Didactical Tool: Digital Literacy

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Digital literacy is often considered as one of the essential skills for the 21st century. In the context of education, it includes not only the use of digital tools in teaching, but also serves the purpose of developing creativity, which aims to refine the teaching process and facilitate the acquisition and expansion of students' knowledge. It should not be seen as a substitute for the learning process that takes place in person, nor is it a substitute for the written word. Digital literacy should be considered to open and enable the engaged work of teachers and students, during and outside the teaching process. In addition to the knowledge of how to use digital tools, digital literacy also implies the knowledge and certainty of choosing the "right" tools. Creating a safe environment in the digital context is something that teachers can create for the students involved in the teaching process, as well as for them to use the knowledge outside the classroom.

What is it about?

To start with the application of the digital tool we recommend that you read the concept on Digital Literacy. The concept is written in such a way that it is interlinked with other concepts important to understanding the broadness of the digital literacy, but also in a way that it gives you ideas about how digital literacy is separate from media literacy and other similar terms. We should constantly be reminded that digital literacy includes knowledge of software skills as well as "soft" skills on how to use content on the Internet in a safe manner.

Try it out

Digital literacy does not only mean access to media content that is published, more important is the knowledge that it includes the ability to analyze, evaluate, and create content. Accordingly, we will propose examples that you can use when teaching the topic of digital literacy in your subjects. In the Croatian context for example, media literacy is taught in the Croatian language, but it is limited to only a few hours throughout the school year, it is possible that in other contexts there are similar policies of teaching and comparable forms of literacy.

Example 1:

Read the concept Digital literacy on digitclue.net. Imagine a person who is digitally illiterate. According to the material you read, write short instructions using Word, Power Point or a

collaborative tool (Google Docs, MS Teams) for that person on how he/she can protect his/her personal information in an online environment.

- Do you consider yourself digitally literate? Write five skills what would make you a digitally literate person.
- Discuss the ethical issues regarding the sharing and posting of other persons information online.

Example 2:

Ask the students to list and in short define other types of literacy they are familiar with. Try to compare other types of literacy to digital literacy. Discuss similarities and differences between a specific type of literacy and digital literacy. Additionally, do an exercise with the students.

Together, try to find information about a specific topic using an Internet browser and then do the same using sources you have in the school library. Compare the information that you collected.

- Talk with the students about which sources they use on the Internet to look for information. Let them give some examples. Do the same with the sources from the library. Talk to them about the problems they are having in doing so. Do they manage to get a concrete answer in each separately? Do they use both to compare and check the information they collect.

Divide students into pairs. Ask them to search for information about the meaning of digital literacy. One will search using Google/Yahoo, and other can use a specific search on the invisible web (using InfoMine, WolframAlpha). Compare the given results. They can repeat this exercise several times with different questions. Ask the students if there are any differences between the Google and InfoMine/ WolframAlpha and have them name them.

Example 2a:

Talk to the students about the internet search engine that they use the most, it's probably Google. Wherever and however they use it, ask them if everything they find there is reliable information, or if they additionally check the information they find there, and in what way. Do they believe that if they want to get information, they can search the Internet as soon as possible? Is that enough to be able to conduct a seminar or some other kind of work? Is the

information in the textbooks reliable? Is the information they get through television reliable? Can you judge which source of information would be the most reliable and why?

Do the students know all the services Google provides? Do they know what Gmail, Google Maps, Google Earth, Google Translator, Google Meet, etc. are? Have they ever used one?

Let's get acquainted with Google Translator. Is the translation we get there reliable? Choose one sentence and translate it from English to your language, and then from English to another foreign language. Compare the resulting translations and think about why certain translation errors occur. In which language are the fewest errors noticeable? Present and compare the results within the groups and think together when, to what extent, and in which language we can most rely on Google Translate. When listing and sharing information, use the online panel in Padlet.

Example 3:

Work with students on the topic of keywords, try to explain that searching on the web for information is in some cases limited by the fact that they didn't "pick" the appropriate keyword. And that sometimes in the open space of the Internet, choosing a keyword can lead them to content that is biased, misleading, and partial. Ask them to write five keywords for each concept on the digitlclue.net page (Inclusion, Digital Culture, Digital Literacy, Digital Transformation, Digital age gap, Digital Divide, Digital Gender Gap, Digital Queer Gap, Digital Storytelling, Digital Worldmaking, Cyberethics, Digitalisation). With the help of the digital tool WordSift, create a word bubble based on word use. It is designed as an interactive bubble in which words are turned into mini-digital databases that contain information about how to use individual words. It is connected to the word web thesaurus. https://wordsift.org/

Tell your colleagues

The examples you create working with your students can be shared in any case with colleagues in your collective, but we would like to suggest that you share it via the Digital Inclusion Map on the Website of DigitClue. The D.I. Map is a map of the world, you can enter your own projects, materials, ideas, and leave comments on digital literacy in your own country.

Thinking further

This part is imagined taking you a step further, to think together with your students completely outside the framework of the context in which you live and create.

- Try to imagine a person living in the 19th century. Can you explain to him what digital literacy is? Can you think of words you could use to explain the scope of digital literacy?
- Think of digital literacy from a perspective of a blind person and what it would mean for them to be digitally literate.