

# Lesson 4: How Social Media Works

## Unit 3 Part A



### **HOMEWORK:**

- Quiz: Are You in a Filter Bubble. Link: <https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/quiz-are-you-in-a-filter-bubble>
- Look at your timeline on the social media site you spend the most time on. Pay attention to at least the first 15 posts, write down what they are about (the topic), what emotions they evoke (if any) and if the post is an ad.

Activity	Time	Instructions & objectives
Ask 3 people to share what they noticed from analyzing their timeline	5 min	<p>First, check if everyone filled out the homework quiz.</p> <p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What were the topics you noticed? Was there a large diversity of topics you saw or were there only a few that were repeating?</li><li>- How many of all posts were ads?</li><li>- What emotions were evoked most frequently?</li></ul> <p>Discussing these questions should help prompt the student to start thinking about social media as a news source - whether a person can find out about relevant news stories on a diverse set of topics if they only use social media; are a lot of the topics on their timeline there to inform them (or rather to persuade them, get them to buy something); and if the posts they see mostly tend to be unserious or evoking sharp emotions.</p>
Watch a video	4 min	Link: <a href="https://youtu.be/yzgLvTy17co">https://youtu.be/yzgLvTy17co</a>
Split screen project	5 min	<p>Link: <a href="https://themarkup.org/citizen-browser/2021/03/11/split-screen?feed=biden_trump">https://themarkup.org/citizen-browser/2021/03/11/split-screen?feed=biden_trump</a></p> <p>Show the top of the tool – how different news sources are displayed to different groups of people</p> <p>Emphasize that what you see is not fictional but created from actual user data gathered by the media outlet, The Markup. This should help introduce the idea of the filter bubble.</p>

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Activity	Time	Instructions & objectives
Watch a video	3 min	Link: <a href="https://youtu.be/fDLzwFdeC4o">https://youtu.be/fDLzwFdeC4o</a>
Discussion in small groups	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Divide students in groups of three or four.</li><li>- Ask the students to consider if social media is a good news source based on their analysis of social media feed and what they learned in the lesson until now. The students have to write a short list of pros and cons.</li><li>- Ask two groups to present.</li></ul>
Quiz	10 min	Ask the students to fill the quiz independently on their phone or laptop. Link: <a href="https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/algorithms-in-social-media">https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/algorithms-in-social-media</a>
Social media vs. Reality game	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ask the students to pair up in groups of two. Encourage them to pair up with a people they don't know very well.</li><li>- Have them look at each other's social media profile (platform of their choice).</li><li>- Ask them to make assumptions based on that profile (age, hobbies, interests, dislikes).</li><li>- The profile owner can confirm whether it's accurate or not.</li><li>- Ask one pair to share what they assumed and if the profile owner thinks it was accurate.</li></ul>
Conclusion	3 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ask a few students to share their thoughts on what social media use habits they would like to change or what habits, in general, they think would lead to them being better informed.</li><li>- Invite students to read the section about basics on data security at their own time. Link: <a href="https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/data-protection-and-safety-online">https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/data-protection-and-safety-online</a></li><li>- Invite students to watch a short interview with influencers where they talk about their work on their own time. Link: <a href="https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/who-creates-popular-content-on-social-media">https://veryverified.eu/units/unit-3/part-a-how-social-media-works/who-creates-popular-content-on-social-media</a></li></ul>