

Okay, welcome everyone!
We're going to go ahead and get started.

Thank you so much for being here.
If you would like to view the auto-generated captions, you can select Show Captions on the bottom ribbon of your Zoom screen.

If you don't see the Show Captions option, just click on More with the three dots above, and then you'll be able to select Show Captions.
The recording that will be sent out to all registrants will have professionally-generated captions and a transcript.

My name is Suzi Tonini. I'm the School Library Consultant for the Colorado State Library. For today's Shine-a-Light on Innovative Practices webinar, I am joined by Erin Olson, who will be presenting Checkology: Support for a Future Founded on Facts.

Erin is joined by her colleague Shayleen Farnsworth, who will be sharing information with us about the News Literacy Projects Fellowship program.
Erin is News Literacy Project Senior Manager of State Partnerships. She began her career as a middle school Language Arts teacher in Storm Lake, Iowa and then transitioned to teaching high school. Excuse me, excuse me, teaching high school English in Sioux Rapids, Iowa. Her interest in meaningful technology integration led her to a position as a Technology Integrationist for a regional state education agency.
Erin supported districts with technology integration, literacy, project-based learning, and STEM. She then returned to her home district to serve as an instructional leader and instructional coach. Erin holds two degrees from Buena Vista. Do you say, byoona or buena? We say it both ways in Colorado. A Bachelor's degree in English and a Master's degree in instructional and curriculum and effective teaching. And without further ado, I'll turn it over to Erin.

Thank you so much, Suzi.
We are excited to be with you.
And again, I'm joined by my colleague, Shayleen Farnsworth, and she'll be sharing more at the end of this presentation about the fellowship districts and how this looks in the library.
Well, let's get started.
Group, you saw that? I put a link in the chat for you. Please access that resource doc. It has all the things and more that I'm talking about today.
So the News Literacy Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit education organization.
We have free resources, supports, and lessons to help you with your quest to teach news and media literacy.
We help people discern fact from fiction in the news and other information that they consume. Again, our resources are all free, and you'll hear me say that often.
Our lessons explore a variety of news and media literacy subjects such as credibility, validity, accuracy, and bias.

That link will be continually shared in the chat and if you haven't got it, you can get it from the screen.

But no, it'll be in the Chat as well.

So what is news literacy?

It does fall underneath the media literacy umbrella, but more specifically, it's a discipline within media literacy focused on specific, non-ideological principles and teaching.

It's a nonpartisan focus with clear learning standards, a dedication to the First Amendment, a conviction that the free press is a cornerstone of democracy.

Of course, this promotes participation in civic life.

After all, we have to know about the world to care about the world.

But our care must be based on accurate information.

Three resources I'd like to share with you today: the first would be our Resource Library, The Sift next, and then lastly we'll go into Checkology, our most comprehensive resource.

You can follow me and open up a tab on your computer if you'd like. Go to newslit.org.

So from here I'm going to show you how to get to our many resources.

So you'll see that For Educator tab, um, link—click on that and it's going to open this up.

So you're going to see from here a lot of different resources.

But I thought specifically for you in your positions that you would appreciate the infographics and posters, but just know that there's quizzes and slide decks and so much more.

So in the Resource Library, once you're there, you can see those various headings.

And I've circled for you the infographics and posters.

So we have so many of those.

You can see the thumbnails at the top, just from your screen.

"Six Things to Know About AI" is a great one.

I also put in that resource doc for you, with a link that gets you a bundle.

If you'd like to download a bundle, you can do that from there.

Otherwise, you can go here to sort, sift, and shop around for these free infographics that you can place and post in your space.

One that I think is especially helpful in your position would be the "Google Like a Pro" infographic.

It's a great one to post in a physical or digital space because finding credible information involves more than just knowing how to Google. But it is a start.

There are all these operators that students can use to get information effectively and efficiently.

It's not always natural, and these operators don't always come quickly to mind.

So having this posted in a visible place can be a great way to support better searching.

Another tool that I think you'll find valuable is *The Sift*.

The Sift is a free newsletter delivered right to your inbox.

It's a just-in-time support connected to current events and filled with discussion questions, lesson ideas, learning guides, videos, and graphic organizers.

One thing I've learned from teaching is that the world always provides a curricular conceptual connection to what's happening in our room, whether it's a discussion or an event. What a wonderful support to have this resource to help bridge that connection.

There's something new with *The Sift* this year that I think you'll find especially helpful, and that's the Daily Do Nows.

It's a slide deck each week that serves as a bell ringer for you, connecting to the topics in *The Sift*.

You can find this linked from *The Sift*.

Here's an example of a bell ringer you might use.

This one deals with AI, asking students which image is real and which isn't. It's tough.

What I see from my screen (and you can't see it on yours) is in the Notes section of those bell ringers.

There are instructions for educators, including the news literacy standard it connects to, the right answer, and more context to help you use it with your students.

So again, that's Daily Do Nows linked from *The Sift*, and that's new this year.

On to our most comprehensive resource that you can utilize: *Checkology*.

It's an online platform designed to supplement your curriculum.

You can access it from our homepage or go directly to [Checkology.org](https://checkology.org) and register for a free educator account.

It will ask for your zip code, name, role, and school.

If you serve multiple districts, just pick one — that's fine.

As you can see from the thumbnails, we have over 20 lessons.

These lessons range from 3 to 45-minute class periods, depending on your design.

Looking at the thumbnails, you'll see they are cross-curricular, covering a variety of topics and subjects, all taught by subject matter experts — statisticians, journalists, AI experts, and more.

Today, we're just going to dive into two lessons so you can get a taste of what's available.

But that resource doc I created for you has even more lessons organized by different curricular umbrellas to help you search more easily.

The two lessons I'll share today are *InfoZones* and *Is it Legit?*

If you have any questions, please add them to the chat, and we'll do our best to answer.

Now, I'm going to transition out of my slides and into a live demonstration.

This is the resource document I've been talking about.

Please note there's an entry for our swag drawing.

So please get yourself entered into that!

And there's an easy way for you to sign up for *The Sift* once you get into that swag drawing sheet.

You'll see that when you're there.

All right, group, let's get to our dashboard.

I'm already in *Checkology*.

So if you went to Checkology.org and you're getting registered, great!

But when you enter the platform, you're going to see this, although you won't see any classes yet since you haven't made any.

You'll probably just see a plus sign.

Let me show you the content first, so you can get an idea of what's available before we dive into how to set up a class.

So, *Checkology* has three levels of content.

You've already heard me mention the Learn content.

These are our full lessons, which can last from 3 to 45 minutes per class period.

I'll show you these first — there are 20 lessons in total.

All of our lessons come with lesson guides within *Checkology*.

For example, in the *InfoZones* lesson, it tells us our subject matter expert is Tracie Potts.

You can see the objectives, how long the lesson lasts, and the essential questions.

I especially love this essential question:

"Does the purpose of a piece of information affect its credibility?"

That's a great starting point for an inquiry-based lesson.

As I scroll down, you'll see a lesson outline so you know what's coming.

You'll know the instructional moves you want to make to align with the video instruction.

And on the last page, you'll find a word wall.

This is an excellent support for those of you working on academic vocabulary.

If you're focusing on tiered vocabulary, you can frontload that lesson with this information.

Now that you've seen the guide, let's dive into the lesson *InfoZones*.

Tracie Potts is going to talk about information and all the places, spaces, and people who get to post and publish.

So, let's listen to Tracie.

"When I was starting out in journalism, we didn't have nearly as much information available to us.

There was no internet, no email, no texting, no social media, not even YouTube.

We got all our information from textbooks, books we bought or checked out from the library, magazines and newspapers we bought or subscribed to, TV shows we watched on just a handful of channels, and films we actually had to go to the movie theater to see.

With no access to the internet, we also couldn't share information with a large group of people at one time.

What that meant was that only professionals could share information with the public.

They acted as gatekeepers, determining what to share with the public and what not to share.

But now, anyone can share information, which means more voices have been added to the mix, including yours and your classmates'.

It also means that you can't trust everything you read because anyone, anywhere, can post and share whatever they want, whenever they want."

Isn't that the truth?

Anyone can post anywhere, whatever they want, whenever they want.

So, this lesson dives into the zones of information.

Back to that essential question:

Understanding the purpose of a piece of information and how that might impact its credibility.

Should we question information based on its purpose?

That's a great discussion to have with our students, considering all the places and spaces they frequent and interact with content.

All of our lessons follow a backward design format.

So, you have this concept taught, and then next comes a formative assessment.

Let's check out an example.

Our examples are really relevant to students' lives.

You'll see memes, reels, articles — all things relevant to them.

We zoom in on these types of information, whether they are texts or visuals.

Then, we ask students to decide the purpose.

Here's an example of a click-and-drag activity.

Because it's a click-and-drag, it's auto-graded.

So, once students decide, they hit "Next" and get immediate feedback.

There are different types of formative assessments found in our Checkology lessons. There are open-ended questions that, of course, one could weigh in on student responses. I see that as a springboard for classroom discussion, but of course, that's up to the educators' design. In the library, we've seen librarians with a limited amount of time with students use parts of lessons, push into a classroom, team teach, and start this off in a classroom with educators.

We've seen this used in a variety of ways to have it work for the space that they have and the time that they have. So know that, um, in addition to these full-on lessons, there's even lessons that are shorter. And I'm going to show you that now.

So we were in this Learn section. The Practice and Extensions are also a valuable place that you can go to get content, and it does exactly as it's named: practice and extend. They do extend the learning from the full-on lessons, but also can be used as a warm-up in your space, as something shorter with your design and your learning that, with your teaching, excuse me, that you're providing learning for students.

So I'm going to show you an example that connects to InfoZones. It's the news or ad. So in this, here's just one piece of, well, I don't want to give away, but article. And as we look through this, there are some, you know, markers of is it a news or ad.

Well, we see GE, and what do we know about GE? We look through... it looks very official. And I think this is a great example because what we were taught when the internet first came to be about, well, does it look professional? This looks so professional. This looks like information, right? We can't use that methodology any longer to determine if something is straight news, straight information, or if it might have an advertising component.

And as we scroll to the bottom, and sorry for making you dizzy, we see the sponsor and recognize that logo. So that tips me off when I go up here that I'm going to answer that it's an ad. And it is. So that's kind of what you see in that Practice and Extension, um, these quick, quick exercises that you're able to do with students to reinforce those concepts that come out in those full-on lessons.

But that section has even more. There's a challenge, and it happens to be my favorite, and I think this will be a favorite of you. So Is It Legit? This is taught by Hannah Covington. Uh, she is one of our colleagues at the News Literacy Project: former journalist, former educator. And she's talking about how do we verify a source.

And so in this portion, I'm just going to show you just this video. She's teaching us about lateral reading and its importance using a TikTok video example. So let's take a peek at this first introduction.

And Is It Legit? One of my favorite lessons found in Checkology.

Okay, step one should be really easy to remember. Do a quick search. I know, I know, it might sound like a no-brainer, right? But doing just one simple search can make all the difference and can often save you from even needing to do the other steps.

Now, when I say search, I'm not talking about searching on social media. Be sure to go to a search engine like Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo and see what other legitimate sources have to say about the news source you're evaluating.

This is called lateral reading, a term first introduced by researchers at Stanford University. Journalists and fact-checkers use this skill all the time to assess information online. It's a game changer.

Let me show you what I mean. Recently, I came across this TikTok video about a dad reportedly helping his daughter practice ballet.

Seems pretty fun and harmless, right? But I noticed this label at the bottom that said Russian State-Controlled Media.

Um. What? It was posted by an account called In the Now, which seems to post a lot of these feel-good type stories.

But when I go to their profile, all I see is a bio that says Kindness is Dope. I mean, agreed, it totally is, but that doesn't tell me anything about this account.

So to find out about this source, the quickest and easiest thing I can do is open a new tab or hop over to Google to do a search.

When I type in "the now" in my search bar, I get a lot of results, but I really want the most credible sources. So I'm going to tweak my search terms and click the news tab to narrow my results.

Other news sources clearly call its credibility into question. They say it's controlled by the Russian government and is connected to another source called RT. And hey, a quick search of RT gives us another clear answer. These sources are state-controlled and funded by the Russian government. That means they're not independent or free of government influence, and they can't be trusted as a credible source.

So hey, while these videos may seem harmless, we need to be skeptical and critical of everything they publish. That's because state-controlled media doesn't exist to inform you. It exists to influence you in some way, to make the sponsoring government look good, or to make other governments, certain groups, or certain ideas look bad.

I appreciate that example because I think too often our students are just consumers of their TikTok scroll, perhaps don't question the creators of the content. Again, but that's not a natural process in a doom scroll; they're just looking, just looking, just looking, just looking. And while this dance video might seem harmless, it's the algorithm that makes it potentially harmful. Because if we're interacting with state-controlled media and we're spending time with it, we're going to get fed more of state-controlled media.

So I think it's a great lesson. But this is a listicle lesson. So this is step one of five. And when I think about the library as a space for students engaging and learning and having perhaps limited time based on what your schedule allows, this might be one that would work for you.

Okay, so I've given you a taste of two lessons. And as you can see from those lessons, they're multimodal. They're engaging; they're bite-sized. It's a short video, and that's true throughout all of them. This is something that students would be able to do on their own, or you would be able to show from your screen.

I just want to point out a few things on Checkology. Um, and then I'll just give you a brief overview of how to set up a class. Just a real brief one. But know that I've highlighted for you on that resource doc instructions how, realizing my pace is not your pace necessarily. You might want to go faster. You might want to go slower. So please note there's instructions highlighted on that resource doc for you to use so you can go at your speed.

Now I mentioned that resource doc. So I want to show you where I got it because that's what I set us off with. I started us with that info zones as I shared that with you in resources right here. That's where you get that resource doc. And there you can filter by all lessons, or you can go to

the lesson that you're working on, and you want to see all the extensions that exist. So if I do that—InfoZones—now I get all the things that go with InfoZones.

As I scroll down, I'm going to point out a few things. There's that lesson guide. There's an awesome visual poster to accompany that lesson. I'm all about visuals, so I do appreciate all of the intentional graphics that we have to support those learning concepts. And then a transcript. We have full transcripts of all of our lessons. So if you need that to help support language acquisition, if you need that for chunking, for modification purposes, or if you need that for transparency purposes, it's there for you.

So full transcripts for all of our lessons. So you can see there's a variety of supports to extend that InfoZones learning or to support you in teaching that. Now the other thing I want to point out would be journalist visits. So I do believe there's something beautiful about humanizing professions, especially those of service. So educators and journalists, um, let's let our students meet the people that are doing this work and learn from them. And we can with this program.

So this is also free. We have vetted journalists from across the country who are willing to donate their time to help support the learning in your spaces. All you have to do is click on a person. You can filter also by area of expertise, but you click on a person. You can see what they've done, what they've written, and then you invite them, and you can coordinate that connection. Um, again, I think this is really important. Our students can see themselves in this profession. They can ask professionals about the process of writing, about the standards of journalism, and extend that learning. And that is part of that news literacy connection.

Okay. Check Center. This, I think, is a great tip for librarians. When you click the Check Center, if you go to the Toolbox, I'm going to scroll down: View All Skills.

I realize that you might not have a lot of time with students, or you might have educators that come to you and ask for certain supports in helping them integrate into their classroom.

And here are videos that you can utilize to help teach reverse image search, geolocation, critical observation. That's a great elementary or upper elementary lesson as well—about those notices and wonders and what you actually see in helping find truth within something.

Whether you're doing that critical observation in text or in an image. How to search like a pro. So that connects right back to that Google like a Pro infographic that I shared, levels of scientific evidence, lateral reading, and an advanced lateral reading that I find quite humorous.

It's based off of a TikTok where two people are talking about Dasani water and how it's poisonous. It really speaks to the importance of lateral reading because we know what's in Dasani.

Water is actually electrolytes, and they're not poisonous, so that's a great one you could utilize as well.

So again, what I'm just sharing this because I think these are things that would work for you and your, um, with the space and place and the students that you're serving and how you support teachers.

All right, Group. I'm going to take us all the way back up. So I'm going to give you a super fast showcase of how to create a class just because I want you to see that it's doable.

Remember, I have highlighted for you on the resource doc how to do this as well, a video and text instructions. So if you don't like my speed, you can follow those.

All right. Add a class. Once we click Add Class, we're going to title it.

And I'm going to be practice for student type. I'm going to go with middle school grade level. Let's be seventh grade.

And we're going to go there. Course lock on or off: on means students go through the content in the order that you are deciding. So it's on by default.

Open Advanced Settings. Um, I would suggest leaving all of this on. The only one I really want to point out to you is this pre and post assessment.

If you don't have a lot of time, you could turn that off because it will have students engage in a pre-assessment before they start. But we love data, so I would keep it on if you could.

If you can swing the time, it's definitely worth it. 15 questions, but just a heads up: it'll force them to do it first. One to Many mode: that means you're the pilot car.

If you turn that on, you're showing the video of those lessons from your screen. It's kind of blurred out on student screen, and then they do the formative from their own computers.

Um, you're the pilot car showing the video. They follow along, do formative on their screen. Right now it's off, but you can toggle that on and off at any time.

Do you notice I have co-teachers? That's based on that zip code that you put in and the school that you're in. So you can partner with teachers if you so desire.

Okay. So did that. We messed with our advanced settings. Now we're going to create a class.

Once we create a class we have two options. We can add our students or we can assign a course. I like to add content first.

So I'm going to show you this way: we're going to assign a course. Because we said that we were middle school and we said we're ELA, we get some default options.

So there's already courses made for you. You don't have to start from scratch. You can change course. You can customize this course.

Um, when we go to Change Course, you're going to see all my practice ones; see, they're named kind of funny. Um, some of them are.

These are all the ones that I've made. But just so you know, when you make a course, you're going to be able to see it year to year, so you don't lose what you've made.

Apparently that day I liked Es. So as we scroll, doo-too-doo, I've made quite a few practice. You see what NLP has for you.

These are the ones that have been created to help support you. By all means, use one of these courses. But I'm going to make mine from scratch, so get started.

It is super intuitive once you make your own course, and any time you're making your own, we need to name it again so it'll save it into our own presets. So we have Practice Four. And my description is that. I'm going to hit Save.

And my class is going to be ready to create. Look at that Content Library on the left. Those are all of our major lessons. And if I keep scrolling, I'm going to see those extension activities as well.

So I'm just going to find InfoZones because that's the one that I shared with you. And I'm just going to click and drag. It asks me if I want to add supplemental courses. And I'm going to say no at this time because I just have time for InfoZones.

And Shaelynn—

Yes?

Is there a question?

So I know this has come up in the past. When you look at these lessons and want to know what's best for students in middle school, students in high school, how do you do that? How do you know?

Besides the preset one, which may be upper middle school, maybe not lower middle school, how do you know if it's appropriate for a certain age group?

That's a great question, and I'm glad you asked. So if you look underneath those lesson thumbnails, do you see InfoZones just has one, like one line? I hope you can see that—it's purple, right there, and the rest are black.

That's because that lesson isn't complex; the ideas aren't complex. Whereas if we look at branded content, that difficulty is more involved because of the ideas that are introduced in that lesson.

This is not a Lexile. It's not even necessarily a grade band recommendation because I call InfoZones the Leatherman lesson of all lessons because I can repurpose it in a variety of ways.

I can use it in sixth grade. I could use it in 12th grade. It's all the instructor's design, but just note those lines underneath; that's really addressing the complexity of the ideas and concepts that are introduced in that lesson.

And that's how I approach it. I think that's where those lesson guides also are helpful because you can see the vocabulary, you can see the lesson outline, and it gives you an idea, even from the questions, what's happening within that lesson.

Okay, so we have InfoZones. That's our course. I'm just doing that one class for today. And at any time, you can add content to your classes, by the way. So it isn't like you have to get it right the first time you make it.

You can feed stuff into your class as you decide what you want to add. Alright. So I'm just scrolling down; look at all of that content, and there's Fact Checks, all of that.

But now that I've decided I just want InfoZones, if you want to close your eyes because I'm going to scroll up quickly, I don't want to make you dizzy.

Alright? I just have to go back to Practice. Right here. Back to Practice. There's my course. I can preview it. You can see I have my InfoZones right there, and that's what students see.

If I go to my dashboard now, I'm going to go back to my dashboard. I call this Practice Four; I have two Practice Fours.

When I want to get students in, I copy this link. And when I copy that link and I give it to students, they can use their single sign-on to get into my class.

Of course, I can manage students here, where I can roster students; they can use single sign-on with Google or with Microsoft.

But the easiest way to get students to the content is to use this class link and then paste it in your LMS or wherever you paste links for students to access. And they'll be in the class and have access to that learning.

Okay, so that was really fast. I just wanted to give you a quick overview of how to get in the class, but please note there's a video and instructions on that resource doc if you prefer to use that step-by-step process.

And of course, I'm happy to help. If you would need my support, you can reach out. My contact information is on the resource doc.

So again, just to recap, Group, we saw three of our resources.

We talked about the Resource Library, where we have quizzes and infographics and slide decks and videos as well.

We talked about The Sift, that newsletter, and I hope you got registered so you can get that in your inbox weekly, because that also includes those bell ringers. Um, so it's a great support.

And then lastly, the most comprehensive was Checkology. So those three things, I imagine, uh, with those three things, there's something that we have that we offer that can help support your news literacy efforts.

But I'm going at this point, I'm going to stop sharing my screen and I'm going to transition. I told you that I had my colleague Shaelynn with me, and, um, she is here because she is the Director of our Fellowship Program at the News Literacy Project.

And it is a fantastic program. And a question we often get is, okay, that's great. But what does this look like? What does this feel like? How do I get started? What does this all mean?

And now we're going to answer those questions for you. So Shaelynn Farnsworth, my colleague from the News Literacy Project, Director of Fellowships, I'm going to pass it over to you.

Shaelynn.

Thank you so much and welcome, everyone. Shaelynn Farnsworth here from the News Literacy Project. And one small thing you may not know about me is I actually grew up in Fort Collins, Colorado, so I have Colorado ties. Excited to be here with you this evening.

Um, as Erin said, we are a national nonprofit education organization, and we support districts across the United States and our brand new program, um, called the NLP District Fellowship Program.

This began, um, three years ago, um, as an idea in our heads that we know that news and media literacy is essential for students to grasp those critical thinking skills before they graduate.

And we wanted to support districts looking at a holistic approach to the instruction, the teaching, and the learning. Um, thus began the fellowship program.

So our first cohort was formed of five districts, and we worked for them with a two-year commitment to help them create an action plan, implementation plan, and how they could have scalable, replicable model schools across the United States so that other districts, um, could also replicate that teaching and learning in their own schools and own districts.

Um, to take that holistic approach. So something that has grown from, um, five districts to this year, we launched our third cohort. Uh, we now have 17 districts across the United States.

Um, creating these model school districts, uh, impacting, um, close to a million students. Uh, the lucky thing that you all have is we have a fellowship district from cohort Number Two right there in Colorado.

Um, so I brought them here tonight to not only share about their roles, their fellowship experience, but then also, um, the impact, uh, on news and media literacy in with their colleagues, with their students and so forth.

So I'm joined by Katie and Erica. Um, Erica, I'm going to pass it to you, since you have the librarian background here.

Why don't you go ahead and share a little bit about yourself and your district, and how news and media literacy impacts your role in the district?

Hi.

Well, that was a great. Um, Erin, thank you for the run-through because I have been diving deep into Checkology and I was like, it was just brilliant. So thank you very much.

Um, my name is Erica Young, and this is my 27th year as a teacher. I was a classroom teacher for the first 25, and then I won the lottery, and now I'm in the library.

Um, so news literacy and Katie's going to jump in, too. But, um, we live in a really small town. We live in Crested Butte, Colorado, and our district has, uh, Gunnison, uh, Crested Butte and then Marble, which is a dinky, dinky school.

But we have a K-12 school in Crested Butte. And, um, and so our library is actually in the center. It kind of is the heart of the school, as far as I'm concerned.

We've got the elementary on one end and the secondary on the other end. So we're always trying to get people to come in and, you know, um, kind of like put on events, or like bring collaboration to the library, or how can we get people in here?

And not just the kids, but my colleagues as well. And so, um, I was talking to Shaelynn and like one of the ways that news literacy kind of just in this last year was; I couldn't find the New York Times anywhere in the Valley, not at a coffee shop in Gunnison, which is 30 miles away.

We couldn't find it anywhere. So now we have the New York Times delivered. I have it delivered to my post office, but we bring it in.

And then we brought a bunch of periodicals in because kids like to look at magazines.

And so just trying to find different sources of literature that kids can get their hands on that's not just on their phone.

Um, and then Katie is like our fearless leader.

She's amazing.

Katie Gallagher, who's on with us, and she told us about the News Literacy Project and that you have this district grant where we can really do something cool.

And so, um, in a nutshell, what we're going to do is the three weeks leading up to the election, um, try to do, um, basically, uh, misinformation.

How do we find misinformation?

How do we navigate it with all the kids, you know, all these different crazy things?

And so Katie has been an amazing resource.

And she's going to talk to you about kind of our layout.

But I just finished... it's hard... what I think is hard, as a school librarian, what I think is hard, is we have all these great ideas like, okay, we're going to do this kick-off like we're going to, you know, bring them in.

And Katie's going to do these stations where you can win prizes and um, you know, QR codes to like a Rumor Guard or, and then find out what's, what's different.

And then they have to do, you know, engagement, engagement, just bringing people into the library.

Um, but what is difficult is: so I teach middle school technology as well, and so I can hit the sixth, seventh and eighth graders, um, over the year because I'll just continue with these Checkology lessons, right.

The lateral, um, the lateral reading and reverse image search are the two things that we're really going to dive into.

But we want our secondary teachers to try.

And the first week, which is October 21st, is going to be our first kick-off week.

If they could, um, teach it in their sociology, in their history, or their whatever, the social studies teachers, then we can hit all the kids in a two-day thing with just a, um, lateral reading and the reverse image search, because I think they're so cool.

And the kids will dive into it.

Right.

Um, but getting them to do something, I mean, Katie, is this... if you guys are able to work with her, you're lucky because she's amazing and she just puts it on a plate and then, you know... but asking them to teach it, it's like here's this great lesson, it's going to hit standards.

It's going to, you know, demystify so much of how we're going to be able to do this.

And, um, but asking teachers-- and I know, I was a classroom teacher for a very long time, adding to their plate is hard.

So my goal is that I'm going to co-plan, co-teach and then they can carry it out when they see this is really easy.

You can do this.

We can just get it out to everybody.

Um, and then continue with things happening in the library over those three weeks.

Katie, over to you.

Thanks.

Erica, one more question for you before Katie jumps in.

Um, you said that you have been teaching for a long time.

Has it always been at Gunnison Watershed?

No, I taught, um, I taught in England for ten years at a British school.

Um, and I taught at a private school in Kansas City.

Um, so.

But one thing that is really interesting, why I'm super drawn to this, actually, and this is such a cool, the News Literacy Project is, I'm just really, thank you.

Happy that it's out there.

So thanks for all the work you've done.

But part of the national curriculum in the United Kingdom I taught, um, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

Hinduism?

Yes.

And they teach, there's just little snippets, kind of like a news project thing, so that you realize what's out there and there's not just... you actually learn about it so that you don't hate, right?

And that's part of the national curriculum.

And I always just think it's so interesting that we get so bubbled into what we actually know, like, okay, we're just going to watch Fox News.

We're just going to watch CNN.

We're just going to watch...

So trying to, I'm just really drawn to your this whole project because it's really just opening up to like, let's look at what the facts are.

Let's really look.

Like we're intelligent people, we don't just have to, just because we heard it on TV, cats being eaten or whatever, you know, it's not just, it's important.

So yeah.

And I mean, you highlight and I'm sure Erin would chime in here our new lesson.

Um, and I hope we have time Suzi to mention this is all about algorithms and AI.

It talks about those filter bubbles you were just speaking about, and rabbit holes and the feedback loops.

I would say that's our algorithm lessons probably for older kids, wouldn't you say, Erin?

Probably for older kids, not middle school?

Definitely.

It's upper middle school/high school.

And then there also is an introduction to algorithms for elementary that would be for elementary.

Now that really gets at just the basics of it, but the new algorithms lesson would be middle school/high school.

And Katie just sent that through, and I haven't had a chance to look at it since yesterday.

So thank you.

Brand new this year.

So yes, that's very interesting.

And I did not know that you taught in all those different, you know, not only states but countries.

Um, why do you think kids need news and media literacy skills?

Where are they getting their information? What are you seeing in the library?

Uh, well, they get it from...

That's a loaded question because we're walking into a, we're walking into an election. Um, and I can just tell you this. My daughter switched schools. She's a senior in high school now. She switched schools in seventh grade. And that was right post Covid. And where she was going to school was 30 miles away in Gunnison and in our district. And there were kids who were wearing Make America Great masks. And there were kids who, you know, it was just all over the place. But these were kids. They were 12 and 13 years old.

And so, um, my daughter, I, I said to her, because she's going to this new school, it's middle school, making new friends. And I said, honey, you believe what Dad and I believe; you believe what we believe. You hear us talk. You believe... all these kids, they're believing what their parents, what they're hearing at home, what they're seeing on TV at home, and what they're seeing online. And so, um, they're just kids. These kids can't vote. So meet these people where they are as friends. Do you like them as friends? Are they good, kind people? All of those things.

And I think a lot of what, what I see in the library because there's talking and, you know, and you hear all the little groups, people are talking about what they're seeing on their phone. They're talking about something that happened in town. Or did you hear about this? My parents told me this.

I mean, I feel like so much for elementary and I mean, definitely elementary, but high school kids, a lot of it comes from their own family base.

And so if they question and I happen to be very strong decided on how I politically feel, and my kids will say to me, Mom, you're just as bad as the other side, you have to hear everybody.

You have to like, well, let's look at this, that let's, you know, they're like.

And so it's interesting, it's really interesting.

But I don't, I don't really have a; they like to look at magazines. We've now cut phones out except for in the library. So we don't have phones in the hallways. Um, I mean not in the hallways, but not in the classrooms at all. Um, so I'm like, we have encyclopedias. You guys look at this unabridged dictionary. I'm all fired up about it and they think I'm crazy.

But, um, I don't know if I really answered your question.

Yeah, you did.

Totally.

I think you nailed it.

Kids get it from all different places, all different sources.

And it's interesting that you also highlight that kids want others to see multiple sides and bring that together.

That's wonderful.

I'll add one other thing though that was interesting is I think that like in my tech class, one of the things I just did: a cookies lesson. Like, what are cookies? And one of my students literally said "a tasty treat." And I was like, well, you're not getting one through your screen. And he said, well, no, but I'm just afraid if I don't click on it, then I'm not going to get to go to my Nike website or I'm not going to...

So, and I was like, I have felt the same way until I learned about cookies. And so, you know, that it's just tracking. It's just a way to see what other things they're sharing this information. And I think that they're really open to learning about it because they're on their phones. Right. So I think if we can teach them ways to; and they're going to be so into this whole like fact checking.

And I was telling Katie, like, and Keeley, I think a lesson I'd like to use, like with the Rumor Guard is when Taylor Swift got off the plane in Kansas City. And the kids were like, but she wasn't there, but she was in a photo with Travis Kelce getting off a plane. I'm a Chiefs fan from Kansas City. But of course it you know, pre T-swizzle. But, um, so they're interested and they don't want to be fooled and they don't want to look dumb.

So I think we have an opportunity to get it right. Yes. Very relevant, engaging and exactly what Erica was highlighting. And it is on the resource document that Erin shared. Um, Rumor Guard. It pulls those viral rumors. And again, we are nonpartisan. So you'll see it run the gamut of sources that are appropriate to use in the classroom, uh, appropriate to to speak to your students about. And it really helps students hone the skills of... of what? How do you identify facts from falsehoods?

But, Katie, switching gears over to you.

Um, because I know Erica tried to pass it to you earlier.

Uh, what would you say the journey has been?

Um, with, uh, Gunnison Watershed on joining the fellowship, your news and media literacy journey, and how that's become kind of a forefront, and it seemed like it was a perfect meeting of times with everything going on and this opportunity came about.

But it really fits in your district right now.

Absolutely. First of all, Erica, fantastic job. I'm sure you all can feel her energy and just positivity and willingness to jump into all this work and to be on this call today. So thank you, Erica. I was sitting back here giggling because I told her I would try to

do the bulk of the talking, and but she nailed it. Um, yes. Our journey.

So this is our second year in the NLP fellowship, so we're super grateful to be part of this group again. And last year our focus was with a professional development cohort. So Erica was part of that group along with other educators in our district. So we have early release on Wednesdays, and that's kind of our district wide professional development time. And six times throughout the year we meet with a cohort of folks. Everyone gets to pick which cohort they're part of. And so last year we had a media and news literacy cohort was mostly, it was all secondary teachers that signed up.

We had social studies, ELA, library, um, trying to think... I think that was the bulk of who we had, uh, like a STEM/tech teacher also. Um, and we really just had the opportunity to dive into NLP resources to share what we've used, what we've learned, and just really have some broader conversations about, um, topics such as artificial intelligence and then just media and news literacy as a whole.

And so that was last year felt like a really successful, um, just kick off for us in our first year to gather that group. We had about 13 educators, I believe, um, that met six times throughout the year. And then this year, our focus in the fellowship is more, um, with exciting events like the one that we're doing at Crested Butte Community School.

And so that's kind of our first initiative of the year for our NLP Fellowship. So I'm working with Erica and another one of our colleagues, Keeley, in planning this multi-week news literacy event, which is intentionally designed to be right before the election and to not really focus on the election, but to really focus on the critical thinking skills of kids and being able to identify fact from fiction and misinformation and disinformation and really skill building more than anything. And so that's our first event.

I hope to have others throughout the year down in our Gunnison schools as well.

And that's that's what we've been up to.

Awesome.

Thank you, Katie, so much.

And I think you brought up another important part, um, focusing on those critical thinking skills and ways to identify mis- and disinformation that is applicable no matter what they read and what they consume.

Um, is so important.

And that's what we we try to do as well.

How can we enrich those skills?

So no matter what they're consuming online, they can use the same skill set to try to figure out, um, if it's fact or falsehoods.

Erin, Suzi, any questions you have for for us?

Well, I was just.

Oh, sorry.

Oh.

Go ahead, Suzi.

I was going to say I wouldn't want to live through another election anytime soon, but I love how you are using it as an opportunity to really focus on the critical thinking skills.

Um, I know that there are lots of schools that have really struggled with how do we navigate through these waters and keep our community um and really preserve our community within our school? Um, because elections can be really stressful on a school community, and just focusing on that critical thinking piece through these resources, I think is just brilliant.

Thank you for sharing, both of you.

Suzi that's very similar to what I was going to share.

So yes, I completely agree.

And when we think about our NLP resources, of course, of course we're nonpartisan.

And that's really important to our focus on amping those strategies for growing news literacy muscles, because you'll hear us say it often, but we're not about teaching what to think.

That's that's not the game we're in.

We're about helping students in their how to think about all that they encounter and and with strategies and skills and even thinking about understanding those red flags and, um, and even understanding the algorithm. So we know how we're getting fed what's not real and what's, you know, fictitious. That's that's what has staying power. I mean, the, the election is tough.

And so for I would encourage educators who are concerned about using that as an example when teaching, just trim down and just stick with this.

Just go to the strategies.

Just go to the strategies, teach lateral reading and ask students to apply it in other spaces.

You know, practice with what doesn't ignite emotion in our comfort of our classrooms.

Use that.

What is that one, Shaelynn, birds aren't real?

Is that the, you know we have the birds aren't real lesson which helps students build those search skills, those strategies for debunking a conspiracy theory.

We're not going to get emotionally triggered by that conspiracy theory.

Birds aren't real.

I mean, most of us aren't, right?

That's a safe subject to approach.

And to have that practice, um, in our spaces and our classrooms.

So when I was going through the lessons, I showed you the full-on lessons, the practice and extensions, you're going to see it in the bottom category.

Um, it is a mission.

So when you saw those three headings in Checkology, just know it's towards the bottom if you're looking for that.

But thinking about, we just have a just a few minutes.

And, so of course if there's any questions for me about um, Checkology and our resources, please ask.

But I would love, uh, Katie or or, you know, go ahead and Erica, you share.

But what what is just one thing-- like people listening to this video, people on this call-- one thing that you think that they could do tomorrow to get started?

What is the easiest one thing?

Just one thing.

I think from my perspective, and I'm a districtwide leader, the first thing is just awareness of these, all of these amazing resources.

NLP has their own set of standards.

For example, you know, is your um, content area specialist, are they able to take those standards and connect them to something that's already happening in their classroom?

So it's not again, another thing, um, but just finding a means to raise awareness and getting people excited because it's not hard to get excited about these amazing resources.

I think for me, that's the first step.

So you can see having Erica on board and her excitement and her energy toward this topic, um, is going to, it's going to spread like wildfire in her school, students and staff.

So.

The one thing I was like was like, okay, bouncing all over the place.

The Checkology, um, Checkology 101, the pre-assessments, I think are super easy.

I had my sixth graders and my seventh graders do them.

I think if it's like an easy one thing, like if you're, if I'm talking to other librarians and you have them set up in your, set up in your, um, like, we have computers out and you can have a couple setups so kids can just go click on it.

It's, I don't, I mean, I don't know how because you have to have your own password and you have to have your own login.

But speaking of just straight to that or um, really easy like the Rumor Guard things looking at,

well, it's interesting, the picture with the fists.

I picked the wrong one.

And so then Katie and Keeley and I met and I was like, but why?

And Keeley said, well, or Katie said, well, they're all assigned the same.

They look the same.

And I thought, well my thought, well, there was all white hands around a black hand.

So it was a statement like, but it got conversations going.

So I think one thing really easy is to take a couple of those pictures and put them up in your library and just say, which one's real?

I mean, that's just. the kids will start talking and then kids are just talking about and then you're just standing there saying.

And I have a question.

Just quickly, you said there's "in the notes" for that.

Like it gives explanations.

Yeah, I didn't see that.

So I was just winging it, going through.

But I didn't see the teacher instruction part.

Yes, there is Erica. So just move the thing up so you can see it. But it's there.

Yeah. That's one. That's one for tomorrow. Thank you. That's the one.

Well there you go. There you go. Well, I really appreciate our guests that accompanied me.

So I just want to give a thank you to Shaelynn, my colleague, for sharing about fellowships, and Katie and Erica for sharing their experiences and their work with news literacy. So I definitely appreciate you joining me on this call. Suzi.

Thank you all. If you are here today, you'll be receiving a recording link. If you know someone, know a colleague who you think would be excited about these resources, please share it. You'll also have a link to the survey. That's how the Colorado State Library shares with our federal funders the work that we do. So we'd love your feedback on that.

Um, and yes, and please help spread the word: free resources, resources, and obviously, um, fantastic testimonies from our Colorado folks.

Thank you again to Erica and Katie.

It's so nice to hear how this is actually being implemented and your enthusiasm just speaks volumes.

So thank you everyone for being here. Um, please look out for that email for the recording link and survey. And thanks again to all our guests tonight and hope to see you at the next Shine-a-Light.

