

Liberal Studies X Information Literacy : For Teachers

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) :

“How could we identify
authentic/false information ?”



Information overloaded about
the outbreak of epidemic



〈網上充斥真假資訊 梁卓偉指港爆「資訊疫症」〉 (頭條日報, 2020-02-07)

〈過度憂慮影響心理健康 穩住情緒擺脫疫情恐慌〉
(明報, 2020-02-03)

“Government condemns rumour monger” (Press Release,
the Government of the HKSAR, 2020-02-05)

? Teachers' thoughts ?

- In view of the overwhelming amount of information circulated in the public, how can I **guide students to find out the truth?**
- What **important values and attitudes** should my students uphold when facing the serious threat of the epidemic?
- How could I **provide more reliable and accurate information** and sources for students?
- What could I do to **protect students** from the disturbance of rumours, enhance their critical thinking skills and enable them to develop multiple perspectives?



Brief introduction:

Teaching objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide students to understand the importance of information literacy, think critically in face of the outbreak of epidemic, and not to be disturbed by rumours.• Remind students to distinguish the sources and reliability of different types of messages cautiously.• Encourage students to find out reliable facts by paying attention to the information delivered by the Government and people with high credibility.
Values / Attitudes	respect for evidence, respect for others, sense of responsibility, care, integrity, solidarity, cooperation, information literacy

Information Literacy



Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students(EDB)

- ▶ The *Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students* is developed to help schools understand how to develop students' knowledge, skills and attitude to use information and information technology at different key stages.
- identify the need for information;
- locate, evaluate, extract, organise and present information;
- create new ideas;
- cope with the dynamic in our information world; and
- refrain from unethical use of information such as cyber-bullying and infringing intellectual property rights.

Source: Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students(EDB)

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/primary-secondary/applicable-to-primary-secondary/it-in-edu/information-literacy/il-document.html>

What areas does the *Information Literacy for HK Students* encompass?

1. Use, provide and communicate information ethically and responsibly
2. Identify and define a need for information
3. Locate and access relevant information
4. Evaluate information and information providers, in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose
5. Extract and organise information and create new ideas
6. Be able to apply IT skills in order to process information and produce user-generated content
7. Recognise the roles and functions of information providers (e.g. libraries, museums, internet) in the society
8. Recognise the conditions under which reliable information could be obtained

Source: Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students(EDB)

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/primary-secondary/applicable-to-primary-secondary/it-in-edu/information-literacy/il-document.html>

Suggested Learning & Teaching Activity



Suggested Learning & Teaching Activity :

“Should I forward this message?”

- Ask students to select 1 message about COVID-19 recently received from the online chat groups/online platforms
- Make reference to the suggested checklist, reflect upon the content and source of message, and verify the authenticity of the content so as not to blindly forward inaccurate information.
- Refer to the suggested teachers' feedback to guide students to think critically about the message

Please read the following “sample message” carefully

< 1 Happy Family Group

Forwarded on 3.2.2020

(Breaking news!!! Please spread!!!) There is a global outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)! A large-scale infection has occurred in Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government is about to impose a ban on the import from the Mainland. This will seriously affect the supply of goods. Everyone should go to the supermarket to buy daily necessities and food as soon as possible! In addition, don't forget to buy and hoard a large quantity of masks and alcohol disinfectant at home for emergency use!!!



Suggested Questions for Reflection

❑ Who created the message?

❑ Who forwarded the message to me?

❑ What should I do after receiving the message?

❑ What are the contents of the message, and how can I verify them?

❑ What will happen if I forward unverified messages?

Suggested feedback




➤ Who created the message?

- During a severe epidemic, it is difficult to find the author of the message, but if it is not from credible agencies or Government official information, we should always stay alert.

➤ Who forwarded the message to me?

- The person who forwarded the message may be your family, friends, or even seniors. They may forward the message out of love and care, but this does not mean that the message forwarded must be correct.
- Instead, we must verify the content of the message and inform the sender to correct the message in a timely manner. To be a responsible person, we should not forward any doubtful and incorrect message.



► **What should I do after receiving the message?**



Guide students on how to respond to any forwarded message received. Students should first “stop and think”, instead of rushing to forward the messages received. They should find out the key points of the message, analyse and verify it detailedly, point out any unreasonable and illogical contents, respect for evidence and think critically.

► **What are the contents of the message, and how can I verify them?**

Prompt students to analyse the contents of the message carefully and try to identify any parts unreasonable. For example, there are two main points mentioned in the “sample message”:

First: Hong Kong has a large-scale infection

Second: The HKSAR Government is about to impose a ban on the import from the Mainland.

Since this message involves officially published information, students should check the relevant information from the Government website. (see next page)



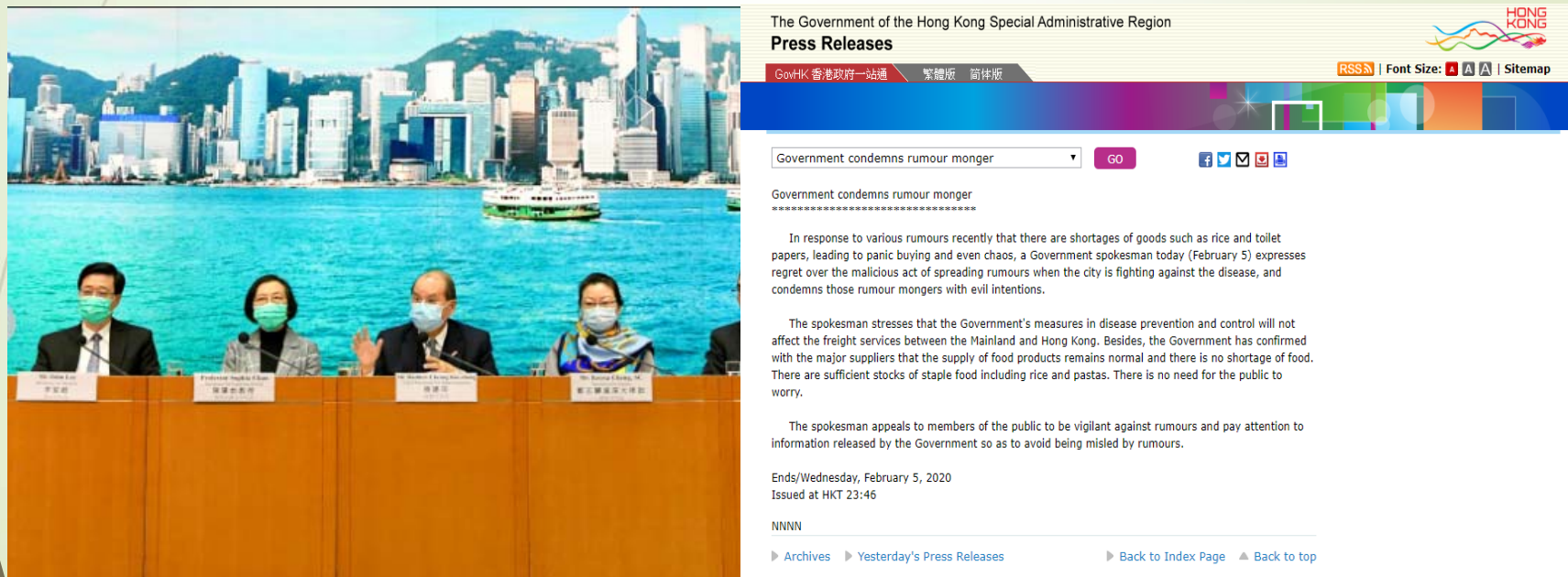
➤ What're the contents of the message, and how can I verify them?

- The message was received on February 3, 2020. According to the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, no new confirmed cases of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 infection were recorded as of 8 pm on February 3, and the number of confirmed cases in Hong Kong remain to this day was 15 (Source: : <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/03/P2020020300736.htm>) ° Therefore, the "large-scale infection" mentioned in the message is incorrect.
- The official website of the HKSAR Government mentioned about the measures for further reducing cross-border passenger flow, but did not mention about cross-border arrangement for goods.
(Source: : <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/03/P2020020300759.htm>) °

Teachers should guide students to think critically and verify the data source when rumours occur.

Make reference to Government official websites :

The HKSAR Government has clarified that the epidemic prevention measures will not affect freight transportation between Hong Kong and the Mainland and the food supplies are adequate.



The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Press Releases

GovHK 香港政府一站通 繁體版 簡體版

RSS | Font Size: A A | Sitemap

Government condemns rumour monger

Government condemns rumour monger

In response to various rumours recently that there are shortages of goods such as rice and toilet papers, leading to panic buying and even chaos, a Government spokesman today (February 5) expresses regret over the malicious act of spreading rumours when the city is fighting against the disease, and condemns those rumour mongers with evil intentions.

The spokesman stresses that the Government's measures in disease prevention and control will not affect the freight services between the Mainland and Hong Kong. Besides, the Government has confirmed with the major suppliers that the supply of food products remains normal and there is no shortage of food. There are sufficient stocks of staple food including rice and pastas. There is no need for the public to worry.

The spokesman appeals to members of the public to be vigilant against rumours and pay attention to information released by the Government so as to avoid being misled by rumours.

Ends/Wednesday, February 5, 2020
Issued at HKT 23:46

NNNN

► Archives ► Yesterday's Press Releases ► Back to Index Page ▲ Back to top

Source of pictures and information: Press Release of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/05/P2020020500797.htm>


What will happen if I forward unverified messages?

If the unverified message is forwarded, the negative consequences may not appear immediately, but in an age of conformity, some people will eventually hoard the goods, resulting in insufficient supply, and those who are really in need may not be able to obtain the resources in time.



Reference

- **Census and Statistics Department of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**
<https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp>
- **Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region** <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/index.html>
- **National Bureau of Statistics** <http://www.stats.gov.cn/>
- **GovHK** <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/>
- **Press Releases of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**
https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/ISD_public_Calendar_en.html?fontSize=1



Summary: Together! We fight the virus!

During a severe epidemic, teachers can:

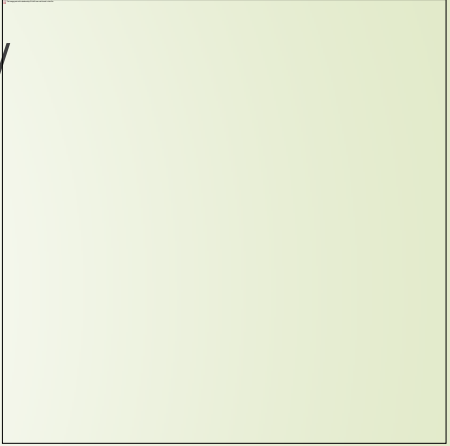
- ✓ **Encourage students to act positively** and apply and practise information literacy.
 - ✓ **Guide students to select information carefully and do not forward unverified messages.**
 - ✓ Share proven and reliable information to get students together to fight the virus
- 

Image source: Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health
<https://www.chp.gov.hk/tc/healthtopics/content/24/102466.html>

