The Checkology® Virtual Classroom 2024-2025 Report

Submitted to
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Summary of Assessment Results: The Checkology® Virtual Classroom 2024-2025

The News Literacy Project (NLP) is a national nonpartisan education nonprofit that empowers educators to equip students with the tools to be smart, active consumers of news and other information and engaged, informed participants in civic life. NLP's Checkology virtual classroom is an immersive resource through which students learn how to navigate today's challenging information landscape by mastering the core skills and concepts of news literacy so they can make informed decisions about what to trust, share and act on.

The Checkology virtual classroom is used primarily by middle and high school students and has been used in college classrooms as well. Given its online delivery system, Checkology can be used by educators anywhere. Educators can tailor the experience to fit their students' abilities, resources, and schedules, electing to implement the platform's multiple lessons as they see fit. The curriculum includes lessons requested by educators, enhanced interactivity and design, and game-like exercises where students can practice their skills. These interactive lessons use real-world examples of news and other information to test students' emerging skills and move them toward mastery.

A total of 47,047 people completed at least one question from the post-assessment survey at least one week after completing the pre-platform survey, while 38,876 students provided their grade (5-12) and were considered for future analysis during the 2024-2025 school year. Students who completed at least one Checkology lesson and answered the post-survey indicator ranged from 581 who completed the lesson associated with metric 4.3 to 10,769 students who completed the lesson associated with metric 1.1. A total of 46.3% of students who took the pre-survey did not answer any post-lesson questions (n=33,572), 34.6% of students completed questions for 1-2 lessons, and 19.1% of students completed questions for three or more lessons. Less than 0.1% of students (n=20) completed questions for all 15 lessons.

Results show that students who completed the Checkology lessons improved their accuracy in responses for 14 metrics and remained stable on one metric.[1] Looking at point growth shows that students made significant gains on 12 metrics with growth ranging from 10.6 points to 27.3 points. Students showed slight growth, 2.6 points and 3.2 points, on two metrics. The metrics are grouped into five standards with each standard containing two to four metrics.

Standard 1 showed improvement on both metrics, with point growth of 10.6 points and 11.4 points on metric 1.1 and 1.2, respectively. Standard 1 assesses students' ability to distinguish news from other types of information and ability to recognize advertisements. Although the point growth was significant, the final percentages of students – 32.8% and 44.1% – answering correctly remained below 50%, suggesting continued room for improvement.

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[1] Stability is defined as any change of less than two points in either direction.

Standard 2 showed significant improvement on two of three metrics. An item that asked students to select three examples of a watchdog press increased by 30.2 points and achieved 59.3% accuracy. The item that asked students to rate the importance of a free press to democracy showed substantial growth and increased to 81.1% of respondents agreeing with this claim (selecting "7" or above on the scale).

Standard 3 also showed significant improvement on all four metrics associated with this standard with growth of 13.6, 27.3, 22.8, and 13.1 points, respectively. All four metrics also had final accuracy percentages above 60%, with one metric increasing to 82.1% accuracy in the post-survey from 59.3% in the pre-survey. This item asked students to select the more credible item from two choices. Overall, Standard 3 showed significant improvement from pre- to post-survey.

Standard 4 showed improvement on all four metrics as well with 20.2-, 11.7-, 14.3- and 17.8-point growth respectively. The percent of students who recognized that the example post did not provide credible evidence rose to 87.8% accuracy in the post-survey, an increase of 20.2 points. This item had the highest post-survey accuracy of any of metrics for standard 4, and moreover for any of the 15 metrics. While the remaining three metrics had a final accuracy of below 60%, they demonstrated substantial point growth with metric 4.4 nearing 60% accuracy (59.8%).

Finally, **Standard 5** showed little growth. The percent of students who said that they verify before sharing on social media rose from 69.1% in the pre-survey to 72.3% in the post-survey (3.2 points). The number of civic activities that students said they would participate improved slightly from pre- to post-survey with just over 5 activities in the pre-survey and nearly 5.5 activities in the post-survey.

Standard	Metric	N*	Pre-Platform Responses	Post-Platform Responses	Change
Standard 1	Metric 1.1	10,769	22.2%	32.8%	**10.6**
	Metric 1.2	1,218	32.7%	44.1%	**11.4**
Standard 2	Metric 2.1	3,206	53.8%	56.4%	2.6
	Metric 2.2	2,807	29.1%	59.3%	**30.2**
	Metric 2.3	615	64.2%	**81.1%**	**16.9**
Standard 3	Metric 3.1	6,169	53.2%	66.8%	**13.6**
	Metric 3.2	6,346	36.4%	63.7%	**27.3**
	Metric 3.3	5,910	59.3%	**82.1%**	**22.8**
	Metric 3.4	4,694	47.6%	60.7%	**13.1**
Standard 4	Metric 4.1	4,426	67.6%	**87.8%**	**20.2**
	Metric 4.2	3,621	33.9%	45.6%	**11.7**
	Metric 4.3	581	32.0%	46.3%	**14.3**
	Metric 4.4	3,623	42.0%	59.8%	**17.8**
Standard 5	Metric 5.1	4,426	5.09	5.48	0.39
	Metric 5.2	9,386	69.1%	**72.3%**	3.2

Summary of Findings

Metric	N*	Pre-Platform Responses	Post-Platform Responses	Change
Standard 1: *Students distinguish news from other types of information and can recognize both traditional and nontraditional advertisements.*				
% of students who correctly match the information with its type (1.1)	10,769	22.2%	32.8%	**10.6**
% of students who correctly identify four advertisements on webpage (1.2)	1,218	32.7%	44.1%	**11.4**
Standard 2: *Students acknowledge the importance of the First Amendment in American democracy and a free press to an informed public.*				
% of students who correctly identify the two scenarios that violate the First Amendment (2.1)	3,206	53.8%	56.4%	2.6
% of students who recognize three examples of the press playing a watchdog role (2.2)	2,807	29.1%	59.3%	**30.2**
% of students who rate importance of a free press to democracy at least "7" (2.3)	615	64.2%	**81.1%**	**16.9**
Standard 3: *Students understand why professional and ethical standards are necessary to produce quality journalism, and they can apply understanding of those standards to discern credible information and sources for themselves.*				
% of students who correctly identify four standards of quality journalism (3.1)	6,169	53.2%	66.8%	**13.6**
% of students who recognize not all information is designed to mislead (3.2)	6,346	36.4%	63.7%	**27.3**
% of students who select the more credible item (3.3)	5,910	59.3%	**82.1%**	**22.8**
% of students who identify the best way to verify whether website is credible (3.4)	4,694	47.6%	60.7%	**13.1**
Standard 4: *Students demonstrate increased critical habits of mind, including effective verification skills and the ability to detect misinformation and faulty evidence.*				
% of students who recognize that the post does not provide credible evidence (4.1)	4,426	67.6%	**87.8%**	**20.2**
% of students who recognize common characteristics of conspiracy theories (4.2)	3,621	33.9%	45.6%	**11.7**
% of students who identify three common characteristics of misinformation (4.3)	581	32.0%	46.3%	**14.3**
% who don't believe government stages catastrophes to mislead public (4.4)	3,623	42.0%	59.8%	**17.8**
Standard 5: *Students express and exercise civic responsibility by seeking, sharing and producing credible information as effective participants in a democracy.*				
Average # of civic activities students say they will probably or definitely engage in (5.1)	4,426	5.09	5.48	0.39
% of students who say they verify before sharing on social media (5.2)	9,386	69.1%	**72.3%**	3.2

Students in grades 5-12, gap between pre-survey and lesson at least 7 days apart