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Media Literacy Activity: Evaluating Social Media Creators

Objective

Students will analyze short-form video content from TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook creators using rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), assess creator credibility, and evaluate the content's potential community impact and role in combating misinformation.

Activity Overview

Students analyze short-form social media videos using rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), assess creator credibility, and evaluate the content's community impact and role in addressing misinformation. The activity includes individual charting, collaborative presentation, and discussion.

Goals for the Media Literacy Activity (ENGL 1101)

- **Remembering:** Students recall definitions and examples of ethos, pathos, logos, creator credentials, and types of misinformation. (A.1)
- **Understanding:** Students explain how rhetorical appeals and credibility function within specific social media videos. (A.1)
- **Applying:** Students apply the rhetorical framework (ethos, pathos, logos) and basic research skills to analyze non-traditional texts like TikTok/Instagram videos. (A.1, C.1)
- **Analyzing:** Students break down videos to examine the relationships between rhetorical appeals, creator credentials, evidence, and potential misinformation. (A.1)
- **Evaluating:** Students judge the effectiveness of the creator's rhetoric, overall credibility, community impact, and ability to debunk mis-/dis-/mal-information. (A.1)
- **Creating:** Students synthesize their analyses into a cohesive group presentation that argues the video's societal value. (A.2)

How This Activity Serves ENGL 1101 Goals

- Rhetorical Analysis Practice (A.1): Treats social media as contemporary "articles/essays" for method-of-development analysis.
- Critical Thinking & Source Evaluation: Builds information literacy and critical evaluation skills essential for research papers (C.1 & C.2).
- Communication Skills: The required group presentation (every member speaks) practices clear, organized delivery of analysis — a key bridge to academic writing and oral reporting.
- Revision & Style (B): The charting and presentation prep encourages clear, coherent expression (can be extended with a written component for full B alignment).

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Step 1: Individual Evaluation (10 minutes) - Use Tiktok, Instagram, or Facebook for the following:

Students will independently watch videos from their assigned creator's account.

Please do this quickly – 10 Minutes

Assigned Creators:

@Brecremer

@drdakotahtyler / dr.starkid

@dr.bscott18

@hashtagrupp

@Thegardeningtheologian

@phdrachel

@nickyounglife

@thel latentvariable

@jakorit1

@heymrsbond

@drjenbeyondthelecture

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Step 2: Evaluation Chart

Individual Evaluation (10 minutes): Students will independently review 2–3 videos from their assigned creator’s account. They will fill out the chart below for each video.

Video Title / Description	Platform & Date Posted	Ethos (Credibility & Trustworthiness)	Pathos (Emotional Appeals)	Logos (Logic, Evidence & Reasoning)	Creator Credentials	How Credentials Are Shown -or- Verified By You.

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Step 3: Group Expansion & Presentation (20–30 minutes)

1. Form Equivalent Groups (e.g., 3–5 students per group). Groups should be balanced.
2. Choose One Video from those reviewed by group members to focus on (the strongest or most interesting example).
3. Group Analysis & Presentation (Each member must present a portion — no presentation = 0 points for that student).
4. Create a video. This video must be recorded and distributed to each person in the group. Each person will submit to Blackboard before next class. You are required to use YouTube and submit the link. **Only Dual Enrollment students are excused from using YouTube.** Set the video to where only people with a link can see it if you don't want the public to view it. Any video that cannot be accessed is an automatic zero.
5. Place all these papers in your binder when you are finished. Ensure they are in order using the page numbers at the bottom of the page. Write your name on each page.

Presentation Structure (Recommended 4–6 minutes total per group):

Note: Overlapping NAMLE sections cannot be the same question. Choose a different one.

Member 1: Introduce the creator, video title/link, and summarize the Credentials section. Explain how the group knows/verifies the credentials (bio, external sources, consistency across videos, etc.). Explain what Ethos, Pathos, and Logos is as well as how it shows up in the content.

Member 2: NAMLE Questions— Answer 1 question from **Authorship** and **Purpose**.

Member 3: NAMLE Questions— Answer 1 question from **Content** as well as **Economics**

Member 4: NAMLE Questions— Answer 1 question from **Techniques and Format** and **Interpretation**.

Member 5: NAMLE Questions— Answer 1 question from **Responses** and **Credibility**.

Member 6 (Whole group if no Member 6. Each must contribute.):

- ☐ How might this video **impact the community** (positive/negative effects on viewers' beliefs, behaviors, or discussions)?
- ☐ How does this content help **debunk mis-, dis-, or mal-information**? (Or, if it doesn't, why not and what it might spread instead?)
- ☐ Overall rating: Is this a net positive, neutral, or concerning source for public understanding of the topic?

Ensure to show the selected media content being evaluated.

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Assessment Ideas:

- Step 1 Chart: Completion and thoughtfulness (individual grade).
- Step 2 Presentation: Participation of every member + quality of analysis and discussion (group + individual).
- Optional extension: Reflection paragraph — “What did you learn about evaluating social media content?”

Teacher Notes:

- This activity works well for media literacy, rhetoric, current events, or science communication units.
- Pre-select creators who produce educational or explanatory content for best results.
- Remind students to evaluate respectfully and focus on evidence rather than personal attacks.
- Differentiation: Provide a partially filled example chart or allow video notes instead of full writing for some students.

This ready-to-use activity promotes critical thinking, collaboration, and public speaking while directly addressing rhetorical analysis and misinformation. Let me know if you need a Google Docs version, rubric, or modifications!