



MEDIA MASTERS ROCK – 7th Grade

Study Guide

Digital Citizenship for Kids: How to THINK FIRST Online

Designed for: Alabama Library Media Specialists

Grade Level: 7th Grade

Estimated Time: 45 minutes

Focus: Critical Thinking, Misinformation, Bias, AI Manipulation, Emotional Reasoning, Media Analysis

Alabama DLCS Standards Alignment (7th Grade)

7.DL.1 – Demonstrate safe, lawful, and ethical behavior when using digital tools.

Students recognize misinformation, emotional manipulation, unsafe content, and deceptive posts.

7.DL.2 – Evaluate digital information for accuracy, credibility, relevance, and bias.

Students analyze online content for source reliability, bias, motive, and manipulation.

7.DL.3 – Explain how digital content creators use emotional, visual, and persuasive techniques to influence audiences.

Students identify persuasion strategies used in viral videos, memes, and AI content.

7.CC.1 – Apply critical thinking skills to assess the quality and truthfulness of digital content.

Students use structured analysis to judge accuracy and reliability.

7.CC.2 – Use multiple trustworthy sources to verify questionable claims.

Students compare sources, evaluate contradictions, and identify red flags.



BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO

Librarian Says:

“Today we’re going beyond ‘Is it real or fake?’ and learning how to evaluate *why* something was created and *how* it’s meant to influence us. Critical thinking is one of the most important digital skills you’ll ever learn.”

Warm-Up Questions:

- “Have you seen an AI video or image so realistic that it fooled someone?”
- “What’s a rumor or viral post you’ve seen that turned out to be false?”
- “How do strong emotions (anger, shock, excitement) affect your judgment online?”

Have students identify signs of misinformation:

- No source listed
- Over-the-top claims
- Emotional language
- Too-perfect images
- AI distortion
- “Everyone is saying...” phrasing



WATCH THE VIDEO

Encourage students to listen for the 3 key Critical Thinking Questions:

1. Who made it – and why?

(creator + motive)

2. Is there solid proof it's real?

(evidence + verification)

3. Why do I feel this way when I watch it?

(emotion + manipulation)

AFTER-VIEWING DISCUSSION – ADVANCED QUESTIONS

1. Motive & Bias

“What reasons might someone have for creating a fake or exaggerated video?”
Discuss:

- Attention
- Humor
- Profit
- Persuasion
- Propaganda
- Clickbait revenue
- Influence

2. Evidence Quality

“What makes something REAL proof? What counts as weak evidence?”

T-chart:

Strong Evidence

- Multiple reputable sources
- Real video verified by credible outlets
- Scientific, educational, or journalistic confirmation

- Clear origin and creator

Weak Evidence

- Screenshots
- Comments
- “Everybody says...”
- Single unsourced video
- AI visuals with no proof

3. Emotional Manipulation

“Why do posts that make you MAD or AMAZED spread so fast?”

Students will recognize:

- Emotion ≠ evidence
- Emotion is often the *hook*

4. AI Deception

“How can AI alter images and videos in ways that fool people?”

Discuss:

- Voice cloning
- Face-swaps
- Fake locations
- Unrealistic situations made realistic

ACTIVITY 1 – Source & Evidence Analysis

COS Alignment: 7.DL.2, 7.CC.1

Give students 8 digital “mystery posts,” such as:

- A deepfake celebrity message

- A viral rumor screenshot
- A surprising real news article
- An AI-generated animal
- A misleading clickbait headline
- A cropped photo missing context
- A science fact
- A fake extreme-weather video

Student Task:

For each:

1. Identify the **source**
2. Identify the **likely motive**
3. Evaluate the **evidence**
4. Rate the content:
 - **Credible**
 - **Questionable**
 - **Misleading**
 - **False**

Students justify their reasoning with text evidence.

ACTIVITY 2 – Debunking Lab (Mini Fact-Check Workshop)

COS Alignment: 7.CC.2, 7.DL.2

Students select one outrageous claim (from the video or teacher-provided list). Examples:

- Flying hamster

- Pizza trees
- Pudding house
- Viral rumor
- Fake “breaking news”

Student Steps:

1. Write the claim.
2. Identify keywords.
3. Check 2–3 reputable sources (AVL, Britannica, .gov, local news).
4. Find contradictions or confirmations.
5. Write a 3-sentence debunking summary.



ACTIVITY 3 – Emotional Hook Investigation

COS Alignment: 7.DL.3

Students examine how creators use emotion as persuasion.

Provide several emotional sample posts:

- Outrage (“You won’t BELIEVE what your school is hiding...”)
- Fear (“Share this or your device will stop working!”)
- Nostalgia
- Joy
- Shock
- Sympathy

Students Identify:

- Target emotion

- Reason emotion was chosen
- How emotions influence sharing behavior
- How a Media Master protects themselves

EXTENSION – AI vs. Human Detection Challenge

COS Alignment: 7.DL.2, 7.CC.1

Show pairs of images/videos:

- Real photo vs. AI render
- Real news clip vs. deepfake
- Real animal vs. AI hybrid

Students must explain their decision using:

- Lighting clues
- Limb/hand inconsistencies
- Background artifacts
- Source origin
- Metadata (if available)



CLOSING / LIBRARIAN SCRIPT

“Seventh graders, **critical thinking is your strongest online defense**. With AI becoming more realistic every year, your ability to THINK FIRST matters more than ever.

Before you believe, react, post, or share, ask:

Who made it? Where's the proof? Why do I feel this way?

Smart choices make YOU a Media Master — and they make the internet a better place for everyone.”