

Confirmation Bias

1. Question & Research Task

Have you ever ignored someone's perfectly good argument because it doesn't line up with what you already believe? You're not alone. This is **confirmation bias**, and everyone has it. The problem is, it can interfere with our ability to problem solve and to tell truth from fiction... if we let it.

Confirmation bias is our brain's tendency to seek out information that confirms things we already think we know. It is important to recognize our own confirmation bias when we encounter online news so we can examine competing opinions and ideas and avoid drawing questionable conclusions. How can we identify our own confirmation bias? And how can we use research to view information in a fair and unbiased way?

In this Slam Dunk, you will conduct brief, focused research to respond to the inquiry question:

How can we challenge our own confirmation bias?

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Watch the video *Can you solve this?*

How does this illustrate confirmation bias? How does confirmation bias hurt the ability to problem-solve?

Image Source: [YouTube](#)

2. Information Sources

You will use the links videos here to explore the idea of confirmation bias and complete the Student Activity on Slide 3.

Everyone watch [this video](#) and ‘[Why Do Our Brains Love Fake News?](#)’ for background information.

Choose at least two additional sources about confirmation bias to explore.

- [Confirmation Bias: Why You Make Terrible Life Choices](#)
- [Cover Up, Your Confirmation Bias is Showing](#)
- [TED Talk: Why you think you’re right—even if you’re wrong](#)
- [Digital Culture Critic Abandons ‘Fake On The Internet’ Column](#)
- [Scientists Discover Simple Psychological Tools to Battle Fake News](#)
- [Looking inward in an era of ‘fake news’: Addressing cognitive bias](#)

How can we identify our own confirmation bias?

How can confirmation bias influence our lives?



What would it take to change your mind about something you really believed? This video examines how confirmation bias works and how we can combat it.

Image Source: [Kqed](#)

3. Student Activity

Use the information sources on Slide 2 to evaluate the effects of and possible solutions to confirmation bias.

1. Choose three sources about confirmation bias to further explore.
2. For each source, note
 - How confirmation bias is defined
 - Possible effects of confirmation bias
 - Possible solutions to confirmation bias
3. Record your findings on the [graphic organizer](#). Any sources used should be listed in [MLA](#) format, either on your chart or a separate attached document. You may use [NoodleTools](#) to format your sources.
4. Answer the follow-up questions:
 - What are the worst problems caused by confirmation bias?
 - What are the best ways to combat or challenge confirmation bias?

Effects and Solutions of Confirmation Bias

Source (in MLA format)	How is confirmation bias defined?	What are the possible effects of confirmation bias?	What are possible solutions to confirmation bias?

4. Assessment Activity

How can we challenge our own confirmation bias?

Create a [mnemonic](#) device that includes at least three strategies you learned to help people confront and defeat their own confirmation bias when they read news and encounter information online.

A mnemonic device helps with memory. Some of the easiest mnemonics create words from the first letters of items in a list that must be remembered (ex: ROY G BIV for the colors of the rainbow). Others popular mnemonics involve rhymes (ex: *i before e except after c*), songs (The Alphabet Song), or sentences (ex: the order of operations is **Please excuse my dear Aunt Sally**). Whatever you choose, it should be something simple and easy to remember!

You may use the [brainstorm sheet](#) to help get you started.

Don't forget to take the **Confirmation Bias Schoology Quiz** as assigned by your teacher or librarian. Complete the assessment to show what you've learned about confirmation bias.

Does your source pass the CRAAP Test?

- C** Is it **Current**?
- R** Is it **Relevant**?
- A** Is the author an **Authority**?
- A** Is it **Accurate**?
- P** What is its **Purpose**?

CRAAP is a mnemonic device to help researchers check the reliability of a source. What mnemonic device could help you challenge confirmation bias?

5. Enrichment Activities



In addition to confirmation bias, most of us have other biases of which we are not even aware. [Project Implicit*](#) provides online tests to help you understand attitudes you have or stereotypes you believe. This is not always easy information to confront about ourselves, but it is helpful to understanding your own biases.

Take at least one of the provided Implicit Association Tests and reflect on your results. Do you agree with the test results? Was it the same or different than what you expected? If the test revealed a bias, how might you challenge this bias in your everyday life?

***NOTE:** Project Implicit asks for personal information, such as your zip code, but does not require this information. When asked, choose “decline to answer.” Please know that it is against BCPS policy for students to supply personal information online.

6. Teacher Resources

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Learning Standards Alignment

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.

AASL Standards Framework for Learners

I. INQUIRE: Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.

Think: Learners display curiosity and initiative by:

I.A.2 Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.

Create: Learners engage with new knowledge by following a process that includes:

I.B.1 Using evidence to investigate questions. I.B.3 Generating products that illustrate learning.

Share: Learners adapt, communicate, and exchange learning products with others in a cycle that includes:

I.C.1 Interacting with content presented by others.

Grow: Learners participate in an ongoing inquiry-based process by:

I.D.2 Engaging in sustained inquiry.

ISTE Standards for Students

2. Digital Citizen: Students recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world, and they act and model in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.

Grade 11 Digital Citizenship

Objective: Students will analyze information from multiple sources in order to determine methods to challenge their own confirmation biases.

Time Frame: 1 90-minute class period

Differentiation strategies for this lesson:

- Have students use learning supports provided in BCPS Digital Content found in the [Apps Portal](#). Refer to [Digital Content Snapshot/Support pages](#) as needed.

Notes to the teacher:

- Collaborate with your school library media specialist to plan and implement this lesson.
- Provide students with login information as needed to authenticate BCPS Digital Content. Login information is available on the **BCPS Digital Content** page found via the [Apps Portal](#)
- ALL STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE THE DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP QUIZ for this lesson on Schoology.
- Consider [using the Schoology Assignment Apps feature](#) to assign Microsoft and Google documents and files for students to access, edit, and submit through Schoology.
- Materials have been adapted from the Common Sense Education [News & Media Literacy Lesson: Challenging Confirmation Bias](#)
- Consider sharing relevant Common Sense Education resources for families following this lesson: [Family Activity](#) | [Family Tips](#) | [Family Engagement Resources](#)