critically assess information in various contexts, improving their ability to apply media literacy skills beyond journalism and news analysis.

5. Provide hands-on, practical activities

Encouraging students to produce their own media content helps them develop a critical approach to digital communication. By engaging in real-world media production, such as writing news articles, creating podcasts, or making videos, students gain firsthand experience in how media messages are constructed and manipulated.

6. Train teachers in media and AI literacy

Professional development for educators ensures that they can effectively teach digital literacy concepts. Teachers must be equipped with the latest knowledge on AI, media bias, and digital misinformation so they can guide students through an ever-evolving media landscape. Schools should offer training on AI-assisted content verification, digital safety, and ethical AI use.

7. Engage the community and external experts

Schools can collaborate with media professionals, journalists, and fact-checkers to provide real-world perspectives on digital literacy. Guest speakers, workshops, and partnerships with tech companies, universities, and fact-checking organizations can expose students to authentic industry practices and equip them with knowledge beyond the classroom.

Conclusion

The Digital and Media Literacy: Good Practice Catalogue for Schools serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to integrate digital and media literacy into their curricula. By compiling best practices, lesson plans, and innovative strategies, the catalogue provides a structured and adaptable framework that enhances students' ability to critically engage with digital content, recognize misinformation, and responsibly navigate the online world.

Through initiatives such as teacher training, student-led digital projects, and cross-curricular integration, the Digital Literate project ensures that digital literacy is not only taught in isolation but embedded across various subjects and real-world applications. The catalogue emphasizes active learning, collaboration, and the use of AI and digital tools to foster a more informed, ethical, and critically aware generation of digital citizens.

As digital landscapes continue to evolve, the need for comprehensive media and digital literacy education remains more pressing than ever. By leveraging the insights and strategies outlined in this catalogue, schools can empower both educators and students to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex digital age, ensuring that they become responsible consumers, creators, and participants in the digital ecosystem.

Annex 1:

School learning unit plans with practical implementation guidelines

Attached as a separate file to this document.