

This resource accompanies the 'Helping neurodiverse young people consider what is 'true' online' film.

It provides a lesson plan and supporting resources for educators to explore the challenges neurodiverse young people face in evaluating the trustworthiness of what they see and experience online. The lesson is suitable for most learners **aged 10 onwards**.

Note: This lesson provides some suggested strategies for use with neurodiverse young people. Depending on the needs of your learners, you may wish to adapt the lesson plan or supporting resources, or use a different example to the one provided in the lesson.

Time: 50 minutes

Learning outcomes:

I will be able to...

- Understand that not everything online is true.
- Consider a range of responses to help me decide what might be true.
- Name one or more strategies to check if something might be true.

Resources:

- Appendix 1 - Emotion cards (one set per learner)
- Appendix 2 - WhatsApp chat (one per pair/small group)
- Appendix 3 - Pathway sheet (one per learner)
- Appendix 4 - Choice cards (one per learner or to display)

Starter (10 mins)

Explain to learners that this lesson is about making decisions on whether online information is true and how it is important to consider a range of options before acting. The lesson will also explore how things we see online make us feel and how this can affect the choices we make.

Organise learners into pairs and provide each pair with a set of emotion cards from **Appendix 1** (happy, excited, sad, angry, confused, scared, frustrated, worried, lonely, 'a different emotion').

Ask learners to listen to the following scenarios and hold up a card to reflect the emotion it would make them feel in those circumstances. After each scenario, provide brief feedback (e.g. 'I see that this would make lots of you angry', etc.) and invite any learners who used the 'a different emotion' card to explain what they would feel and why.

What does it make you feel when someone...

- ? ...agrees with you online?
- ? ...makes a positive comment about you?
- ? ...makes a negative comment about you?
- ? ...says something bad about your friend?
- ? ...helps you online?
- ? ...says something about you that is untrue?
- ? ...posts/shares something that is against the rules?
- ? ...takes a photo of you without asking?

After discussing the scenarios, ask learners to place their cards in a pile. These cards will be used as part of the main activity.

Activity (30 mins)

Explain to learners that they will be looking at a situation that can happen online and will consider what it makes them feel, what they might do/say as a result and what might happen next. As a group, learners will be guided through different responses to consider which might lead to positive outcomes (for themselves and/or others) and which may lead to more negative outcomes.

Provide each pair of learners with a copy of the WhatsApp messages example (**Appendix 2**) and the pathway sheet (**Appendix 3**).

Explain to learners that you have printed a screenshot of something online, and then show them the WhatsApp message example. Depending on group size and organisation, you may wish to print or display a large copy of the example to discuss with the group. To aid learners in processing the information shown in the example, you may also wish to cover up different sections and reveal them one at a time as you discuss what they show. Some language (such as the word 'Hoax') may also require further discussion and explanation.

Ask learners what they think this example depicts and where they might see it online. Explain each section of the example with learners (each message is coming from someone who is considered to be a trusted friend, and the link that has been shared is what must be judged as being 'true' or 'untrue').

Before exploring the scenario further, clarify to learners that their discussion in this lesson is not about whether global warming is true or not, but rather how to decide if the link to the article can be trusted or considered to be true.

Ask learners to imagine that they see this conversation amongst their friends and to consider what it would make them feel. Using the emotion cards, learners should select one or more emotions and place the card(s) in the first space on their pathway worksheet.

Ask learners to share their selected emotions and encourage them to provide a brief explanation as to why they might feel that way.

As a group, ask learners '**How much do you trust the article?**' (based solely on what they can see in the scenario).

Learners should indicate their preference on a scale of 0-10. This could be done by pointing to a visual scale with marked numbers or by using their hands to indicate their preference – holding their hand out high against their body to indicate a higher number (8-10), midway to indicate 4-7, or low to indicate a lower number (0-3).

Acknowledge learners' responses and explain that they must now decide what they would do or say next.






Show the possible options on the choice cards (**Appendix 4**):

- ➔ I don't trust anything that has been said or shared.
- ➔ I press/click the link to find out more.
- ➔ I say something in the chat.
- ➔ Something else.

Ask learners to talk in pairs to discuss which response they would choose and why. They should place a choice card or write their response into the middle space on their pathway worksheet.





When learners have completed this task, ask them to look again at their chosen response and then consider what might happen next. They should record any ideas they have in the final space on their pathway sheet. Encourage learners to record multiple outcomes if they are able to.

For example, for 'I press the link to find out more', a learner might consider some of the following:

-  I read the article and agree with what it says.
-  I read the article and disagree with what it says.
-  I read the article then send a message in the chat to share what I think.
-  I don't understand the article so I ask an adult to help me.
-  I'm still confused so I use a search engine to find out more.

Use the responses to guide a discussion around what learners decided to do, and what they think may happen next. Ask learners to explain their thinking and ask them to decide if their pathway leads to a positive outcome, a negative outcome or if they are unsure – for some choices, it may be impossible to discern if the end outcome will be positive/negative; further actions might need to happen first!










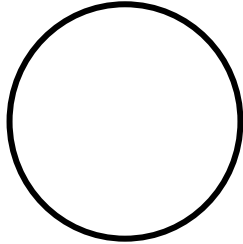
As part of the discussion, it is useful to include the following advice:

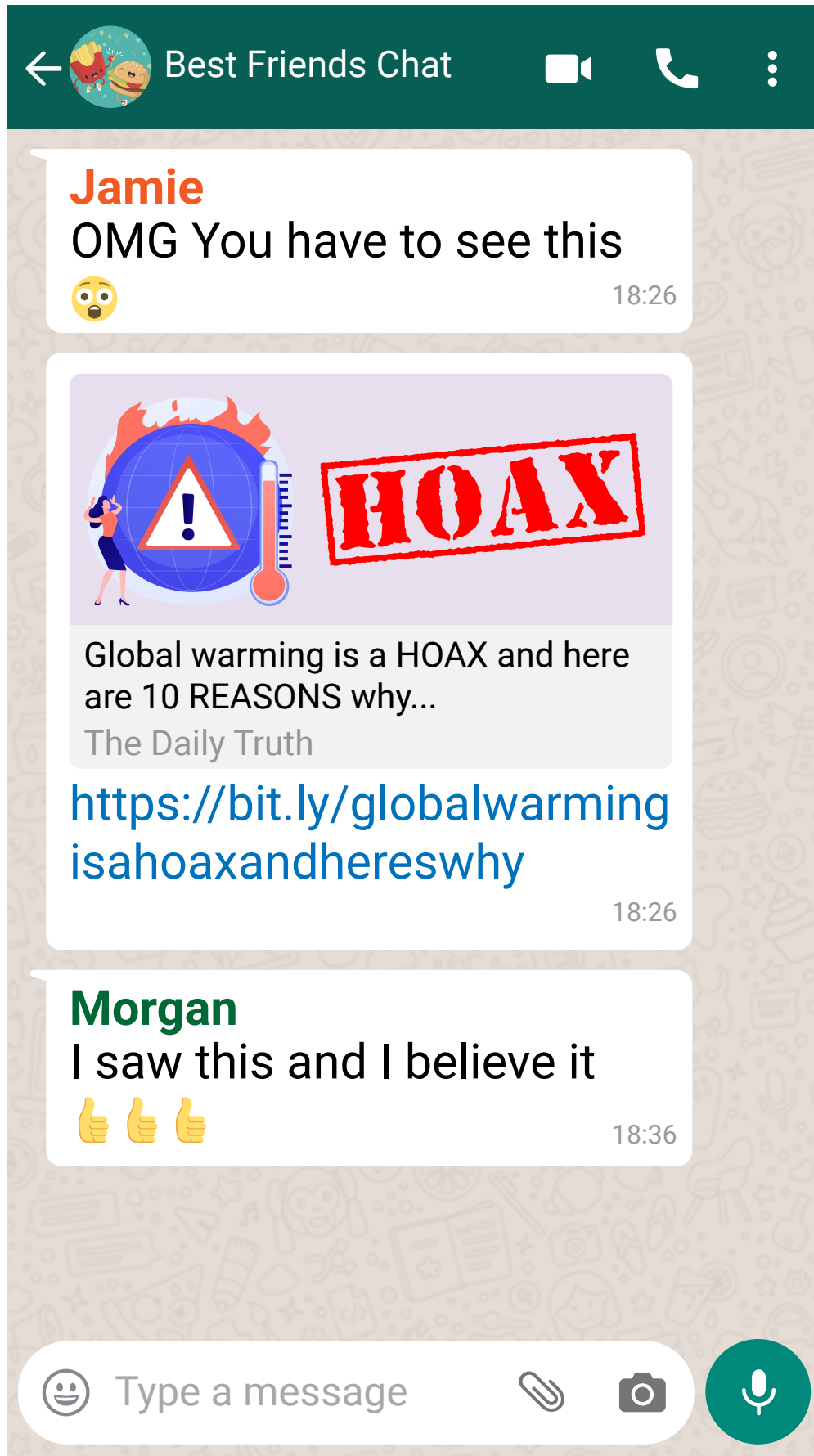
-  Online articles may give the author's opinion rather than facts, or a mixture of both.
-  People may choose and show only the information that matches their opinion.
-  Using different websites (or sources of information) can help to learn more about something.
-  If something looks different to what you expect or think, ask an adult to help you understand it.

Plenary (10 mins)

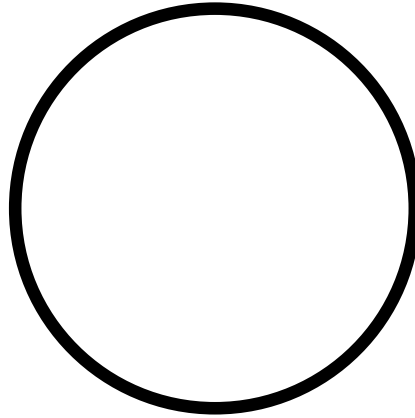
Based on the discussion, ask learners to think of a 'top tip' or something they have learned on for how to deal with this situation positively. Encourage them to consider strategies that involve actively seeking different viewpoints (such as reading additional reviews/comments or asking someone else for their advice or opinion).

You may wish to capture learners' top tips in different ways - they could be written or drawn, recorded as audio or video, or captured in another format that would make them accessible to learners in the future.

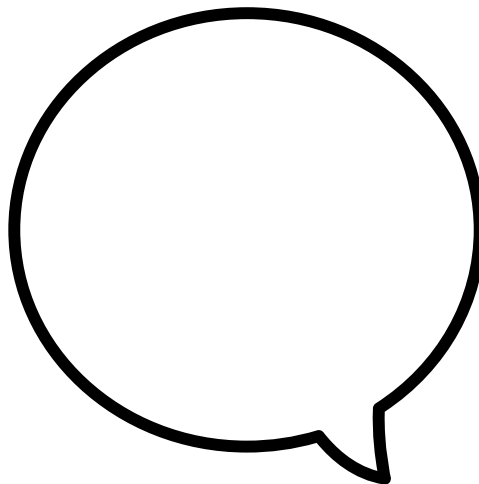
 <p>happy</p>	 <p>sad</p>	 <p>excited</p>
 <p>scared</p>	 <p>frustrated</p>	 <p>worried</p>
 <p>angry</p>	 <p>confused</p>	 <p>lonely</p>
 <p>a different emotion</p>		



You feel...



You say/do...



What might happen next



**I don't trust
anything that
has been said
or shared**

**I press/
click the link
to find out
more**

**I say
something
in the chat**

**Something
else**