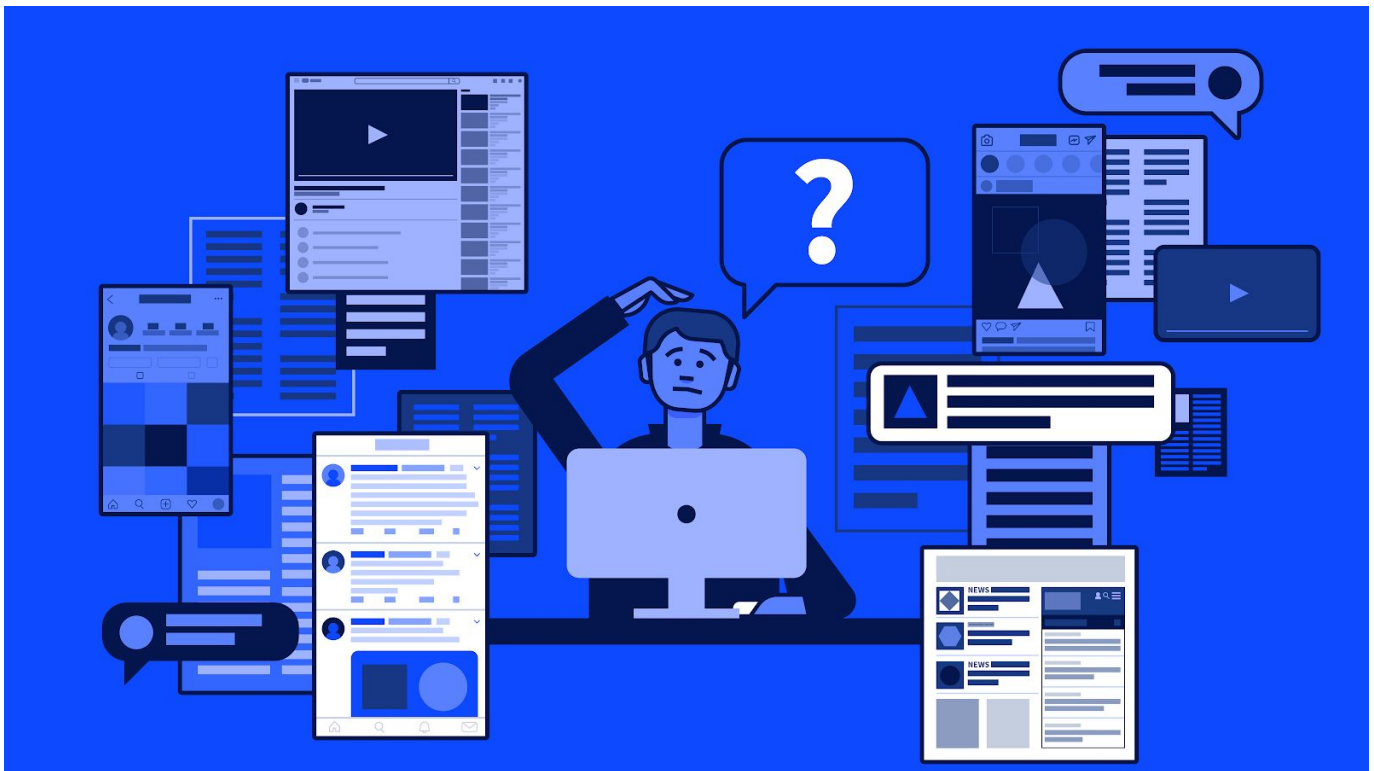# Sorting Truth From Fiction: Civic Online Reasoning
Practice Space Sharing Guide

MIT Teaching Systems Lab
Stanford History Education Group

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Introduction

One of the best ways to extend what you've learned in this course is by sharing materials with the people you work with daily. A great way to start is by sharing some of the practice spaces with your colleagues. **We've designed all of the practice spaces in this course to be easy to share and use**. Completing a practice space together gives people a shared scenario that can help groups start talking about what they are observing in their classrooms and how they can work together to help students navigate information online.

We designed this guide to **help you share the practice spaces from the course with colleagues.** It includes a variety of resources, including a model meeting agenda, proposed discussion questions, debrief materials, and links to additional resources.

We are excited that you are taking this course with us and we hope that sharing these resources with colleagues will lead to richer professional conversations about how to best prepare students to evaluate the content they encounter online.

Sincerely,

Justin Reich,
Sam Wineburg,
& the *Sorting Truth From Fiction: Civic Online Reasoning* Instructional Team

Links to the Practice Spaces

Where to Start: We recommend starting with *Assessing Students' Baseline Skills* for colleagues who do not have any exposure to Civic Online Reasoning (COR). *Supporting Lateral Reading* and *Misconceptions* are great practice spaces to try once people have some exposure to COR concepts. *Formative Assessment* should be used only after participants have completed *Assessing Students' Baseline Skills* and have tried some of the COR tasks with students.

- **Assessing Students' Baseline Skills** Participants review sample student responses to Civic Online Reasoning tasks. This practice space is a good introduction to COR.

- **Supporting Lateral Reading** The scenario asks participants to consider a sequence of instruction for working with a student who is struggling to effectively evaluate digital sources. This practice space focuses on how to teach students the skill of lateral reading and exposes participants to some common student misconceptions.

- **Misconceptions** Participants help a fellow teacher determine a way to address student misconceptions in a class about evaluating online information. This practice space focuses on how to effectively model Civic Online Reasoning skills to students.

- **Formative Assessment** Participants review sample responses who have had a little exposure to Civic Online Reasoning. The responses showed some evidence of applying COR skills, but students still made errors and required additional instructional supports.

Getting Started Tips

- **Prepare yourself** - Make sure you have completed the scenario yourself before facilitating any practice space session. If you completed it a while ago, **make sure to review the practice space before the session.** Familiarize yourself with the TeacherMoments platform and check out our **troubleshooting guide**. For assistance signing into TeacherMoments, watch this **tutorial**.

- **Find the right time and setting** - It usually takes 60 to 90 minutes to facilitate a practice space. A longer slot will give you more time to debrief the practice space. If you have less than 60 minutes, we recommend asking participants to complete the practice space in advance. If you are new to facilitating professional learning, you may want to start with a smaller group of colleagues before inviting a larger audience.

- **Personalize your invitation** - People are more likely to try new things if you ask them directly. Rather than sending out a generic invitation, consider sending a personalized email to colleagues. See **here** for some sample language to get started.

- **Gather all the materials** - Make sure that all participants have access to a device and a reliable internet connection. We find that desktops, laptops, and Chromebooks work best for TeacherMoments and that it does not work as well on smartphones. If you are using Zoom, check that your camera and screen sharing are working correctly. Check that all your materials - links, resources, debrief questions - are easily accessible since it can sometimes be challenging to find them while you are also facilitating.

Model Meeting Agenda

Before starting the Practice Space (5 minutes)

Facilitator Actions	Suggestions
Orient participants and frame the simulation	Talk about what you're about to do and how it fits with shared goals and challenges in your context.
Set norms and expectations	Share that practice spaces are great places to try out responses, take risks in a structured environment, and potentially make mistakes. Encourage participants to be open-minded, to listen actively, and to learn from the conversation.
Share the link	Share the link to the practice space, and then troubleshoot as needed ● On the login page, tell participants to select "continue anonymously" instead of logging in. You can share this **video** with participants to help guide them. ● See **here** for help with troubleshooting TeacherMoments

Completing the Practice Space (30-45 minutes)

Note: Skip this part if you chose to have participants complete the practice space ahead of time

Facilitator Actions	Suggestions
Manage time	- Provide time updates approximately every 10 minutes and provide a five minute warning before time is up. - People complete practice spaces at different rates. If you have limited time, let people know it's okay if they don't finish every question.
Troubleshoot as needed	- If meeting in-person, walk around to see if participants have questions. - If online, let participants know to send you a chat message if they are having trouble. - See **here** for troubleshooting tips.

Debrief Practice Space (20-40 minutes)

Note: If you have a large group, we recommend having people complete part 1 & part 2 in pairs first so that people have more opportunities to share.

Facilitator Actions	Suggestions
1. Ask participants what they noticed in the practice space	Keep it open-ended. Your goal should be to get people talking about what they observed in the practice space.
2. Ask participants what they found difficult or challenging about the practice space	Try to identify where people struggled in the scenario. Were there any parts where people weren't sure what to do? People will often say that they do not have enough information about the students or that they would have done something different than the teacher in the scenario. These are great instincts, but they can distract from reflecting on the experience. We have some model response language in the **FAQ section**.
3. Share the debrief materials from the course and **ask participants to review them with a partner**. See **here** for the debriefs links for each specific practice space. Ask people to discuss what they thought the main takeaways were from the debrief	Make sure you are available to answer questions as people read through the debriefs.
4. Ask participants to share what they discussed about the debriefs with their partners	Depending on the group, you may have to introduce some ideas if they do not come up organically.

5. Ask participants if there is anything they would have done differently if they were to do the practice space again	Participants may be hesitant to share their misconceptions about evaluating information online. One way to encourage people to share is by identifying misconceptions you may have had or talking about how these misconceptions are very common.
6. Connect to your own practice (if you haven't already)	If participants need a prompt: What connections can you make between this practice space and situations with students you've faced as an educator?
7. Call to action: Encourage participants to continue with the work by exploring the additional **resources** and sharing their experiences with colleagues.	End the meeting by asking participants to share one takeaway from the experience.

Debrief FAQ

1. **I can't make decisions without more context and information about these students**. We encourage people to discuss what additional information that they wish they had, and then we say something like, "Absolutely, this is such a good reminder of how important it is to know our students, families, and communities. But it's just a case study, so let's keep thinking about what we noticed and decided with what we did know."

2. **The teacher should have done X weeks beforehand.** So often the best solution to a hard moment in teaching is something that you should have done 3 weeks ago. We might say, "That is such a great reminder that looking ahead, setting norms, and planning can help avert a lot of problems. But, none of us are perfect, and we all get stuck, so let's discuss what we could do here."

3. **The scenario doesn't reflect what happens in my classroom**. No simulation can fully capture the complexity of a real classroom. The closest thing we

can do is create approximations that are useful for reflection. We might say, "Definitely, every classroom is different. I'm sure there are many things that won't apply to your classroom. But what did you notice in the scenario that you do see happening in your classroom?"

This is great, but how can I use these ideas with students? Practice spaces are great opportunities for opening up conversations about how to shift practice. Encourage participants to check out the Civic Online Reasoning [website,](#) which has lesson plans, assessments, and videos for teachers. We would also encourage participants to sign up for the online course if they have not already.

Links to Debrief Materials

- **[Assessing Students Baseline Skills Debrief](#)** - summarizes how high school students responded to these tasks and identifies common student misconceptions.

- **[Supporting Lateral Reading Debrief](#)** - summarizes the misconceptions that Timothy had about lateral ready and includes a link to a video describing one teacher's experience using lateral reading strategies to guide students' evaluation of online sources.

- **[Misconceptions Debrief](#)** - offers suggestions on how to model to students how to evaluate information and includes a video interview with San Francisco Unified teacher Valerie Ziegler describing how she models evaluating images from social media with her students.

- **[Formative Assessment](#)** - represents how high school students responded to these tasks after some exposure to COR concepts and identifies common student misconceptions. It includes discussion questions for people to reflect on how their own students have changed in their reasoning.

Links to Additional Resources

- [Students' Civic Online Reasoning: A National Portrait](#)
- [What are Practice Spaces Video?](#)
- [Civic Online Reasoning Introduction Video](#)
- [Civic Online Reasoning in Action](#) shows one teacher's experience using lateral reading strategies to guide students' evaluations of online sources.
- [Lateral Reading video](#) provides an introduction to or refresher on the strategy of lateral reading.
- [Voices in Practice: Civic Online Reasoning](#) provides one teacher's experience modeling for students how to evaluate images they see on social media.
- [Evaluating Evidence: Crash Course](#) John Green demonstrates worked examples for how one might show students how to evaluate the evidence behind claims.
- [Wikipedia Explainer Video](#)

Troubleshooting TeacherMoments

Watch [this video](#) for a tutorial on how to access TeacherMoments.

If you have any trouble with TeacherMoments, try the following:

- Make sure you have an updated browser, preferably Chrome ([instructions to download and install Chrome](#) AND Instructions to [update Chrome](#))
- Refresh your browser and try again
- Hard refresh your browser and try again ([instructions](#) on how to do hard refresh)
- If possible, we recommend going through TeacherMoments on a laptop or desktop. We've had better luck on those devices than on smartphones.

If you forget your password:

- There is no password reset; just create a new account.

If you run into any issues using TeacherMoments, please contact us at cormooc2020@gmail.com.

Sample invitation email text

Here is sample text for inviting a colleague to do a practice space activity with you.

Dear _____,

I have been taking an online course about helping students evaluate the information they find online, and I would like to share some of what I learned with folks at [insert name of school or organization]. I'm hoping that it will help us talk about ways to support all of our students, and close gaps of opportunity or access they face.

To do this, I'm inviting colleagues to get together and complete an activity from the course called a practice space. A practice space is a digital scenario that approximates decisions in real-world teaching.

Each participant will respond individually, and then we'll talk about what actions we chose, what we'd like to practice more, and how this can help us understand best practices in supporting students.

I would like to invite you to join us on [Insert Date]. Can you join us?

You do not have to register for the course or review content in order to join the activity. However, if you would like to learn more about the course, visit the Sorting Truth From Fiction: Civic Online Reasoning edX page. If you're interested, consider enrolling in the course to get access to videos, readings, and other activities.