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**ACTIVATING LESSON SCENARIO**  
**developed as part of the project**  
**‘INNOVATIONS IN SCHOOL EDUCATION’**

**TOPIC**

**Phishing and Fake Websites**

**1. Lesson Objectives**

The student:

- understands what phishing and a fake website are,
- can identify the most common methods used by cybercriminals,
- knows how fake messages and fake news are used for fraud,
- learns the basic principles of online safety,
- develops the ability to analyse online content and think critically.

**2. Target Group**

Primary school students

**3. Teaching Methods**

- Brainstorming
- Mini-lecture with examples
- Case study analysis
- Group exercise – “Real or Fake Website?”
- Guided discussion
- Individual reflection

**4. Teaching Aids / Sources**

- Computer, projector, interactive whiteboard
- Screenshots of fictional phishing e-mails and fake websites
- “10 Warning Signs of Phishing” card (to be distributed to students)
- List of educational and fact-checking websites:
  - o Poland: <https://niebezpiecznik.pl>, <https://demagog.org.pl>
  - o Czech Republic: <https://manipulatori.cz>
  - o Slovakia: <https://hoax.sk>
  - o Ukraine: <https://www.stopfake.org/en/news/>
  - o EU: <https://edmo.eu>, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas-and-trends/crime-areas/cybercrime>

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## **Part 2 — Lesson Flow (45 minutes)**

### **1. Introduction – Does every headline tell the truth? (5–7 min)**

#### **1. Brainstorming (2–3 min)**

- The teacher asks students to recall headlines they have recently seen on the internet (news portals, YouTube, TikTok, advertisements, social media).
- Students provide examples – they can be neutral or sensational (e.g. “No one expected this!”, “Shocking discovery by doctors!”, “This trick will change your life!”).
- The teacher writes several headlines on the board and then asks:
  - o “After clicking such headlines, was the content always consistent with what the title promised?”

#### **2. Guiding questions for a short discussion (2 min)**

- Have you ever found that the content of an article was completely different from what the headline suggested?
  - Why do authors sometimes create headlines full of emotion or exaggeration?
  - Can a headline be a form of manipulation – an attempt to control our emotions or decision to click a link?
  - What emotions are most often triggered by sensational headlines (e.g. shock, fear, curiosity, outrage)?
- (The teacher may also ask if students feel “manipulated” in such cases or if they have ever regretted clicking on such an article.)

#### **3. Teacher’s explanation – extended factual information (2–3 min)**

- Clickbait is a “click trap” – a headline or thumbnail (e.g. an image on a YouTube video) designed to make the audience enter the content, often by using:
  - o exaggerated or dramatic wording (“no one will believe...”, “shocking discovery!”),
  - o deliberately omitting important facts to build suspense or a sense of mystery,
  - o promises of extraordinary content that ultimately turns out to be ordinary or unrelated to the headline.
- Main purposes of clickbait:
  - o profit – the more clicks, the more ad views and money for the site’s author,
  - o influencing public opinion – a headline can shape the way we think about an event before we even read the article,
  - o spreading fake news – sensational titles attract attention and are widely shared, even if they are false.
- The problem with clickbait:
  - o it can lead to disinformation because many people read only the headline and don’t check the content,
  - o it reinforces an online “culture of sensation” in which the most emotional news spreads the fastest, even if false or misleading.



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## **Part 3 — Mini-lecture: What is clickbait and how does it work? (10–12 min)**

### **1. Introduction (1–2 min)**

- The teacher asks students:
  - o “Have you ever clicked on an article or video whose title promised a sensation, but the content was boring or completely different?”
  - o “Why do such headlines attract our attention?”
- Short explanation: clickbait is a “click trap” – a specially constructed headline or thumbnail that encourages you to enter the content but often misleads or exaggerates in order to get as many views as possible.

### **2. Features of clickbait headlines (4–5 min)**

The teacher discusses the most common techniques, giving examples:

1. **Sensational words**
  - o Use of emotional, dramatic words:
    - ♣ “SHOCK!”, “TERRIFYING!”, “YOU WON’T BELIEVE WHAT HAPPENED...”, “SECRET GOVERNMENT PLAN”.
  - o Goal: to spark curiosity and emotions in order to encourage clicking.
2. **Exaggeration and dramatization**
  - o Creating the impression that an event is more important or more dangerous than it actually is.
  - o Example: “This ordinary drink KILLS millions of people every day!” – and the content is about excessive consumption of carbonated drinks.
3. **Unanswered questions**
  - o Headline format that leaves a mystery, e.g.:
    - ♣ “Is your phone spying on you? The truth is shocking!”
  - o Psychological mechanism: the audience wants to know the answer, even if the text contains no reliable information.
4. **Manipulative images and graphics**
  - o Video thumbnails or pictures that don’t match the content or are exaggerated: dramatic colours, loud captions, exaggerated facial expressions.
  - o Often used to grab attention while scrolling through a page or social media.
5. **Promises of extraordinary content or rewards**
  - o Headlines suggesting a shocking discovery or a miraculous solution to a problem, e.g.:
    - ♣ “This one trick will make you lose weight in a week – doctors hate it!”
  - (The teacher may show examples of clickbait thumbnails from YouTube – e.g. titles in capital letters with exaggerated emojis.)



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### **3. Purposes of creating clickbait (2–3 min)**

- **Economic:**

- o Each click = an ad view, and thus more money for the website or channel owner.
- o Even if the content is weak, the number of clicks matters, not the quality of the information.

- **Manipulative:**

- o Clickbait is used to control the audience's emotions: triggering fear, anger, outrage, but also curiosity or hope.
- o Emotions make us more likely to share content, even if we haven't read it.

- **Strengthening fake news:**

- o Clickbait headlines often spread faster than factual news because they are more emotional and easier to remember.
- o This allows false information to spread virally before it is verified.

### **4. Consequences of clickbait (2 min)**

- Superficial knowledge: many users read only headlines and not the article content – this leads to half-truths or false beliefs.
- “Chasing sensation”: media compete for our attention by creating increasingly exaggerated titles, lowering the quality of information online.
- Disinformation and information chaos: sensational titles easily lead to sharing false content, reinforcing rumours and fake news.
- Information fatigue: audiences stop trusting the media, feeling deceived or manipulated.

### **5. Summary and question to students (1 min)**

- Clickbait is a tool for attracting our attention, but often at the cost of truth and reliability.
- The teacher asks:
  - o “Can you create headlines that are interesting but not misleading? What could they look like?”
  - o (Encouragement for further discussion in the next part of the lesson.)

## **Part 4 — Group exercise: “Which headline is lying?” (15–20 min)**

### **Purpose of the exercise**

- Develop the ability to recognize clickbait headlines.
- Learn to analyse linguistic and visual tricks that influence our emotions and the decision to click.
- Practise creating reliable, informative titles instead of sensational ones.



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### **1. Division into groups (1 min)**

- The class splits into teams of 3–4 people.
- Each group receives a set of 6 headlines (3 clickbait, 3 reliable).
- Headlines should be realistic but fictional or politically neutral, e.g.:

1. “Shock! This food can kill you in a minute – doctors warn!”
2. “New research: a diet rich in fibre reduces the risk of heart disease.”
3. “Nobody expected this! See what this politician did during the meeting.”
4. “Yesterday, the largest educational park for children was opened in Kraków.”
5. “This one trick will cut your electricity bill in half!”
6. “New WHO report: climate change impacts young people’s mental health.”

### **2. Supporting tool – ‘Card of 10 clickbait tricks’ (2–3 min)**

Each group receives a card with a list of the 10 tricks most commonly used by clickbait authors:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Clickbait trick</b>	<b>Example</b>
1	Shocking words and exclamation marks	“SHOCK!”, “TERRIFYING!”
2	Mystery, vagueness	“You won’t believe what happened...”
3	Promise of an extraordinary effect	“This trick will change your life...”
4	Scare tactics, fear-mongering	“This food can kill you!”
5	Unanswered questions	“Is your phone spying on you?”
6	Exaggerated emotions	“Everyone is in shock!”, “No one can believe it!”
7	Overstating facts	“The biggest scandal in history...”
8	Manipulative photos/graphics	Thumbnails with loud captions, dramatic colours
9	Promise to reveal ‘secret information’	“Companies are hiding this secret from you!”
10	Numbers without context	“10 times higher risk!”, without providing sources

### **3. Group task (7–8 min)**

Each group:

1. Marks the clickbait headlines – identifying which titles are sensational and which are reliable.
2. Notes the tricks used (number from the list of 10 clickbait tricks) – more than one trick may be present in a single headline.



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3. Suggests a more reliable title for at least one clickbait headline so that it conveys the content in an informative way, without emotional manipulation.

**Table to fill in:**

<b>Headline</b>	<b>Clickbait? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Which trick used? (number from the list)</b>	<b>Better version of the headline</b>
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1

2

#### **4. Presentation of results (4–5 min)**

- Each group presents its conclusions in 2–3 minutes:
  - o Which headlines they identified as clickbait.
  - o Which tricks were used.
  - o How they would rewrite the headline to make it interesting but reliable.
- The teacher writes the most common tricks on the board, creating a joint “warning list” for the whole class.

#### **5. Summary of the exercise (1–2 min)**

- Clickbait works because it triggers emotions and curiosity but often misleads or exaggerates.
- It’s not worth sharing content based solely on the headline – check the source and read the article.
- Everyone can learn to create headlines that are interesting yet reliable, encouraging reading facts instead of manipulations.



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## **Part 5 — Discussion: Why do we click on clickbait? (8–10 min)**

### **Purpose of the discussion**

- Understand the psychological mechanisms that make clickbait attractive.
- Realise how emotions and curiosity influence internet users' decisions.
- Develop rules for safe online content consumption and resistance to manipulative headlines.

### **1. Questions for students (basic)**

1. What makes some headlines tempting to click, even if we know they might be exaggerated?
2. Are emotional titles more “engaging” than neutral facts? Why?
3. How does clickbait affect our perception of content before we even read the article?
4. Is it possible to completely avoid clickbait on the internet? Is it realistic?
5. How should we react when we notice that a headline is misleading or exaggerated?

### **2. Additional probing questions**

- Have you ever shared an article based only on the title, without reading the content?
- Which emotions most often push people to click – curiosity, fear, anger, joy, a sense of mystery?
- Have you noticed that some headlines promise a sensation, but then in the text almost nothing happens? How did you feel then?
- Does a higher number of likes and comments under a headline make it seem more true?
- How do media make money from our clicks? Is that fair to the audience?

### **3. Mini-analysis (optional, 2–3 min)**

The teacher presents two fictional headlines on a slide:

- “Shock! This drink can kill you in 60 seconds!”
- “Research shows that excess caffeine can harm your health.”

#### **Questions for students:**

- Which headline attracts more attention? Why?
- Which one would you be more likely to click – and does that mean it's more true?
- What emotions does the first title evoke, and what emotions does the second one evoke?



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#### **4. Conclusions from the discussion**

- Clickbait is based on emotions and our natural curiosity – we want to know what is “shocking” or “secret.”
- Our brain reacts faster to strong emotions than to calm facts – that’s why manipulative headlines win online.
- Many users judge content by its title, not by the facts – this encourages the spread of half-truths and fake news.
- It’s impossible to completely avoid clickbait, but we can learn to recognise it and resist manipulation.
- The best reaction to a clickbait title:
  1. Check the source and read the content to the end.
  2. Don’t share an article based only on its headline.
  3. Report blatantly misleading titles on social media platforms.

#### **Part 6 — Summary and Reflection (7–10 min)**

##### **1. Individual reflection – complete the sentences (3–4 min)**

Each student writes in their notebook or on a small card their answers to the sentences:

- “I have understood that clickbait...”
- “The headlines that fool me the most are those that...”
- “Before I click next time, I will check...”
- *(optional)* “Thanks to this lesson, I know that on the internet not everything is...”

*(The teacher may collect the cards anonymously and read a few responses to show different points of view in the class.)*

##### **2. Short class discussion (2–3 min)**

###### **Questions for students:**

- During the lesson, did anything surprise you about clickbait?
- Will it now be easier for you to recognise a manipulative headline?
- Is every clickbait harmful, or can it sometimes be a “harmless encouragement” to click?

*(The teacher moderates the discussion, stressing that the main problem is misleading people, not just attracting attention.)*



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### **3. Creating a shared list – “5 ways not to get caught by clickbait” (3–4 min)**

On the board or flipchart, a list of rules suggested by the students is created – for example:

1. I check the website’s source (whether it is credible, well-known, reliable).
2. I read the whole article, not just the headline.
3. I think about whether the title is exaggerated, emotional, or mysterious without reason.
4. I do not share news just because it sounds shocking or because everyone else is sharing it.
5. I compare the information with other media to see if anyone else is reporting it.
6. *(optional extra point)* I ignore content that promises “miracle solutions” or “secret facts that everyone is hiding.”

*(The list can be displayed in the classroom as a reminder for students.)*

### **4. Teacher’s conclusion – factual summary (1–2 min)**

- Clickbait works because it uses emotions, curiosity, and our desire for quick information.
- However, a sensational headline does not always convey the truth, and many people believe the content based only on the title, even without reading the whole article.
- The ability to recognise clickbait is an important part of conscious internet use, which helps us:
  - o avoid manipulation,
  - o not get drawn into false information,
  - o maintain the quality of information we share ourselves.

## **Part 7 — Glossary of Terms**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Clickbait</b>	A headline or thumbnail intended to attract attention, often exaggerated or misleading compared to the article’s actual content.
<b>Manipulative headline</b>	A title constructed to evoke emotions (shock, anger, fear), often at the expense of factual accuracy.
<b>Curiosity gap</b>	A psychological mechanism that makes us want to know the missing information – used in clickbaits.
<b>Disinformation</b>	False or manipulated information spread to influence audiences.

## **Part 8 — Teacher’s Methodological Guide – Extended Version**

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## **1. Preparing materials**

### **Selecting examples:**

- Use neutral or fictional headlines that do not refer to current political disputes or topics that may cause controversy among students.
- Avoid sensitive topics (religion, local conflicts, private situations of students).
- Focus on educational, entertainment, everyday headlines (e.g., health, science, trivia, sport).

### **Varied formats:**

- Prepare a set of headlines in print or as slides – from news portals, YouTube, social media, and advertisements.
- Add graphics and thumbnails so that students can see how clickbait works visually (colours, emojis, loud captions).

### **“10 Clickbait Tricks” card:**

- Give each group a card with the most common headline manipulation techniques to make their analysis easier during the exercises.

## **2. Conducting the lesson**

### **Introduction:**

- Start with examples that match students’ everyday experiences (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram) to immediately capture their attention.
- Ask if they have ever clicked on a title that turned out to be misleading – this will create context for the next activities.

### **Mini-lecture:**

- Provide short, precise definitions, alternating with questions to the class to maintain engagement.
- Show that clickbait is not always false, but it always aims to manipulate emotions and encourage clicking.

## **3. Moderating exercises and discussions**

### **Group work:**

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- Make sure each group understands the instructions and knows how to use the “10 Clickbait Tricks” card.
- Encourage them to explain their choices: “Why do you think this headline is clickbait? What emotions is it trying to evoke?”
- If there are different opinions, show that the line between an interesting and a manipulative headline can be subtle – and that it’s normal for students to assess differently.

### Discussion:

- Create a space for free exchange of opinions – ask questions, do not judge.
- You can point out that even professionals sometimes fall for clickbait, so students should not feel embarrassed.
- Stress that the goal of the lesson is not to criticise internet users, but to learn how to filter information better.

### 4. Building a safe atmosphere

- Avoid mocking students’ answers – every opinion is a starting point for conversation.
- If someone shares an example from their own life (e.g., they clicked on a false title or fell for a scam), do not allow jokes at their expense – emphasise that it is a common experience.
- If necessary, remind them of netiquette principles – mutual respect and safe communication online.

### 5. Educational aim of the lesson

Shaping in students:

- Awareness of how media and online advertising work.
- Resistance to emotional manipulation that makes us click and share without checking facts.
- The ability to read headlines critically, assess their reliability, and avoid spreading false content.

### 6. Possible lesson extensions

- **Homework:** students search the internet for examples of clickbait headlines (without sharing links) to analyse them together in the next lesson.



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- **Class project:** create a “Conscious Student’s Internet Code” with rules for safe headline reading and content sharing.
- **Mini creative workshop:** students rewrite clickbait headlines into factual ones, showing that a title can be interesting without manipulation.

## Part 9 — Educational and Fact-Checking Sources

- **European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO)**  
<https://edmo.eu>
- **EUvsDisinfo – European External Action Service**  
<https://euvsdisinfo.eu>
- **Demagog.org.pl** (Poland)  
<https://demagog.org.pl>
- **Konkret24** (Poland)  
<https://konkret24.tvn24.pl>
- **Manipulátoři.cz** (Czech Republic)  
<https://manipulatori.cz>
- **Demagog.sk** (Slovakia)  
<https://demagog.sk>
- **StopFake.org** (Ukraine)  
<https://www.stopfake.org/en/news/>

