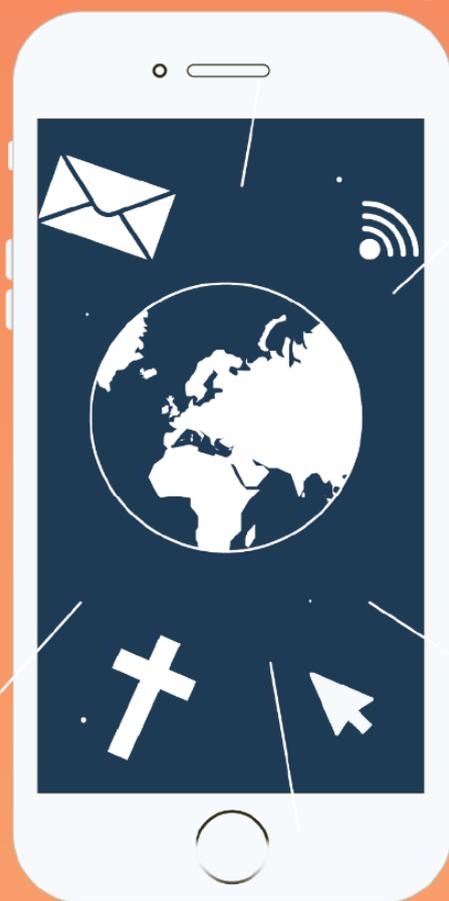


# READY? COOL. KNOW YOUR DIGITOOOLS!

## Teacher's Guide



# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

DigiTools aims to be a resource that allows students to acquire the necessary media literacy skills to prevent them from radicalisation online. The teacher's guide helps to achieve this goal by facilitating classroom activities which consolidate and broaden the understanding of the issues presented on the website. The guide has been designed for teachers and educators who work with adolescents aged between 14 and 17 years.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

The guide consists of five lesson plans, each of which covers a key stage of online radicalisation linked to a specific area of relevant media and information literacy. For a teacher explanation of the different stages of online radicalisation, see the [appendix](#) to this guide on page 24.

[Lesson 1 - Pre-Radicalisation - Vulnerabilities](#)

[Lesson 2 - First Contact - Evaluating Trustworthiness of Online Content](#)

[Lesson 3 - Connection - Navigating Online Chat Rooms](#)

[Lesson 4 - Indoctrination - Speech & the Architecture of the Internet](#)

[Lesson 5 - How to Help a Friend](#)

Each lesson plan contains the corresponding location of the topic on the DigiTools website, the learning outcomes, a number of classroom activities with detailed instructions on how to deliver them and additional notes for the teacher.

The lessons are designed to last approximately 30 minutes each. All timings are recommendations based on the estimated time needed to deliver the activities effectively. Teachers are encouraged to extend the lessons as long as necessary, depending on the depth of discussion and the level of student engagement.

To develop students' digital literacy knowledge most effectively, we recommend letting students go through the interactive DigiTools website in its entirety before delivering these lessons in chronological order. However, the teacher's guide has been designed in a way that allows it to be used flexibly. If better suited to the circumstances, teachers may wish to work through the website in conjunction with the teacher's guide section by section or to only pick out a few lessons from the suggested five.

## WHEN TO USE THIS RESOURCE

In determining when these lessons should be delivered, it may be useful to consult national or local curricula. Media or digital literacy knowledge is part of most curricula at some stage.

The UK's school curriculum offers several opportunities to use this resource. Relationships education (compulsory for all primary aged pupils), relationships and sex education (compulsory for all secondary aged pupils) and health education (compulsory in all state-funded schools in England) all require students to be taught about online safety and harms. Media literacy also comes up in the computing curriculum and other curriculum subjects such as citizenship education. Additionally, the guide's content corresponds with several core themes at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 of the PSHE Association Programme of Study.

# LESSON 1 - VULNERABILITIES

Interactive Story: Slides 03 - 14

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit students should be able to ...

- ... identify factors that can make an individual vulnerable to online radicalisation.
- ... distinguish these from factors that have no relevance to online radicalisation
- ... understand that there is no one profile for vulnerability to online radicalisation.

## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Give a quick introduction into the topic emphasising that this unit is NOT focused on the first stage of the online radicalisation process but on stage zero: the potential vulnerabilities that may make an individual more susceptible to the process.

Start the activity by asking the students the following question:

*"Based on your gut feeling - what factors (such as patterns of behaviour, circumstances that a person may find themselves in etc.) do you think could make someone vulnerable to being radicalised online?"*

Let students come forward and write their ideas on a mindmap that is visible for all (could be on the blackboard if in-person or the digital whiteboard ['Miro'](#) if online).

**Further tip:** In case class engagement is low, tell the students that everyone must write down at least one thing and it has to be something that is not already on the mindmap.

After students have stopped writing down ideas, foreshadow that you will come back to them at the end of the lesson and see how they compare to what has been learned.

## **EXPLANATION**

Starting the lesson off with this question establishes the framework of the unit. It prompts students to put down their intuitive assumptions as to what factors may make an individual more susceptible to online radicalisation. This will allow students to challenge their initial assumptions about individual factors as well as the inconclusiveness of any one factor once they have learned more later on.

## **ACTIVITY 2 - VULNERABILITIES**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Separate the students into seven groups at different tables. Place a different card on each table. Each card should have a possible vulnerability on the front side and the explanation on the bottom side.

You can print out the table below and fold it along the middle to create the cards.

#### Step 1

Ask the students to discuss with their group if they think (or still remember from the website) whether the factor on their table makes an individual more vulnerable to online radicalisation or not.

#### Step 2

Ask the students to look at the answer on the bottom side and discuss whether they find this surprising and why.

After both steps have been completed - rotate. Repeat until all groups have discussed all factors.

#### Step 3 (optional)

Applying the things learnt in step 2, ask students to discuss in what ways Lucas and his five friends might and might not be susceptible to online radicalisation based on the character descriptions provided on slides 3 to 8 of the interactive story.

You may consider asking the students to go over the characters in groups, as in step 2 above, or going over each character in a general class discussion, encouraging all students to make suggestions.

Gender	<p>Gender IS a relevant factor.</p> <p>Although women certainly may become involved with extremist ideas and communities, men are proportionally more involved in radical groups and may be the targets of extremist content more often.</p>
Mental Illness	<p>Mental illness or related psychological disorders are not critical factors in explaining extremist behaviour. Individuals become involved with extremist ideology for many different reasons, and the reasons why someone may commit an extremist act can be complicated. Most extremists are not 'psychopaths'.</p>
Academic Success	<p>Being academic is NOT a relevant factor.</p> <p>There are many different reasons why someone may be drawn to extremist ideology. For example, perceived injustice or dissatisfaction with one's life and society might push someone towards radical ideas; these feelings have nothing to do with academic success. In fact, terrorists and extremists may often come from well-educated backgrounds.</p> <p>BUT: This does not mean that learning to be critical about the media we consume, and knowing about extremist thinking cannot help us avoid being misled by extremist views.</p>
Age	<p>Age IS a relevant factor.</p> <p>People of all ages may become involved with extremist communities, even, for example, young children who are influenced by their parents' ideas. However, teenagers and young adults may be particularly susceptible to extremist ideology because they are going through a key period in their lives in which they discover, explore and connect with different ideas and ways to understand the world.</p>
Religion	<p>Religion is NOT a relevant factor.</p> <p>Violent extremism goes beyond a person's faith or religion. It is important to distinguish between those who identify with a certain religion and those who merely use it to fulfil an extremist and violent agenda. In fact, labelling certain religions as dangerous or 'terrorist' only leads to discrimination, which can often push people towards violent extremism.</p>
Race & Ethnicity	<p>Race and ethnicity are NOT relevant factors.</p> <p>Equating someone's race or ethnicity with extremism labels 'suspect' communities as pre-criminal. One should never assume that some demographics are inherently more at risk than others. Instead, it is the act of labelling which causes people to feel discriminated against and bolsters the message of violent extremists. Therefore remember: Radicalisation can happen to anyone!</p>

Triggering Event	A triggering event IS a relevant factor as it can sometimes be a reason for individuals to close up and make themselves targets of extremist groups. Triggering events frequently involve a traumatic live event, a personal crisis, or disillusionment or a combination of all three. One analysis of the 'pre – radicalisation' stage led to the conclusion that triggering events occurred in over 90% of the 68 reviewed cases. <sup>1</sup>
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### EXPLANATION

This activity allows the students to reactivate and build on the knowledge they previously developed by completing the website. It also gives them the opportunity to recognise and discuss answers which they found surprising with their peers. By doing so, they will develop an understanding that intuitive assumptions in this area are often incorrect.

## ACTIVITY 3 - CONCLUSIVENESS OF VULNERABILITIES

### INSTRUCTIONS

Divide the class in half.

#### Step 1

Ask one half to come up with a fictional character who they think is protected from online radicalisation based on his or her characteristics. Ask the other half to come up with a fictional character who they think is very likely to be radicalised online.

**Further tip:** If you think students will not be creative enough in coming up with characteristics, give them a minimum number that they need to incorporate with their character.

#### Step 2

Ask a student from the first group to present their character. Ask the class the following questions: *Is there no possibility of this character radicalising online? Why or why not?*

#### Step 3

Repeat the same thing with the character from the second group. This time ask: *Will this character be definitely radicalised online? Why or why not?*

#### Step 4

<sup>1</sup> Jytte Klausen, Selene Campion, Nathan Needle, Giang Nguyen & Rosanne Libretti, 'Toward a Behavioral Model of "Homegrown" Radicalization Trajectories, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism' (2016) <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1099995?needAccess=true>>

Ask the students what this tells them about the conclusiveness of any of the factors that they have explored earlier.

Depending on the time available, ask follow-up questions to keep the discussion going. Encourage all students to participate.

#### **EXPLANATION**

By allowing the students to create 'extreme' characters, they are challenged to recall as many (non) vulnerabilities as possible.

The following discussion allows them to critically evaluate the conclusiveness of any of the given factors, first using the particular characters they created and then on a more abstract level during the class discussion.

### **ACTIVITY 4 - OUTRO**

Ask students to look at the mindmap they created in the introductory activity. Would they take anything off the board? Add anything new?

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## **TEACHER NOTES**

This topic is supposed to make students aware of factors that may make an individual more vulnerable to online radicalisation. It is vital that students' intuitive assumptions are challenged in this lesson, as these often tend to be inaccurate. Additionally, students should learn that none of the factors are conclusive and that there is no single profile of a person vulnerable to online radicalisation.

# LESSON 2 - TRUSTWORTHINESS OF ONLINE CONTENT

Interactive Story: Slides 15 - 29

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit students should ...

- ... know the steps they can take to check the trustworthiness of online content.
- ... understand that it is crucial to take these steps before sharing content.
- ... be able to identify manipulation techniques in various forms of online content.

## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Ask students to indicate their (dis-)agreement to the following statements by either showing a thumbs up (I agree), thumbs down (I disagree) or fist (in between agreeing and disagreeing). Alternatively you may also create an [online poll](#). Encourage them to be honest.

*I know how to check whether online content is trustworthy.*

*I know what the SHARE checklist is.*

*I can identify commonly used manipulation techniques in online content.*

#### EXPLANATION

Starting the lesson off with this small activity will allow you to gauge which topics students still remember from completing the website and which topics you may want to cover in more detail during the lesson. It also gives students the opportunity to honestly evaluate where they stand. Repeating this activity at the end of the lesson allows for students to recognise the progress they have made.

## ACTIVITY 2 - SHARE CHECKLIST

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1

Divide the class into 5 groups. Assign each group with one step from the [SHARE checklist](#) (Source, Headline, Analyse, Retouched, Error). Give the students some time to research, so that they can create a small presentation for class, explaining how best to complete this step.

**Further tip:** Each group could design a poster. The posters could then be hung up in the correct order in the classroom so that students are continuously reminded of the steps they should take before sharing content.

#### Step 2

Let the groups present in order. Encourage students to ask clarifying questions.

### EXPLANATION

This activity enables the students to become experts on one step of the SHARE checklist. The presentations then allow everyone to gain an overview and understanding of each step.

## ACTIVITY 3 - MANIPULATIVE CONTENT

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1

Split the students into groups. Task them with creating their own form of manipulative content - emphasise that this could be anything from a picture to a newspaper article. After they have created the piece of content, ask them to write down the main manipulative elements and tactics that they have used. The paper with these answers should be turned around and placed on the table next to the content they have created.

#### Step 2

Make the groups move to the next table. Allow them to view the content created by their peers. Their task is to identify the manipulative elements. Once they think they have identified all of them, they can compare their ideas with what the group that created the content wrote down.

### EXPLANATION

This activity challenges students to first think like a manipulator, allowing them to understand the tactics that manipulators commonly use. It then gives them the opportunity to improve their ability to identify these manipulative elements.

## ACTIVITY 4 - OUTRO

Ask students to indicate their (dis-)agreement to the following statements by either showing a thumbs up (I agree), thumbs down (I disagree) or fist (in between agreeing and disagreeing) again.

I know how to check whether online content is trustworthy.

I know what the SHARE checklist is.

I can identify commonly used manipulative elements in online content.

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## TEACHER NOTES

This topic is about giving students the ability to check whether a source is trustworthy or not. During the lesson it is crucial to have the SHARE checklist at hand which can be found within the interactive story on slide 23 or [here](#). It may also be useful to acquaint yourself with commonly used manipulation tactics such as calls for violence/ extreme action, loaded language, the presentation of a dichotomous world view, colloquialisms, use of exclamations etc. Some of these techniques are explained as part of the activity in the interactive story on slides 28-29

# LESSON 3 - NAVIGATING ONLINE CHAT ROOMS

Interactive Story: Slides 30 - 39

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit students should be able to ...

- ... navigate online interactions with strangers safely.
- ... identify suspicious chat behaviour.
- ... react to suspicious messages appropriately.

## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Provide a brief introduction into the topic, emphasising the relevance of the topic to students' everyday life.

Get students to stand up for an introductory game. Explain that the game is based on an interactive activity of the website and is meant for them to refresh their memory. Tell them that you will read out chat messages that a stranger has sent to Lucas on an online chat forum and they have to decide whether the message is suspicious or not. Depending on their answer they have to position themselves on either side of the room. After they have positioned themselves, give them the answer and a short explanation.

Further tip: Set a 10 second time limit for students to decide and move to the appropriate side to make the game more dynamic.

#### Message 1

Hey Lucas! I'm glad to see you're interested in our chat group. I just accepted your request to join. If you have any questions at any point, reach out!

Not suspicious - This is a friendly & welcoming message, nothing wrong here!

#### Message 2

Oh and I forgot, I posted an invitation into the chat before you joined, a couple of people are meeting up for online gaming this week. It's on Thursday, I think, you're welcome to join, if you don't like gaming you can still drop by to have a chat.

Somewhat suspicious - The stranger is trying to set up an online meeting with Lucas. Unclear what the intentions are. Is this just a friendly offer, or something more?

### Message 3

Hey Lucas, we had a really good session today, what about you? I told the others you were interested in joining; they can't wait to get to know you. Don't disappoint them.

Suspicious - The stranger is building up pressure on Lucas by telling him the others can't wait to get to know him and to not disappoint them.

### **EXPLANATION**

Starting the lesson off with this quick introductory game gives students the opportunity to refresh their memory on what they have learned about online chat room behaviour from the website. It also gets them to stand up and move, in order to wake them up and make them excited about the lesson.

## **ACTIVITY 2 - CHAT ROOM EXPERIENCE**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Step 1:

Ask the students one of the questions below.

Step 2:

Ask the students to reflect on their own. They may wish to make some notes.

Step 3:

Encourage them to discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Repeat the same for each question.

Questions

- *Have you ever encountered suspicious chat messages/content?*
- *How did/would you feel about it?*
- *Do you think your response at the time was appropriate?*
- *Would you change your approach after what you have now learned?*

### **EXPLANATION**

This activity aims to give students the chance to reflect on their own experiences with online chats. By exchanging and discussing their experiences with other peers, students can furthermore learn from one another.

## **ACTIVITY 3 - REACTION TO SUSPICIOUS MESSAGES**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **Step 1**

Split the students into groups. Ask them to compile five top tips on how to react to suspicious chat room behaviour and potentially inappropriate messages.

#### **Step 2**

Hang up all the posters around the room. One person in the group stays with the poster while the others walk around and let the representative of each group explain the group's thought process behind the suggestions they came up.

#### **Step 3**

Ask the entire class to decide together what they think the best five tips are. Encourage discussion.

### **EXPLANATION**

This activity allows students to come up with their own suggestions for how to handle online chat rooms, drawing from the experiences they shared in the previous activity. It then challenges them to present their ideas to the class and pick the best tips. The activity encourages discussion within smaller groups as well as within the entire class.

## **ACTIVITY 4 - OUTRO**

Ask students to think of their key takeaway from the lesson. Pick some students to share theirs with the class.

## **TEACHER NOTES**

Online interactions with strangers are part of students' daily lives. Hence, it is important to enable students to confidently move in online spaces and empower them to draw a line where necessary, for instance, in cases of unwanted contact.

# LESSON 4 - SPEECH & THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE INTERNET

Interactive Story: Slides 40 - 61

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit students should be able to ...

... understand that the internet is not an unbiased source of information, and that content viewed online only tells one side of a story

... understand the role of echo chambers and filter bubbles in influencing the content we are exposed to.

... differentiate between free speech and hate speech, and understand why it is unfair to judge someone based on a set of 'protected characteristics'

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## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Give a quick introduction into the topic emphasising that this unit is all about how the internet functions. Write the four terms below on the whiteboard (or online equivalent).

*Filter Bubbles*

*Echo Chambers*

*Free Speech*

*Hate Speech*

Ask students to put down anything they associate with these words. Tell them that you will come back to this and complete it at the end of the lesson.

#### EXPLANATION

Starting the lesson off with this activity prompts students to recall knowledge that they acquired while completing the website.

## ACTIVITY 2 - DEFINITIONS

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1

Separate the students into four (or alternatively eight) groups. Assign each group one of the four terms. Their task is to come up with a way to explain that term to a 5-year old.

#### Step 2

One member of each group has to come forward and explain the term to another student as if he was a 5-year old. The other student is supposed to ask questions pretending to actually be a 5-year old not understanding.

Repeat this process until all four terms have been explained before the class.

### EXPLANATION

This activity challenges students to explain complicated concepts in a simple way, thus making them easily understandable.

## ACTIVITY 3 - FUNCTIONING OF THE INTERNET

### INSTRUCTIONS

Make the students stand up and clear out a linear space.

Explain the activity: You will read the statements provided below out loud one by one. Each time, students must position themselves along the line depending on how much they agree or disagree with the statement.

After they have positioned themselves, ask a couple of students why they chose their position to initiate a class discussion.

#### *Statement 1*

*You can have any opinion you want.*

#### *Statement 2*

*Social media increases polarisation of society.*

#### *Statement 3*

*Criticising someone based on a protected characteristic is never okay.*

*Statement 4*  
*My Instagram feed is unbiased.*

#### **EXPLANATION**

This activity challenges students to use the new terminology they

### **ACTIVITY 4 - OUTRO**

Ask students to look back at the things they wrote on the whiteboard at the start of the lessons.

Make them add any definitions and aspects that they have learned during the lesson.

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## **TEACHER NOTES**

This unit is rather technical compared to the other ones. It aims to create an awareness of how the internet functions in order to understand why the information we find online might guide us towards one way of thinking over another. This involves discussion of echo chambers and filter bubbles and how these mechanisms affect the way we view content online. This section also addresses the difference between free speech and hate speech. It is important to keep the following definitions in mind:

#### **FILTER BUBBLES**

- You are suggested content based on previous internet habits and interactions. Over time they can isolate you from any viewpoints or interests different to your own. This can make people less open-minded and unable to see things from the other side.

#### **ECHO CHAMBERS**

- Social spaces in which ideas, opinions and beliefs are reinforced by repetition within a closed group. Think of echo chambers as a product of filter bubbles; if the latter filters out the information we might not be interested in or disagree with, an echo chamber is what we are left with. We become overexposed to one type of information.

#### **FREE SPEECH**

- Free speech is the right to hold opinions and to receive and share information and ideas freely without fear of retaliation or censorship by the government.

## **HATE SPEECH**

- Hate speech attacks a person or group based on their race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or physical and mental abilities. These are sometimes referred to as 'protected characteristics' – things about an individual which cannot be changed, are central to their identity or 'make a person who they are'. As such, abusing someone or discriminating against them because of these factors is prejudiced and unfair.

# LESSON 5 - HOW TO HELP A FRIEND

Website Section: 'How to Help a Friend'

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit students should be able to ...

- ... understand the three step process of how best to help a friend.
- ... spot signs of radicalisation in order to identify it in friends.
- ... know how best to initiate dialogue with that friend.
- ... identify support that is available in case one of their friends is being radicalised.

## ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Give a brief introduction into the topic, emphasising the change of perspective in today's lesson.

Example:

*"We have spent a lot of time putting ourselves in Lucas' shoes and trying to learn about what we can do to avoid being radicalised online like him. Today we are going to take a bit of a different perspective."*

*I want you to try to imagine that you are Lucas' friend who wants to help. What would you have done to help him?"*

Let people come forward and write their ideas on a mindmap that is visible to all (could be on the whiteboard or [online-equivalent](#)).

**Further tip:** If class engagement is low, tell the students that everyone must jot down at least one thing that is not already on the mindmap.

After students have finished writing down ideas, ask them to keep their ideas in the back of their mind. Let them know that you will come back to this at the end of the lesson to see how the initial ideas compare to what the students have learned during the lesson.

## EXPLANATION

Starting the lesson off with this open question gives students the opportunity to show what they already know (including the content that they remember from looking at the relevant section on the website). It allows students to put themselves in the shoes of someone trying to help a friend who is being radicalised online.

## PRELIMINARY STEP - STRUCTURE

Start off by introducing the 3 step structure:

- (1) *Spot the signs*
- (2) *Dialogue*
- (3) *Seek professional help*

Write these steps down in a place that is prominently visible throughout the lesson in order to allow students to follow the structure of the upcoming activities.

**Further tip:** Having a post-it or some other type of indicator next to the step currently being discussed can be helpful. You may even wish to assign a student with the task of ensuring that this is always indicated.

## ACTIVITY 2 - SPOT THE SIGNS

### INSTRUCTIONS

Make the students stand up and clear out a linear space.

Explain the activity to them: You will tell them about a character and their behaviour. The students then have to position themselves along the line depending on how likely they think it is that the character is being radicalised.

After they have positioned themselves, ask a couple of students why they chose their position and initiate a class discussion. Always emphasise that none of the behaviours are conclusive.

Character 1

Maria is 15. She used to be an A\* student but her grades have recently dropped a lot. She says she can't be bothered with school anymore. Instead of studying or meeting up with friends she spends an increased amount of time on her phone.

Character 2

Sahid is quite shy and used to be an average student. Recently, he has started to participate much more in class and his grades are improving.

Character 3

John always used to be a pretty calm guy. His friends have noticed that he has recently become very irritable and angry. He has also shown disrespect towards teachers on several occasions.

Character 4

Yu used to love horse riding. She knew most of her friends from the staples. She has quit horse riding and now hangs out with a completely new circle of friends, skateboarders. She has changed the way she dresses and speaks and has also created a new online profile.

**EXPLANATION**

This activity allows students to investigate the signs of radicalisation. Letting them choose where to stand on the spectrum rather than giving 'yes' or 'no' answers supports the idea that none of the signs are conclusive.

**ACTIVITY 3 - DIALOGUE**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Split the students into pairs. Assign each pair one character from Activity 2.

Step 1

Give the pairs five minutes to prepare a short role play where one student acts as the character suspected of being radicalised and the other student plays the friend trying to talk to them about what is happening.

Step 2

Select one pair (or more depending on the available time) to perform their role play in front of the class. Give the remaining students a checklist with tips for talking to a person who is suspected of being radicalised. Using the checklist, students will discuss the role play, especially the way in which the 'friend' approached the situation, and provide constructive criticism where necessary.

## EXPLANATION

By acting out a short dialogue students can experience the challenges of initiating and maintaining a conversation with someone who may be in the process of being radicalised. Evaluating the dialogue with the checklist in mind will further allow students to understand which techniques work well and which ones do not. Overall, this activity is aimed at equipping students with the skills and experience to be able to start such a dialogue in the real world.

## ACTIVITY 4 - PROFESSIONAL HELP & OUTRO

Give a brief summary and alert the students that even if they apply all of the above steps, it is likely they will need to seek professional help since, as they will have seen in their dialogues, it is not always possible to get through to a person being radicalised.

- National Police Prevent Advice Line ([ACT Early](#)): [0800 011 3764](tel:08000113764)
- [Channel](#): a confidential and voluntary multi-agency safeguarding programme (for referral contact local police or council)

Ask students to look at the board and what they wrote at the beginning.

Would they take anything off the board? Add anything new? Any other thoughts?

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## TEACHER NOTES

All of the required information on the three steps can be found on the 'How to Help a Friend' section of the DigiTools website.

# APPENDIX: THE STAGES OF RADICALISATION

The table below provides teachers with a brief description of the different stages of online radicalisation. The DigiTools interactive story and the five lessons in the teacher's guide are broadly centred around these stages. Please keep in mind, however, that the table is not a comprehensive summary, as radicalisation is a complex process, which can progress in many different ways.

Radicalisation stage	Description
Pre-radicalisation	Pre-Radicalisation is the point at which an individual finds himself prior to radicalisation. It is important to note that the majority of the individuals who go on to radicalise are 'unremarkable' and certainly not 'psychopaths'. Poverty and lack of education are also not linked to most extremists. Instead, the radicalisation process is frequently sparked by a particular trigger event, such as a personal crisis, a traumatic life event (e.g. death of a relative) or disillusionment, which in turn lead to perceived injustices. Furthermore, there are certain factors, which likely make an individual more susceptible to radicalisation, e.g., a propensity for risk taking behaviour, the need for identity or belonging and a quest for significance. There is, however, no single profile of people susceptible to violent extremism. These vulnerabilities (and non-vulnerabilities) are explored in <a href="#">Lesson 1</a> .
First contact	The individual comes into contact with extremist content for the first time. This may happen through a wide range of media, be it a social media post, images, videos, games or music. Initially, an individual may be curious about this content as it is designed to be provocative and captivating. Even if they are not initially convinced by the ideas presented, they may seek out more of it or gradually encounter more as a result of internet algorithms and strategies used by extremist accounts. Sometimes, 'typical' accounts will occasionally post radical content, incrementally exposing their following to extreme ideologies. Those who like to retweet, share or otherwise endorse propaganda may then be contacted by recruiters of extremist groups, who pay them lavish attention and try to meet their needs in an effort to seduce them into the group. Being able to spot common manipulative tactics and evaluate the trustworthiness of different media is therefore critical at this stage and explored in <a href="#">Lesson 2</a> .
Connection	An individual begins to increasingly consume extremist content and may start to engage with it more directly, 'liking' and commenting on posts and following accounts. They begin to absorb some of the ideas they encounter. An individual's activity on extremist social media pages may allow extremists to identify them as potential targets for further radicalisation and provide a platform for contact. Once a connection is established, the

	<p>extremist attempts to push more radical ideas onto the individual and isolate them from other sources of comfort and information. Therefore, <a href="#">Lesson 3</a> focuses on identifying and correctly responding to suspicious messages.</p>
<p>Indoctrination</p>	<p>Indoctrination is the phase in which an individual progressively reinforces their beliefs, wholly adopts the extremist ideology and concludes that violent action can be justified to support and further the cause. The world for these individuals becomes divided into two sides: the enlightened believers (themselves) and the unbelievers (everybody else), creating an 'us vs them' view of the world marked by in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination. Those undergoing this brainwashing typically devote their time on the internet to extremist sites and chat rooms—tapping into virtual networks of like-minded individuals around the world who reinforce the individual's beliefs and commitment to them. Echo chambers and filter bubbles further act as radicalisation accelerants. At this stage, any successful educational mechanism must therefore emphasise the role of hate speech, 'us vs them' narratives as well as internet algorithms. This is explored in <a href="#">Lesson 4</a>.</p>
<p>Action</p>	<p>People challenge and encourage each other to take action. Instructions on constructing weapons, information on potential targets, and justification for attacks can be found online. Furthermore, by categorizing their target, albeit civilians, as 'the enemy' and exaggerating differences between the in-group and out-group, terrorists psychologically distance themselves from the humans they intend to destroy and thereby sidestep inhibitory mechanisms. It is to be hoped, of course, that a person never reaches this stage, which is why <a href="#">Lesson 5</a> focuses on preventative measures, such as peer-support and seeking professional help in case someone is suspected of being radicalised.</p>