

Short Activity Title	Analysing pictures
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<b>Topic</b>	Information is not knowledge
<b>Competences</b>	Communication in foreign languages / Communication in the mother tongue / Digital competence
<b>Level</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Easy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult
<b>Age Group</b>	13-15 years
<b>Duration</b>	A series of two lessons, each approx. 50 minutes
<b>Aim of this lesson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that pictures do not represent reality.</li> <li>• Be able to recognise when a picture is fake.</li> <li>• Increase their ICT skills.</li> <li>• Improve their foreign language skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Our students see and use pictures in their daily life: on TV, in magazines, in advertisements, and on the internet. They often take it for granted that those pictures depict reality.</p> <p>The aim of this activity is to raise students' critical thinking concerning pictures. This lesson can be very easily used for an eTwinning project: the activities would then be done by collaborative European teams, and not by in-class groups.</p>
<b>Tools</b>	<p>You will be using these tools:</p> <p>To create questionnaires: <a href="http://www.socrative.com">http://www.socrative.com</a> (registration required)</p> <p>To create a whiteboard and to add documents on it: <a href="http://padlet.com">http://padlet.com</a></p> <p>To create dynamic slideshows: <a href="http://www.prezi.com">http://www.prezi.com</a></p> <p>To find similar pictures: <a href="http://www.tineye.com">http://www.tineye.com</a> and <a href="https://images.google.com/">https://images.google.com/</a></p> <p>JPEGsnoop: To spot edited photos (freeware)</p> <p>To record your voice and create an mp3: <a href="http://vocaroo.com">http://vocaroo.com</a></p> <p>To write collaboratively: <a href="https://titanpad.com">https://titanpad.com</a></p>
<b>Process</b>	<p>Before you begin - To check students' knowledge and skills about pictures, create a questionnaire on <a href="http://www.socrative.com/">http://www.socrative.com/</a> (registration required). The teacher keeps all these answers for the end lesson. Here are ideas of question you could ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portrait of a woman: Is it a retouched photo?</li> <li>• Picture from the news: Is it a retouched photo?</li> <li>• Picture of a personality: What do you think this person is doing?</li> <li>• How can you know if those pictures you just saw are real or retouched?</li> <li>• Was it possible to transform a picture in 1950 for example, before the computers existed?</li> </ul>

## Lesson 1

## Transforming a picture? So easy! (2 x 50 minutes)

### Step 1 – (50 minutes)

- Using <http://padlet.com/> or a similar tool, upload to on an online wall a few documents such as photos from an online newspaper, online advertisements, or the welcome page of a website. These documents will help you show how pictures can be manipulated, transformed and/or distorted.

Example of documents:

- “Al-Ahram newspaper defends doctored photo of Hosni Mubarak”, in The Guardian, 17 September 2010: <http://goo.gl/culwNG> (The Guardian)
- “Michelle Obama’s Oscars dress too revealing for Iranian media” in the-guardian.com, 25 February 2013: <http://goo.gl/KYM0zl> (The Guardian)
- “Manipulating truth, losing credibility”, by Frank Van Riper, in The Washington Post: <http://goo.gl/0w5efl> (The Washington Post)
- “Demi Moore takes to Twitter to hit back at airbrushing claims” by Daily Mail Reporter, 20 November 2009: <http://goo.gl/R4mVgd> (The Daily Mail)
- “The 9 most unnecessary instances of celebrity photoshop”, by Lauren Duca, in The Huffington Post, 17 October 2013: <http://goo.gl/VaLoAw> (Especially the cover with Beyoncé) (The Huffington Post)
- “The Lash Stand. Will new attitudes and regulatory oversight hit delete on some photo retouching in print ads?” by Jessica Seigel, in Adweek.com, 29 May 2012: <http://goo.gl/1Kw60V> (Adweek)
- Dove’s ad “Evolution”, 2006 : <http://goo.gl/e9uxhr>
- “The Matarese Countdown” by Pixus retouch, 2009: <http://goo.gl/2yCQqn>

Other ideas can be found here:

- <http://www.arretsurimages.net/dossier.php?id=204> (in French)
- <http://www.fourandsix.com/photo-tampering-history/> (in English)

**Practical activity:** students are asked to prepare a simple slideshow to give an imaginary class to primary school children to demonstrate why they should not consider all images they see as being ‘true’ or ‘real’. They can use [www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com) (registration required) or whatever software or online site they wish, but the slideshow should include:

- Two examples of pictures that have been retouched from amongst those provided on the padlet.
- An explanation of what has been doctored.
- A list of reasons explaining why they think the image was changed, and the objectives behind the changes.
- A list of the problems or dangers that could arise from altering pictures

## Step 2 – (50 minutes)

### Presenting the results

Each group presents their slideshow to the rest of the class for discussion and comment. Students do this in English or another language they are learning.

Students can record their own evaluation of their presentation using <http://vocaroo.com/>. What have they learned? What do they think about altering images now? Do they have further questions?

Explain that transforming a picture is not new; use news articles such as the following to show this to the students:

“Ye olde photoshoppe: The first ever altered images” by Lee Moran, in dailymail.co.uk, 28 February 2012: <http://goo.gl/2osiBw> (Dailymail)

The teacher gives some tips on how to tell if a picture has been modified:

- Look at all the details carefully, zoom in on the picture!
- Use a site such as <http://www.tineye.com/> to find out where your picture is used on the internet, where it comes from, or that date of, the characters in it, etc.

JPEGSnoop is another freeware that spots edited photos:

<http://goo.gl/bLwEVB>

- Right-click on a picture, go to Properties and then click on the Details tab, you get a whole lot of info on your photo. If you see ‘Photoshop’ there is a big chance that the picture has been changed.

### Homework: Is it true or is it fake?

Give one picture to each student: they have to try to find out if it’s real or fake using the previous tips. They send their answer to the teacher by email, explaining how they found the answer, and also any information they may have found about the picture.

*Advice: this picture should be easily findable on the web, with information around it.*

## Lesson 2

### A little change... a whole different meaning! (50 minutes)

#### Step 1 – (5 minutes)

Before starting, summarise all the recordings that were made during the previous lesson and answer any remaining questions.

#### Step 2 – (20 minutes)

### The same... but different!

Choose in advance a picture to work on. Half of the class is given this picture with a caption created by the teacher. The other half has the exact same picture, but with a different caption.

Students each have to describe their picture (without talking about the caption), telling what they think of it, how they feel about it. They record themselves on <http://vocaroo.com/> in English or a language they are learning. Each half of the class then listens to one of the recordings of the other half.

### Step 3 – (25 minutes)

#### Assessment

Lead a discussion on the following topic: how is it possible to have such a different opinion about the same picture?

Explain that the caption can lead to different interpretations. This is another way that a picture can be reframed, in order to change its meaning.

In conclusion, explain that in order to better choose the picture we need, and to be sure of what we see, it is necessary to find the source, the date, and so on, about a picture.

**Homework:** We can make a picture say anything

Provide the class with a picture. In groups, students create a caption that could be credible. They can reframe the picture, imagine a date, a location, etc. They can complete the assignment in English or another language, and upload their work on the school working space. Then, using <https://titanpad.com/> the class works together to explain how it was possible to have such a different interpretation of the same picture and what problems that could lead to.

#### Follow up options

The students once again respond to the questionnaire they responded to in the introduction on <http://www.socrative.com> (registration required). They can use the tools learned in class in this and other lessons. They can compare their results and discuss how they have progressed. What part of the lesson do they need to do more work on?