

Media Literacy Practice in education and inter- institutional cooperation process in Norway

by Human Rights Academy (Menneskerettighetsakademiet)

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Definition of MIL

Equivalent to MIL used in Norway is *medie-* and *informasjonskompetanse*.

Media literacy can be understood as the ability we have to use the media and at the same time understand and critically evaluate the content of digital and traditional media such as television, film, radio, music, books and newspapers. Media literacy is also the ability to communicate and participate in the public conversation. Good media literacy is an important competence for children and young people to develop as to become independent, creative and responsible citizens, do well in future labour market and be able to live a good life.

Chapter I, On MIL: policy related

General remarks and some history (before 2015)

- Media and information literacy sometimes named as critical media literacy and/ or critical media competences.
- Danish professor Kirsten Drotner: more research is needed about what media mean for learning, and [MIL should be part of education at school](#).

Article of K. Drotner (Uni-ty of Odense, DEN) in Norwegian educational magazine “Utdanningsnytt” (2005), might be one of the first times MIL was used as a term, in Norway. Drotners refers to the Art. 13, UN Convention on the rights of the Child, on children ‘s freedom of expression.

- [Microsoft Word - Mediepedagogene_NOU2015-8.docx \(regjeringen.no\)](#) This is contribution from Mediapedagogene on hearing about competences in school/ reforming the curriculum back in 2015. **Please see Annex 1** in the attachment “The school of the future. Renewal of subjects and competences” Esp. Chapters 2 on Digitalizaton and MIL might be of interest. (2015) “The school of the future” is also available online, in Norwegian: [NOU 2015: 8 - regjeringen.no](#)

Mediapedagogene is a kind of network for media teachers in Norway. Please note, that there are two programs at the upper secondary school available for students, called: a) Media and communication, b) Information and technology.

Quote from Mediapedagogene’s input (p.2): “*From our point of view, it is very positive that being able to communicate, interact and participate is highlighted in the NOU * (Norw. Official report. Usually, a report from a committee assigned by the parliament to research an issue/ come up with suggestions) as an important and cross-disciplinary area of expertise (Pt.2.5, pp. 27-29). Unfortunately, it lacks an explicit focus on media literacy. We believe this is crucial for this not only to be seen as a functional understanding of being able to read, write and express oneself orally, but also understanding the different contexts in which these competencies are included.*

Policy documents on MIL (after 2015):

- 1) From [Committee for the protection of children and young people from harmful media content – with particular emphasis on pornographic and sexualised content](#) to Ministry of Culture and Equality, March 2021 (NOR: *Utvalg for beskyttelse av barn og unge mot skadelig medieinnhold – med særlig vekt på*

pornografisk og seksualisert innhold, (NB: Utvalg is a committee/ working group of professionals aimed to map out, describe, recommend measures. Committee established by Royal Decree/ Kongresolusjon in 2019) **Note: Please see Annex 2 (pages 22, document is in Norwegian)**

The Committee on Media Harmfulness maps and compiles knowledge about the harmful effects of exposure to different types of media content and outlines alternative options for increased protection of children. Look esp. for Ch. 6 (p. 51) On sexual education and digital competences.

Extracts, Ch. 6.3:

- In the Committee's view, media competence is therefore a key area of expertise when it comes to being able to use the media safely, understand and critically evaluate different types of media content, including potentially harmful media content and producing media content in an ethical and safe manner.
- A general development in the Nordic countries can be summed up by the fact that the focus in media literacy and media education has shifted from protection through content control to building resilience.
- In the Committee's view, it is important that digital competence or media competence is both defined and used as broad areas of competence that cover the knowledge and skills needed in different contexts and media formats in everyday life that children and young people actually have. This is because some of the most important problems children and young people experience in their media use are related to aspects that have not necessarily traditionally been defined as harmful media content. This applies, for example, to bullying or harassment, self-harm and suicide, unwelcome contact with others, fake news and conspiracy theories, misuse of personal information and unwanted commercial content, but also what may often be defined as harmful, such as violent and sexual content. Based on this, the Committee will argue that it is important that areas of competence such as digital communication and media literacy are based on children and young people's own views and understanding of what "harmful" entails.

One of the main conclusions is that there is a need for coordinated interaction of cross-sectoral measures to safeguard the best interests of children in the digital media reality. The Committee does not consider new legislative measures to be an effective instrument, and the recommendations mainly concern measures aimed at strengthening the knowledge base, coordination and communication.

[Contribution/ feedback from the Ombud on Children's Rights to the report made by the Committee](#). More about Ombud for Children here: [About the Ombudsman for Children – Barneombudet](#)

2) Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Message to the Parliament, October 2020, “Society security in an unsecure world”/ [Meld. St. 5 \(2020–2021\) Samfunnssikkerhet i en usikker verden](#)

Chapter 9: “Mixed threats”. 9.6.1 Work against disinformation, 9.6.2 Influence of elections, 9.6.3. Ability to be critical of source of info, 9.6.4 Role of the press

9.6. On disinformation might be of interest. **Please see Annex 3 (document is in Norwegian language).**

Extracts:

- In light of the big increase in the use of social media and changes in people's media use, as well as

the increased opportunities digitalization provides to communicate and influence through various digital platforms, the work against disinformation is a key part of the work against complex threats.

- The ability to criticise sources: A prerequisite for counteracting disinformation is to be able to assess the sender and credibility of the news and knowledge sources used. Developing the ability to criticise sources begins in schools, but it must also be developed and maintained in organisations, private enterprises, public agencies and individual citizens.
- The ability to analyse information flows: The best possible understanding of attempts at influence through disinformation requires that the authorities and others can identify attempts to influence different media platforms and see these in context.
- The role of the media: A good, diverse, independent, critical and self-critical press that the population trusts is a key part of the protection against fake news and disinformation. The role of the press as infrastructure in the public discourse can only be fulfilled if the media are – and not least are perceived to be – independent of the power structures they are supposed to follow, primarily public authorities. This places restrictions on what the authorities can and should do, and on what measures are suitable for, among other things, combating disinformation and fake news.
- Attribution: Understanding and possibly refuting disinformation requires the ability to understand who is behind it. Attribution involves identifying and possibly holding an actor accountable behind an intentional action. Attribution can also be a tool in itself, because the authorities may want to show that they know who is behind disinformation and other attempts to influence. Whether it is desirable and appropriate to hold an actor accountable for an intentional action may depend on the information base and the political context.
- Technological competence: A significant part of disinformation takes place in the digital space. Competence on how technology is used for disinformation and other influences is crucial (see also chapter 8 on cyber security). This includes knowledge about how fake news/disinformation is spread online, how social media can be misused and how such influence can be automated.

9.6.3 Skills to be critical to sources of information (p. 113)

Examples of competence goals related to source criticism and use of sources. Students shall:

- Compare how different sources can provide different information on the same topic, and reflect on how sources can be used to influence and promote a particular view (Social science 7th grade).
- Assess the ways different sources provide information on a social / society related topic, and reflect how algorithms, single-minded sources or lack of sources can influence our understanding (Social science 10th grade).
- Interpret and critically evaluate statistical representations from the media and the local community (Maths 9th grade).
- Discuss current health and lifestyle issues and assess the reliability of information from different sources (Natural science Vg1).
- Use sources in a critical manner, highlight quotations and refer to sources in a reliable manner in own / self-produced texts (Norwegian 10th grade).
- Talk about the reliability of different sources, and choose sources for your own use (English 7th grade).
- Use sources in a critical and accountable manner (English 10th grade).

- Compare and critically evaluate different sources of knowledge about religions and worldviews (KRLE 10th grade).

Preventive measures connected to criticism of sources of information (p. 114).

- 3) **Ministry of Culture and Equality. Message to the Parliament** "To experience, create, share- Art and culture for, with and by children and youth" / Meld. St. 18 (2020–2021) **Oppleve, skape, dele — Kunst og kultur for, med og av barn og unge**. Part 4 "Digital culture" Chapter 13 "Possibilities and challenges" might be of interest." Might be of interest.

Extracts:

- Today, the mobile phone is the most widely used screen for cultural and media consumption, and the younger consumers are constantly struggling more. In recent years, we have seen young people who distinguish themselves as esports athletes, or as profiles on YouTube or TikTok, where creating music or expressing themselves artistically, creatively and socially has become a common cultural phenomenon.
- Norwegian children also spend more time on the Internet than other European children (3.6 hours compared with 2.8 hours on average) Children and adolescents in Norway are also very digital from an early age. Survey "Children and media 2020" documents that the vast majority of 9-18-year-olds have a mobile phone (97 per cent), and that very many children and young people get a user account / profile on social media before they are 13 years old.

- 4) **Ministry of Children and Families. National strategy to ensure children's right in digital environment and their right to take part in decision making.** "Straight to internett."/ **Rett på nett. Nasjonal strategi. Sikre barns rettigheter i det digitale miljøet og reell medvirkning fra barn og unge**, September 2021. Please see Annex 4 (in Norwegian language, page 38).

Extracts:

- School shall play a key role in helping children and young people develop digital skills, critical media understanding and ethical and digital judgement.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs has overall coordinating responsibility for the field of safe digital upbringing. This responsibility entails leading the work at the ministry level, being a driving force for policy development in the field and maintaining a dialogue with the relevant ministries to ensure coordinated efforts. Other ministries that play a key role in this work are: Ministry of Health and Care Services; Ministry of Justice and Public Security; Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Education and Research. The Norwegian Media Authority follows up and coordinates efforts to ensure safe digital upbringing at directorate level. The Norwegian Media Authority works to ensure that children and young people become active and safe media users who can orient themselves in the media landscape and make informed choices, by protecting children and young people from harmful media content and developing measures to increase critical media understanding in the target group.
- Many children and young people use different news channels than adults. According to Children and Media 2020, 88 percent of children between the ages of 9 and 12 watch news on NRK Supernytt. Among children between the ages of 9 and 18 who use social media, 87 per cent respond that they hear or watch news on such platforms. When news is consumed in social media, it is a challenge that news access can be controlled by algorithms that help create echo chambers and the spread of fake news and disinformation.

- Challenges for democracy. An important part of growing up is to become confident democratic citizens who can make conscious decisions about, for example, participation in elections, membership in associations or labor organizations. Without knowledge of how they can be influenced by fake news, how algorithms control what they read online and the effect of echo chambers, children and young people can end up as victims of extremist groups, conspiracy theories or, at worst, radicalized.
- Social science has a particular responsibility for digital skills, including that the pupils develop digital citizenship.
- Children and young people are particularly vulnerable to marketing pressure because of their natural gullibility and lack of experience. They have greater difficulty than adults in identifying and understanding advertising.

5) **Ministry of Culture and Equality. Report “An open and fact-based public debate”/ NOU 2022: 9 En åpen og opplyst offentlig samtale—Ytringsfrihetskommisjonens utredning Delivered by a special commission on Freedom of expression, 2022. Please see Annex 5 (in Norwegian language). Please check Chapter 9: Disinformation and manipulated information.**

Extracts:

- The concern about the dissemination of false information is not new. But the internet has made it easier than before to spread propaganda, lies and misinformation to a larger audience than a few years ago. Social media algorithms amplify the distribution of the publications that create the most engagement. This is often beneficial for those who want to spread what is often called fake news.
- If people can no longer distinguish between fact and fiction, between true and false, it poses a serious threat to freedom of expression.
- The free formation of opinion presupposes access to reliable information. The search for truth becomes impossible if we cannot establish what is true and false in what we base our judgments on. At worst, this could pose a threat to democracy.

**Conversation with Marie Grande,
Senior adviser on children and media, national strategy**

28.09.22

Medietilsynet (MT) /Norwegian Media Authority (NMA). NMA is a state body responsible for law making, implementation of laws in the field of media in Norway. *The Norwegian Media Authority shall contribute to fulfilling freedom of expression, legal security, and a vital democracy. The priority tasks are to facilitate strong media diversity and critical media understanding in the population. NMA is part of the Ministry of Culture and Equality.*

You are the team leader for Critical Media Understanding, which works with children and media. What is your work about?

- Kids and young people are our priority. We conduct the survey "Children and media"

every second year to see children's and adolescents' media habits and media practices. This survey has more than 3,000 respondents. To get a whole picture, we run parallelly the survey "Parents and media" in which parents report their children's media habits and practices. This survey has more than 2,000 respondents. Last time surveys were conducted was this year, results are published October, 11, 2022.

- Children and young people do read newspapers, but to a much lesser extent than before. Survey "Children and Media" shows that the most important entry point into news for young people is social media. Primary school children get news/ have own news [Supernytt](#), delivered by the public TV company in Norway, [NRK](#). Supernytt (News for everybody who wants to know what's going on in Norway and the world), is quite popular among kids. NRK and [VG](#) (one of the biggest newspapers) have news also on Snapchat for young adults, 15-24 years old.
- Many of news- providers are regulated by editorial staff, but some are not. NMA does not work with news providers directly. However, through its research/ investigations, NMA tries to understand what consequences the new habits for media-consumption can have for the fulfillment of the NMA's mandate and responsibilities: preserving freedom of expression and supporting critical media understanding.
- Relevant to ask in this sense: What happens to the public debate in the long term? On what terms is public debate is being conducted? What happens to trust to the authorities and democracy as such? It becomes vulnerable in a longer perspective.

Can you tell more about surveys on media consumption and habits, which you run and results?

- MTA conducts a survey on critical media understanding (MIL) for the whole population in Norway every 2nd year. [Last one is from 2021](#). Next time is in 2023. This in addition to those two surveys (kids, adults), which I have mentioned already.
- MTA uses survey's results in following way: looks as to how media industry works, runs parents' meetings in schools in cooperation with police, for example, on the issues of photos sharing by kids on SoMe or sharing/selling/buying drugs, selling sexual material of themselves. Children and young people are content producers today, not only consumers. MTA is engaged in public education after the survey is completed and published and runs qualitative interviews with children and adolescents. For example, in connection with the next survey, which is to be published in February 2023 where we ask children: When did they get their first mobile phone?
- Press release about surveys' results is very important. It is crucial for us to reach out to society about how young, adults, elderly people use media and handle information.

How do you follow-up your work/ findings? Do you work with other institutions in the society?

- When survey is published, we come up with suggestions for measures/ follow-ups.
- MTA does not work directly with politicians, but with bureaucracy (departments,

smaller bodies and entities, municipalities) in order to develop a policy paper or an action plan. For example, we developed in 2021 the national strategy "[Rett på nett-strategi for trygg digital oppvekst](#)" / "Straight to Internet- strategy for a safe digital childhood".

- It is important for us to stick to participative perspective, digital citizenship: e.g., we know that children in the foster families cannot use Vipps (payment system in Norway) and skip some possibilities therefore for participation. When identifying an issue, MTA might together with other state stakeholders (directorates) make an action plan to settle this issue. It does happen, but not often though. It is more usual to get an assignment from a ministry as to develop policy paper/ national plan/ action plan.
- What we also do is to receive suggestions from other organisations, working with youth / on youth's issues. For example, [Ungdomsnettverk](#) / A network of youth organizations, a newly established (June 2022) network of 9 youth organizations. We want to develop policies based on the participation of the youth, what they have to say. We get inspiration and ideas from them. This network is participating actively in the realization of the National strategy "Straight to internet- strategy for a safe digital childhood".

MTA has also teaching materials on media. How do you reach schools, if you do?

- School curriculum is quite general, and it is up to every teacher to deal with this generality, make up her/ his own teaching. Teaching would be dependent on teacher's competences.
- We often collaborate with others to make sure our teaching materials are known and used. Like, our collaboration with [NDLA](#) (Norwegian digital learning platform), which is very much used by school students and teachers in the upper secondary school, or [Tenkfaktisk.no](#), which is an educational portal of the fact-checking entity, [Faktisk.no](#)
- In any case, when producing the teaching materials, our focus is on digital human being/ digital citizenship. We use digital services in everyday life and it is therefore important to protect ourselves when we are online. We know that a) Abuse of children online is the type of crime that goes up in Norway; b) different apps were used in schools during the pandemic Covid-19. Are kids safe and protected then? Datatilsynet/ Norwegian Data Protection Authority monitors this too. You might have a look at their educational webpage, [Du bestemmer – lær om personvern, nettvett og kildekritikk](#) (You decide- learn about privacy, information sources and critical media competence). Another tips, is a game from NED, Bad news. It is going to be available soon at [ndla.no](#).

Chapter II: On MIL: media-related

1) [Faktisk.no](https://www.faktisk.no/sjangere/faktasjekk) (like A/S DELFI in Latvia, see fact-checking poster)

<https://www.faktisk.no/sjangere/faktasjekk>

The grid contains 12 fact-checking posts:

- Top row:
 - Faktasjekk: Nei, det rodgronne byrådet i Oslo har ikke regulert over 3500 nye studentboliger
 - Faktasjekk: Nei, Store og EU vil ikke forbry vedfyring
 - Faktasjekk: Usikkert hvor mange dognplasser som vil forsvinne
 - Faktasjekk: Nei, britisk rapport viser ikke at covid-19-vaksinene dreper tusenvis
- Middle row:
 - Faktasjekk: Nei, klimagasser fra vindmøller gir ikke mer drivhuseffekt enn flytrafikk
 - Faktasjekk: Nei, sveitsere får ikke 200 franc for å angri naboen
 - Faktasjekk: Riktig at 50 000 flere står uten fastlege med ny regering
 - Faktasjekk: Ap bommer på skattekutt, lærere og barnehageplasser
- Bottom row:
 - Faktasjekk: Nesten like nye utenlands strømeksport fra Sørlandet som i fjor
 - Faktasjekk: Vi kan ikke lage nok strøm til å få ned prisen nå
 - Faktasjekk: Vedum og Listhaug uenige – har regjeringen økt elavgiften?
 - Faktasjekk: Gamle tall for antibiotika i kjøtt deles igjen

Faktisk.no AS is a non-profit organization and independent editorial board for fact-checking of the public debate in Norway. Faktisk.no is owned by editorials: [VG](#) and [Dagbladet](#), public TV/radio: [NRK](#), private TV company: [TV2](#), media groups: [Polaris Media](#) and [Amedia](#). Its mission is to contribute to an open, inclusive and fact-based public conversation. By reviewing the basis for current claims that affect our perception of reality, we work for a fact-based and constructive public debate. Faktisk.no also detects and prevents the spread of fictitious messages pretending to be real news. Through knowledge building and competence exchange, Faktisk.no wants to be an open laboratory for source awareness and critical media use in Norway.

The statutes require Faktisk.no to work in accordance with the central, self-imposed ethical guidelines for the Norwegian press: [Code of Ethics of the Norwegian Press](#). Editorial and organizational independence of Faktisk.no is ensured by the Media Responsibility Act and own statutes, which require us to comply with the [Editor's Poster](#). It ensures the editor independence from the company's owners and other stakeholders in Faktisk.no.

Faktisk.no has joined the [International Fact-Checking Network \(IFCN\)](#) and is a verified signatory to their fact-checking poster "Fact-checkers code of principles". This requires that Faktisk.no is impartial and politically independent, and has full transparency about methods, use of sources, funding, and organization structure. Faktisk.no is being evaluated each year according to these criteria. In 2018 Faktisk.no became part of the Facebook's "Third-party fact-checking program".

Tenk.faktisk.no – educational resources for young people in critical media use and source awareness, as an “educational” part of Faktisk.no Available also at FB, Instagram, Youtube. For primary and upper secondary schools. Learning packages ordered in following parts:

- a) **Fact-checking:** Fact-checking is a genre in journalism. Checking up on the factual basis behind the information we encounter is sometimes necessary and other times very useful.

E.g. Activity “[Fact-check the prime-minister](#)” (40-60 min. relevant subjects in school: Norwegian language, Civics, Nature science): What are facts, and what is opinion? Students fact-check a press release from a fictional prime minister and send feedback about what's wrong.

- b) **Source awareness:** When we talk about source awareness, we often focus on the information alone, but in many cases we should also evaluate the information based on the sender.

E.g. Activity “[Dilemma](#)” (5-20 min. Relevant school subjects: Norwegian language, Civics, Nature science, KRLE (Christianity, Religions, Life philosophy, Ethics), Media & communication, Media & information): Students discuss 6 dilemmas.

- c) **Fake news :** Fake news or disinformation is information someone chooses to give you, even if they know it's not true. The purpose may be to spread certain attitudes or simply make money.

E.g. Activity “[To read news in social media](#)” (90 min. Relevant school subjects Norwegian language, Civics, KRLE (Christianity, Religions, Life philosophy, Ethics), Media & communication): For young people, social media is an important information channel. Here we give the tools to evaluate the credibility of what they read.

- d) **Graphics and figures:** The production of figures can be an effective tool to bring forward a message. Graphs and numbers can also be used to angle and adjust the message.

E.g. Activity “[What does the graph say?](#)” (90 min. Relevant school subjects Natural science, maths): Difficult questions can be easier to understand with a graph. But sometimes graphs give an oversimplified or erroneous impression of reality. Here, students take a closer look at what a graph actually says.

- e) **22 of July* and radicalization:** On July 22, 2011, Norway experienced its largest terrorist attack since World War 2. What could be behind such an action? How can we use source criticism to prevent such an attack from happening again?

E.g. Activity “[What is radicalization?](#)” (30-45 min. Relevant school subjects History, Politics and human rights, Civics, KRLE): Radicalization is used in many contexts, both politically and religiously. But what exactly is radicalization?

- f) **Conspiracies:** Conspiracies can be exciting stories, and we have examples of how they can have major consequences. But how can we recognize a conspiracy?

E.g. Activity “[The great replacement](#)” (60-90 min. Relevant school subjects: History, Politics and human rights, Civics, KRLE): This conspiracy shows up in an increasing number of dramatic events related to terror. What is it about and how can we treat it?

2) [Mediebedriftene](#)

Norwegian Media Businesses' Association. Media trade- and tariff organization in Norway. Has 324 member businesses (newspapers, TV companies, media groups, magazines, multimedia companies, press agencies, radio stations, printing offices, distribution companies, ads groups and companies).

Mediebedriftene has own educational resources [Mediekompasset](#). Aim- to encourage to use media in teaching/ learning process. Teaching activities are developed in collaboration with active teachers based on current competence plans and relevant focus areas in schools; the goal is facilitate the use of newspapers and other current information media in teaching. Educational materials for teachers, all school levels (primary, low secondary, upper secondary), [Lærerveiledninger \(mediebedriftene.no\)](#)

Educational package for primary school (1-4 grade). E.g. Activity "Be a journalist", subject: Norwegian, primary school. Competence goals: a) Explore and communicate texts through conversation, writing, play, movement and other creative expressions. B) Talk about the difference between opinions and facts in texts

Task: Make a map on a topic to be examined. These questions are the basis of all writing:

1. What do I want to say?
 2. Why would I say that?
 3. Why should the reader read it?
- Channel: Where will they present their product? In the class/school newspaper, in the local newspaper or online? Recipient: Who will they say this to? It can be helpful to keep a specific person representing your target audience in mind. If you write to a friend who is of the same age, they imagine this one.

Educational package for middle school (5-8 grade). E.g. Activity "Newspapers help you to take part in public/ society life" (p.5) Learning goal: Teach the students - how they can benefit from the newspaper as a source of information and as a relevant arena for their own opinions, - how they can express themselves in public forums and participate in debate. This knowledge is the basis for forming opinions.

Background: Public debate is democracy's tool for finding solutions, and those who want to influence must participate in the debate. Knowledge is a prerequisite for making an opinion, and also gives confidence to express it.

Suggestions for discussion/talk and assignments in the class: Check the comments section of a current story in an online newspaper. How do those who comment act? (Polite, factual, or vice versa?), etc.

Educational package for lower secondary school (9-10 grade) E.g. Activity "Photos and illustrations" (p.8). Goal: To give students knowledge about different types of illustrations, and that photos, videos and illustrations in the newspapers are an important part of journalism. Teaching: The reading material provides knowledge that will be useful in the work with the tasks on page 9. It is well suited for plenary teaching, but can also be done individually. The assignments on page 9 encourage students for analysis, discussion, assessments and to make up their own minds. Questions related to reading material: a) What is meant by a "composite text"? b) What is the difference between a documentary image and a illustration image? c) Who takes the newspaper photos? (Where do newspapers get the photos from?) d) What is a photo agency? Group work about caricatures in newspapers: Go & search current newspaper cartoons (caricatures). Choose one you think is good/funny/ ugly/interesting... Prepare a short presentation in class based on: 1. Where is the drawing published? 2. What does the drawing actualize? 3. What do you perceive it to be about? 4. What do you think of the drawing?

Conversation with Eivind Mørk from Aftenposten Junior (AJ)

2.11.2022

Aftenposten Junior is not that old, isn't it?

AJ has existed 10 years now. We are the largest newspapers for kids in Norway. AJ has an independent editorial staff of 7 employees. AJ is a weekly edition on paper and digitally, a podcast and we are publishing new content also at the AJ's school (educational material, digital). Our target group is 9-13 years old kids. We cover the news on children's terms. Our journalists are experts at conveying news in a way that children understand. AJ writes about things that are happening in the world, and we make our own reports from all over Norway. We take children seriously and write about things that concern them.

It is not so stated in the editorial board that we work for children to develop a better understanding of the media. But in the power that we are a newspaper, this is also within our mandate, yes.

AJ looks very “pedagogical” in a way. Are you especially aware about using pedagogical tools (e.g. highlighting and clarification of terms)?

We communicate content that can be complex but try to keep it as short as possible. Use words that children understand. There is no point in using terms children do not understand. E.g., to explain what the EU is, we say that the EU is a club, not an organization (organization is a word for adults). We use visual means actively: arrows, graphs to make the content more engaging and accessible to our readers. I think that we are good at keeping it short. I see other newspapers in the Nordic countries tend to use too much text. It becomes uninteresting/ boring for children.

It is crucial for us to take children seriously. We write in such a way that children understand, but also about topics that concern them the most. We are interested in hearing from them what they are interested in. We receive tips from children via e-mail. In addition, get tips and ideas when we meet children, either in schools or other arenas (several colleagues have kids this age).

How do you know that you “reach”/ is interesting for the target group?

One of our contenders today is social media, such as Snapchat, Tik Tok. Children spend a lot of time on these platforms. They get some news on social media, but since these are not editor-controlled media, there is no guarantee that the news on these platforms is trustworthy. We also know that social media is used to spread disinformation and fake news. We want to be a counterweight to this.

Although the age limit for using social media is 13 years old in Norway, we know that 10-11 years old children are also there. It is then a dilemma for us how much content we should take from, let's say from Tik Tok. For example, a video of violence in school has been

circulating recently on Tik Tok for a few weeks. "Violence at school" is a phenomenon that our target group is concerned with and therefore we chose to mention it in our newspaper. In addition, we're trying to "explain" the video and, not to "advertise" for Tik Tok.

We have launched the digital version of AJ, [Aftenposten Junior skole](#), in the school year 2021/22 and made an agreement with Gydental publishing house. Content is linked to school subjects and competence goals. It is up to schools/ municipalities to buy the content and use it in the teaching.

Are you pro-active in approaching schools?

It varies. Journalists have a low threshold for contacting schools. We have visited schools in connection with creating teaching materials at AJ school. We know that our teaching materials are being used in schools, we have data on that.

This week (week 44) is National Newspaper Week ([Nasjonal avisuke: Rekordmange elever får tilgang til avisenes nettutgaver \(mediebedriftene.no\)](#)), and schools get free access to online editions, as well as teaching materials.

Screens of AJ, October 22



10. Dagens JUNIOR

Finn på gaten

Hva liker du å gjøre i friminuttene?

Sigrun (9)
Klikk på bildet og last ned intervjuet med Sigrun fra Finn på gaten.

Sophie (11)
Klikk på bildet og last ned intervjuet med Sophie fra Finn på gaten.

Weronika (10)
Klikk på bildet og last ned intervjuet med Weronika fra Finn på gaten.

Mathilde (10)
Klikk på bildet og last ned intervjuet med Mathilde fra Finn på gaten.

Hæ?
Vil du vite mer om hvilke oppdrag vi har til deg? Klikk på bildet og last ned intervjuet med Hæ fra Finn på gaten.

Det gir tilkommenn i skolen

Skummel sminke

Ikke kjøp nye ting hele tiden!

Meninger

- Veldig trist

Likestilling på skolen

Collin (12)

Hilien Steffie (10)

2. Dagens JUNIOR

Jorden rundt

1. MINNEKLASS TÅRN

2. HOTELLSØ

3. MANGER SPENT:

4. STOR PEKING:

5. VAKTMENT:

6. EN SPESIELL SEKK:

7. KJØP PÅ INTERNETT:

8. KJØP PÅ INTERNETT:

Chapter III: On MIL, education- related

Formal education

Utdanningsdirektoratet (UDIR)/ Directorate is an executive agency for Ministry of education and research in Norway, www.udir.no

Core curriculum. Values and principles for primary and secondary education

Core values of the education of training (1. Human dignity 2. Identity and cultural diversity 3. Critical thinking and ethical awareness 4. Joy of creating 5. Respect for nature and environmental awareness 6. Democracy and participation).

Core value: [Critical thinking and ethical awareness](#)

Extracts:

- School shall help pupils to be inquisitive and ask questions, develop scientific and critical thinking and act with ethical awareness.
- The teaching and training shall give the pupils understanding of critical and scientific thinking. Critical and scientific thinking means applying reason in an inquisitive and systematic way when working with specific practical challenges, phenomena, expressions and forms of knowledge. The teaching and training must create understanding that the methodologies for examining the real world must be adapted to what we want to study, and that the choice of methodology influences what we see. If new insight is to emerge, established ideas must be scrutinised and criticised by using theories, methods, arguments, experiences, and evidence. The pupils must be able to assess different sources of knowledge and think critically about how knowledge is developed. They must also be able to understand that their own experiences, points of view and convictions may be incomplete or erroneous. Critical reflection requires knowledge, but there is also room for uncertainty and unpredictability. The teaching and training must therefore seek a balance between respect for established knowledge and the explorative and creative thinking required to develop new knowledge. Ethical awareness, which means balancing different considerations, is necessary if one is to be a reflecting and responsible human being. The teaching and training must develop the pupils' ability to make ethical assessments and help them to be cognizant of ethical issues.
- Critical thinking and ethical awareness are a requirement for and part of what it means to learn in different contexts and will therefore help the pupils to develop good judgment. Practical work in a vocation, profession or artistic field also requires the ability to reflect, judge and evaluate.

[Principles of education and personal development](#)

(...) The teaching and training shall give the pupils a good foundation for understanding themselves, others and the world, and for making good choices in life (...)

- Interdisciplinary topic: [Democracy and citizenship](#)

Social studies (school subject), all levels

- [Curriculum for social studies](#) (Core elements: Sense of wonder of exploration/ Deliberating on society

and interconnections/ Understanding and participating in democracy / Sustainable societies/ Development of identity and belonging. Intedisciplinary topics. Basic skills. [Competence aims and assessment](#) (year 2, 4, 7 & 10).

E.g. Competence aim, after year 2 (2nd grade)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- reflect on why people have different opinions and make different choices
- talk about friendship and belonging and what can have an impact on relations
- describe and give examples of diversity in Norway, with an emphasis on different types of families and communities, including the indigenous Sami people
- explore and give examples of how people have impact on the climate and the environment, and document how this can be seen in the local community
- present and give examples of children's rights in Norway and in the world, and what children can do when these rights are violated
- explore and give examples of how children can have an effect on decisions and collaborate on democratic processes
- talk about the opportunities and challenges involved in digital interaction
- talk about emotions, bodies, gender and sexuality and how both one's own and other peoples' boundaries can be expressed and respected
- explore and give examples of how people in different parts of the world can have an impact on each other's lives

E.g. [Competence aims \(year 10\)](#)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- Assess the ways in which different sources provide information on social-studies-related topics, and reflect on how algorithms, biased sources or the lack of sources can affect our understanding
- Explain the causes and consequences of key historical and contemporary conflicts, and reflect on whether changes in certain conditions could have prevented the conflicts
- Explain the causes and consequences of terrorism and genocide, such as the Holocaust, and reflect on how extremist attitudes and extremist acts can be prevented
- Explore and describe how human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples, as well as other international treaties and international cooperation, are important for national policies, people's lives, equal rights and equality
- Reflect on equalities and inequalities in identities, ways of life and cultural expressions, and discuss the opportunities and challenges related to diversity
- Explore and reflect on one's own digital footprint and the possibility of deleting one's digital trail and the value of one's own and others' right to privacy, data protection and copyright
- Describe important laws, rules and norms and discuss the consequences any violation of these may have for the individual and for society, in both the short and long run

Norwegian (language, literature), all levels

- Curriculum for Norwegian (Text in context / Critical approach to text/ Oral communication / Written text creation / Language as system and opportunity / Linguistic diversity). Interdisciplinary topics. Basic skills. Competence aims and assessment.

E.g. [Competence aim and assessment, year 7](#)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- find information in subject-related sources in libraries and digital media, assess the reliability of the sources and refer to the sources in one's own texts
- listen to and develop input from others and justify one's own points of views in conversations
- reflect ethically on how he or she presents him or herself and others in digital media
- present subject-related topics orally with and without digital resources
- play with language and experiment with various language features, literary devices and types of presentation in oral and written texts

E.g. [Competence aim and assessment, year 10 \(10th grade\):](#)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- use sources critically, highlight quotes and refer to sources in a verifiable manner in one's own texts
- explore and assess how digital media affect and change language and communication
- express him or herself in different genres and experiment with genres in a creative way
- create multimedia texts and justify the choice of forms of expression

KRLE (Christianity, Religion, Philosophies of life, Ethics). NB: curricula available at the time only in Norwegian language (new version), From middle school level, the 4th grade

[Curriculum for KRLE](#)

Subject's relevance and values: KRLE is a key subject for understanding oneself, others and the world around oneself. Through knowledge of different religions and worldviews, the pupils shall develop the ability to live in and with diversity in society and working life. KRLE will provide practice in ethical reflection and help develop the pupils' judgement in everyday life and in the face of societal challenges. The curriculum in KRLE facilitates that Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, new religiousness and philosophical humanism can be treated both individually and in context. In total, the pupils will become well acquainted with the breadth of religious and non-religious beliefs. About half of the teaching time in the subject will be spent on knowledge of Christianity.

E.g. [Competence aim and assessment, year 4](#)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- distinguish between different sources of knowledge about religions and worldviews
- describe and talk about different ways of living together in family and society

-
- collaborating with others in philosophical conversation
 - identify and reflect on ethical issues
 - explore and discuss ethical aspects of people's way of life and resource use
 - get to know with and communicate their own and others' thoughts, feelings and experiences
 - talk about what human dignity, respect and tolerance mean and what it means for how we live together

[Competence aim and assessment, year 10](#)

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- compare and critically evaluate different sources of knowledge about religions and worldviews
- give an account of and reflect on different views on gender and sexuality in Christianity and other religions and worldviews
- explore and present how elements from Christianity and other religions and worldviews are expressed in media and popular culture
- explore the perspective of others and deal with disagreement and differences of opinion
- reflect on existential questions related to growing up and living in a diverse and global society
- identify and discuss ethical issues related to various forms of communication
- identify and discuss current ethical issues related to human rights, sustainability and poverty

Politics and human rights (subject at high school, 11-13 grade)

[Curriculum for Politics and human rights](#)

Relevance and values: Politics and human rights are about how our own and other societies are governed through political decisions. The subject shall provide insight into the importance of human rights individually, nationally and internationally. The subject shall also provide a basis for active participation in society and an understanding of and respect for other people's views, values and cultural expressions.

Core elements: Political theory and understanding of democracy / Power, influence and citizenship / Human rights and international community / Political institutions, stakeholders, and processes

The pupil is expected to be able to:

- evaluate information to analyse academic questions and issues
- reflect on what it means to be a citizen, compare the form of government of different states and analyse the development and challenges of democracy
- explore and analyse national and international issues or conflicts in a political science perspective
- give an account of power relations, dimensions of conflict and channels for political influence in the Norwegian political system and elaborate on and discuss how this is expressed in practical politics
- assess the importance of human rights for democracy and the welfare state
- assess the role and significance of international law nationally and internationally

- explore institutions and actors that monitor and enforce human rights, and elaborate on and discuss the relationship between state, intergovernmental and supranational authority
- give an account of the Norwegian political system locally and nationally and discuss and elaborate on the challenges facing Norwegian democracy
- explore and discuss how the international political system handles issues related to war and peace, security, cooperation and conflict resolution

Conversation with Oda Marie Skancke & Tina Scheen Kiese from [Tenk.faktisk.no](#)

4.10.22

How was Tenk.faktisk.no (tenk = think. Faktisk = in fact/ actually). started? As it is quite a new educational initiative on MIL, right?

- Tenk.faktisk.no was started in 2019 and operated by people with teacher background. We get financial support from the state, and in addition have some honorars for giving workshops/ running smaller projects.
- The beginning of Tenk.faktisk.no was when we were asked by schools to give lectures on information source criticism. Our colleague then who had given a lecture realized that he could speak to adults, but not young people/ school students.
- We want young people to have tools to manage information and be resilient. We meet young people on the platforms they are on and get information from.

How do you work and what are your priorities?

- We see that Tenk.faktisk.no do works and makes a change. Misinformation, disinformation is being spread very fast. We see that school students don't learn much about practical tools for managing information (like, reverse image search; cross-reading, fact-checking as method). We take themes, which are relevant for young people, something that concerns them (e.g. money laundering in sports, or an analysis of a piece of music, or a news circulating at SoMe like Tik-Tok). School students should see this information is relevant to their everyday lives, to their interests.
- We would like to link our educational packages to current news/newsfeed (for example, the war in Ukraine).
- We are trying to reach out to teachers and make them use our educational materials as a part of their teaching / integrate into their teaching, not as additional/ vocational learning. It is up to teachers to make up lessons and pick up methods of teaching.
- It is important that our teaching materials are updated constantly. Our goal is to make updates once a week.
- Our goal is neutrality. We're not gonna say "Trump is stupid." Students should make

their mind and (not) find it out themselves. What we do is to raise awareness about how we treat information which is around us.

- For example, an influencer/ blogger posts tips about health. What we do, we check, [Influensernes helseråd | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#) and suggest students to check: look after sources, reflect on sources they find.
- We want students to look for and find out if there is any agenda behind information. For example, kids get assignment at school to find a dinner recipe. They would, most probably, pick up recipe from matprat.no (we see that matprat.no usually comes up when searching because of paid ad placement). However, school students will not necessarily think about who is behind matprat.no, who the sponsor is, and what a hidden agenda might be)
- We are keen to teach the youth how to recognize and identify the source of information. For example, when they come across advice on hygiene/ body treatment/ cosmetics or related to Covid-19: Is this advice delivered by an expert? What kind of expert then?
- We want to make the youth aware about algorithms; analyze the commercial stakeholders so that they make better choices.

How do you evaluate your work? How do you see that your educational materials are being used?

- "It's hard to measure usage and learning. When we want to see what teachers/ school students have used, we check the statistics (number of clicks on the website). For example, if we check figures for January 2022, we see the educational material about the war in Ukraine was at the 1st place ([Søk: ukraina | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#)), educational package about the 22nd of July/ radicalization at the 2nd, [Søk: 22 juli | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#). Otherwise, we see that educational packages on: Conspiracies ([Søk: konspirasjon | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#)), Influencers/bloggers ([Søk: influensere | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#)), Eco-chambers ([Søk: ekkokamer | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#)), Source criticism ([Søk: kildekritikk | Tenk \(faktisk.no\)](#)) are among those, which are popular.
- 75 000 clicks in September 2022, 13 000 users.
- We do run surveys among teachers, though not regularly. Another way to evaluate our work is through projects. Like, the project "Fact-checking week", we are able then to collect feedback from teachers.

How do you work with authorities, if at all, and eventually justify the necessity of your work?

What helps us is that Norway has got the new curricula in 2020. Critical thinking is included in it as key knowledge and expertise. Faktisk.no was not involved in developing curricula, but it is an absolute aid in our work.

Conversation with Kristoffer Kjelling

14.10.2022

Kristoffer is media and Norwegian teacher/ upper secondary school, author of textbook Media subject

What is your opinion on the level of MIL in Norway in general (teachers, students, society as such)?

The level of media and information literacy is still too low, I would say. Well, it is crucial school students learn about and attain MIL skills. To be critical to and about information is important. I know kids in Norway do learn quite a lot. Still, look at some of my students. Coming to upper secondary, they cannot always identify the source of information (who is behind information or message? Can it be any (hidden) agenda behind information?) School students must be able to search, reflect, evaluate the information they find and use it in a good way. This is the most important thing. I am author of the textbook for media subject, which is being used in schools. In addition, I produce and use own materials.

What is it like to be a media teacher?

Nice. I am free to make up my teaching. Most teachers in Norway enjoy a considerable freedom when it comes to choosing methods and resources to use in the classroom. What is interesting to think about is though where do we, teachers, get information from, for our teaching. Textbooks are less and less available on paper, we use digital educational resources. Schools have often contracted with publishing houses about purchase of educational resources and materials. Usually school administration (in some cases, together with teachers) decide on which publishing house to use.

Alternatively, teachers can use resources, paid by public money, like Norwegian digital learning arena, [Frontpage - NDLA](#). I have to say I am bit skeptical about state-paid resources. State is not always critical, is it? It is better publishing houses produce and promote educational materials.

For example, students need to learn how to methodically search for information online. If they are assigned to research “racism in Norway”, for instance, they should learn how to choose precise searchwords that narrows down the search results. It’s not necessarily good enough just to type “racism in Norway” in the search engine. Students must learn about the methods of searching. Students learn this in media subject at upper secondary (but there are only about 3, 000 students in total in Norway, taking media).

What is good and successful in Norway is using rhetoric, “art of persuading”. We teach our kids to know about and recognize rhetorical appeal forms: ethos (credibility and trust), logos (common sense and logics), pathos (feelings). It has to do with presenting your message, with analyzing the message, to put up (critical) questions to the message you hear/ to the written text/ what kind of feelings it arises, etc. It is a big part of education in Norway, esp. in the subject Norwegian. (To work with words, with text). Then, Semiotics (meaning of the

word). When you look at the pick, something happens in your head, the same when you read some text or interpret body language.

Let us take a Brexit slogan “Let us take back control!”, - what does it mean *actually*? The choice of words is important. That is where a critical analysis comes in.

Criticism to/about sources of information. Use of sources of information. Let us say, students get an assignment to write a text. They have to find sources for information, evaluate: does information come from an editorial staff? Is state, non-state source? Commercial or non-commercial? They need to understand genre.

I see that school children know quite a lot about privacy (nettvert), but they need to know more about critical attitudes to information.

I know that you in addition to be the media teacher, cooperate with the publishing house Aschehoug ([Aschehoug skoles læremidler for barneskolen](#)) on developing of the educational materials. Can you tell how does it happen, this cooperation?

It started that the publishing house took contact with me concerning the writing of a textbook. Asked me to do consultancy of the content and edit. Publishing houses have in a way been always there, in Norway. Especially the big one. They have been producing textbooks since long time ago. Last 10 years textbooks have mainly become digital. This has to do with digitalization of the learning process.

At the same time, teachers do make/ create their own teaching. Make power points, etc.

Conversation with Beate Børresen*

26.10.2022

*Beate Børresen, researcher, dosent emerita, has 30 years in teacher education, Oslo Met (Oslo Metropolitan Uni.). Author of textbooks for KRLE.

Author of the series of articles on critical thinking: [Critical about critical thinking](#) 2020, [Critical thinking through oral practice](#), 2021, [How to distribute the word in the classroom](#) 2022.

Critical thinking is a central competence in school education in Norway. You are active in the discussion on “critical thinking”. Why? “Critical thinking” is, as far as I understand, not a new word in school education.

Yes, critical thinking has always been there if you think historically about education in Scandinavia. Depends on how far back in history we want to go. Since the end of 19th century John Dewey's ideas about teaching, that the main task of education is to teach the students to reflect by themselves, has been important in pedagogical thinking and practice. One learns through dialogue - with fellow students and with the teacher. The child is active in her own understanding, not a passive receiver of the adult's knowledge.

So the focus on critical thinking in modern pedagogy and present curriculum is old news but is also connected with modern communication and because of, perhaps, “democracy crisis” we are witnessing?

For example, as a kid I loved to read newspapers. I took granted that everything written in newspaper is true. I was shocked when I both found out and was told by my mother, that I could not always trust what was written in papers and books. As I did, children of today need other peoples’ input to be able to be critical to what they read. But since the read and hear so much on internet, it is hard for us grown ups to follow.

Goal with critical thinking in school is to make kids more aware, to have better knowledge, to help them better understand what is going on, to make better choices etc. In philosophy a good life consists of an ability to think and act from your own thinking.

One thing we can teach and train students in, is that it is not “bad” to make mistakes. We often need mistakes to understand things better. We can find something true, good or right by analyzing our misunderstandings and mistakes. As to me, I love to use activities/exercises when pupils are supposed to answer wrong. We need to make mistakes.

Teacher education in Norway. How has it been changed during the last years?

A bit difficult to say. There is a focus on pedagogy/the art of teaching and leading a class, more than the content of the subjects. Perhaps the modern teacher do not know so many things as the old teachers did, but they are better leaders, take better care of the students etc. I am often surprised by all the things my students do not know like the date of the French revolution, content of important books etc. At the same time, I see that the students are so creative, heartwarming, caring. Much more than my teachers have been. And then, I think, that knowledge about the different subjects, well, this one can learn later, but to trust yourself and others, to be a good friend, to be helpful, playful etc. is harder to learn later in life. It is crucial that a child feels to be trusted, loved and respected from the early age, from his/ her teacher.

You emphasize the importance of oral competences in school education. Why?

In 2006 five basic competences became part of the curriculum: talking, reading, writing, mathematics and digital. Talking/oral competences have much less focus than the other four. For example, do they have national centres for research, teaching etc, while oral skills/competences are “left alone”.

In general, I would say the room for fostering oral competences is small in school education. For example, are both our teacher students and students in school, allowed to not speak if they do not like to. And there is very little focus on the important to think through expressing yourself in words. The students have presentations in class. That is good, but not enough. In a presentation something true or important is presented, the thinking is already done so to speak, the listeners are supposed to accept what is said more than to develop it together.

What I miss, is a conversation, talk, dialogue. Orally structured conversation, when opinions collide with each other and bring forward a concrete result (whether it is a campaign in class/ school, or a project). A conversation when a pupil tries and fails. Where they work together to find something true, good or beautiful, as the old Greek would say.

For example, to find something true about democratic and democracy. The teacher can give a speech/small lecture about this, of course. Some students will understand and learn. Instead, we can involve the students in a task. Let them, in a short thinking time answer the question "Is USA a democracy?" Yes/No, because Let the students listen to each other while the teacher writes the criteria they use for democracy on the board. If the students are stuck, the teacher can supply them with facts about the political system. In this way they learn both about democracy in general, politics in USA and hopefully in their own country. How it is, how it can be, how it should be, what we can do etc. etc.

This dialogical way of working can be used with students in all ages. Just let them work with themes they have some knowledge and experience about, and words for. The point is that we know that children can think and that they can think better if they get the possibility to practice, for example by making mistakes.

Non-formal Education

Several NGOs / civil society organizations in Norway work with / propose educational activities on democracy, human rights, non-discrimination, sustainable development/ environment, mental health. Here is the list of some. The list is not full.

- Project [Dembra](#) (Democratic preparedness against antisemitism and racism) offers development programs for schools and teacher training institutions to prevent prejudice and exclusion. Dembra covers various challenges to democracy, such as racism, islamophobia, antisemitism, hate speech and extremism.
- [22-July Center](#), [Educational materials](#) on terror attack in Oslo/Utøya July 2011, democracy, media, manipulation of information (conspiracies), rule of law in Norway.
- [UN Association of Norway](#), [Undervisningsopplegg etter tema \(fn.no\)](#) available in Norwegian.
- [Nobel Peace Centre](#), [Opplegg til klasserommet | Nobel Skole \(nobelpeacecenter.org\)](#).
- [Oslo Jewish museum](#). Educational materials, all school levels, kindergarten. Available in Norwegian.
- [Human rights academy / Menneskerettighetsakademiet](#), educational materials in English, [Toolkit on human rights and democracy](#).

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