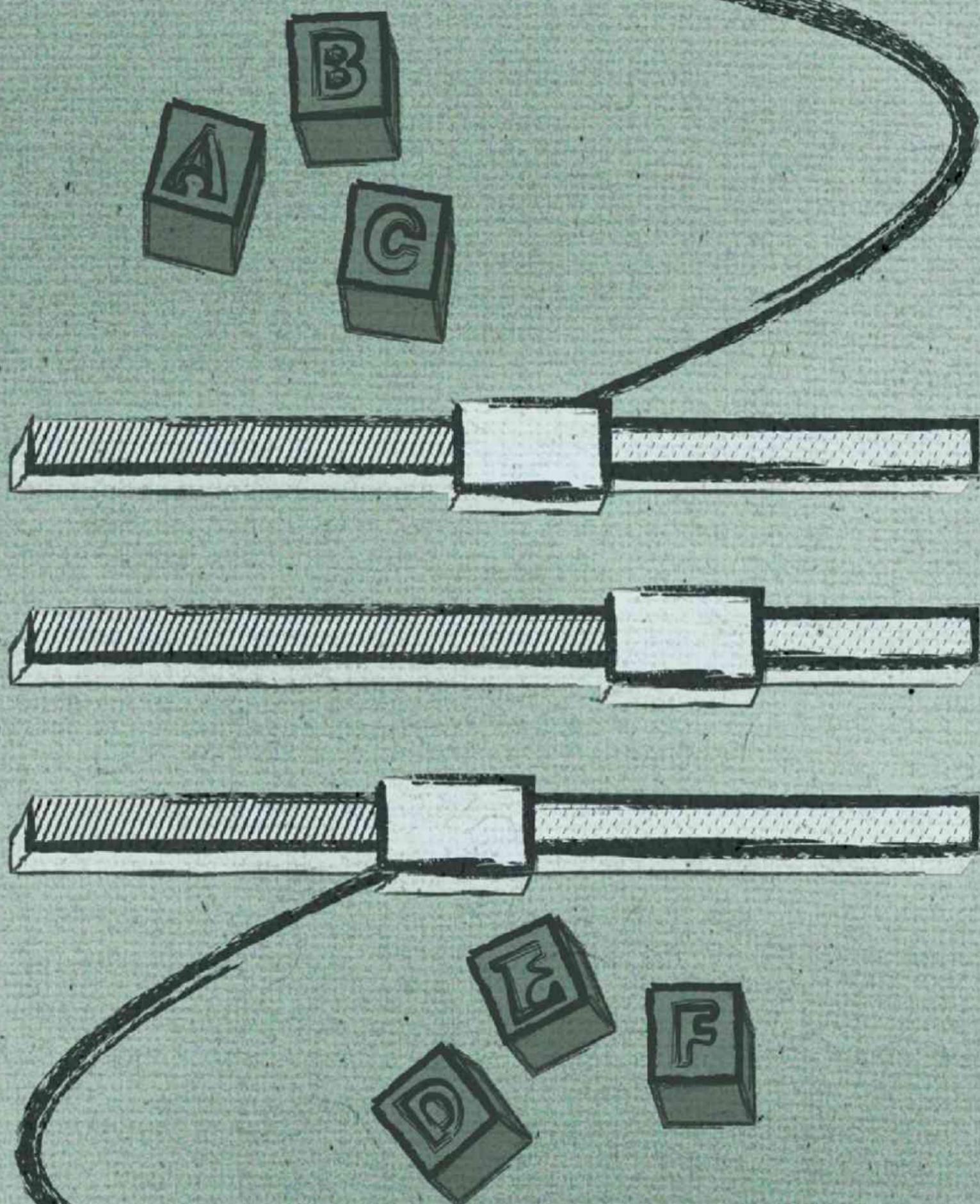


KNOWLEDGE IN THE NETWORK



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THE HORIZONS | AUGUST 2025

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NEWSLETTER DESIGNED & ILLUSTRATED BY LUCAS GLADUN

EDITOR'S NOTE

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this special edition of Horizons, dedicated to the theme Knowledge in the Network. In today's world, learning is no longer confined to the classroom. It flows through conversations, collaborations, and the global connections we build each day.

For this issue, we wanted to bring our readers something truly unique, a collection of articles written exclusively by our teachers. Each piece reflects the insight, creativity, and dedication that our educators bring not only to their classrooms but also to the wider community of International Schooling. Through their voices, we gain a deeper understanding of how knowledge is shared, expanded, and celebrated in our network of learners.

I invite you to read, reflect, and be inspired by the perspectives of those who guide our students every day. May this edition remind us that when we connect and learn together, knowledge has no boundaries.

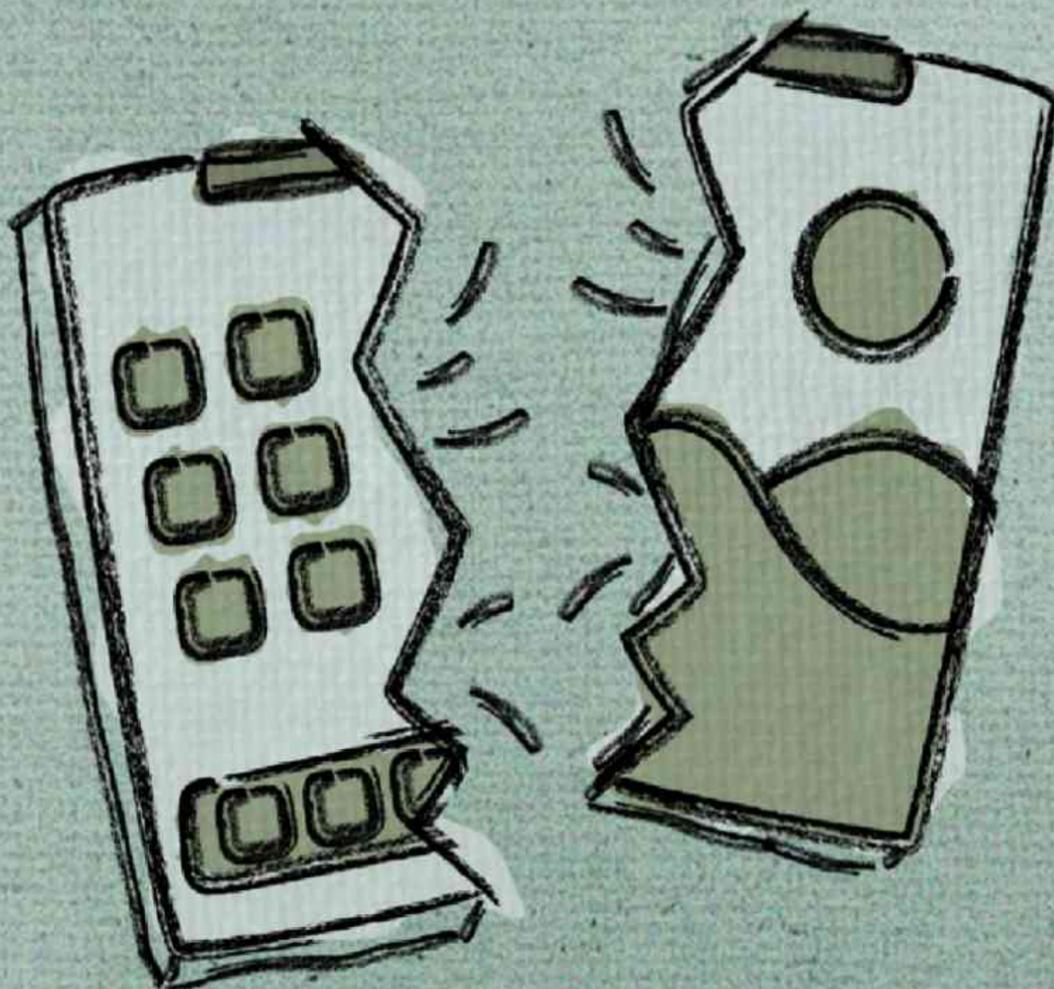
Ms. Natasha
Social Engagement Officer

INDEPENDENT MINDS IN DEPENDENT TIMES

By
Ms. Thais

One big mistake many teachers make is trying to prevent students from using media and AI in order to make them independent thinkers. But how can they become independent thinkers if we stop them from accessing the main source of information they know? Trying to block something so integral to their generation and identity is as useless as it was for parents in the past to prevent teens from listening to certain records, reading certain books, or watching certain TV shows.

Our generations (Boomers, Gen-Xers, Millennials) learned to separate real life from virtual life. We could turn off the phone because we lived in a world without smartphones and constant internet. As National Geographic says, "we are digital immigrants!" We learned to use computers and phones because they were new.



This generation, called “Digital Natives,” has never known a world without the internet. For them, the line between real and virtual life doesn’t exist: the internet and social media profiles are part of their identity. Many companies now check social media before hiring. SAPO (Portugal) confirms that 53% of companies do this; Ferretly reports that 91% of employers evaluate candidates’ social media as part of the selection process.

Bad news? The world changed...

Good news? The world changed!



The internet, media, networking, and AI are now part of who they are, just like TV, radio, CDs, and magazines were part of who we were. So instead of blocking access, why not teach them to use these resources thoughtfully? Why not teach fact-checking and critical evaluation?

Tips for using the internet, media, and AI wisely:

1. Ask the right questions on ChatGPT. Start prompts with “show trustworthy sources and links” or “Is this scientifically proven? By whom?” This teaches to look for reliable answers rather than blindly accepting information.
2. Use official sources: universities, academic journals, government sites, verified social media accounts, and respected authors. A famous example: in 2012, Italian journalist Tommaso Debenetti created a fake Vatican Twitter account claiming Pope Benedict had died. The news spread in minutes but they took days to fix the damage. The Vatican emphasized, though: “only trust our official pages.”
3. Trust your gut: If information makes you reflective, it’s probably credible. If it makes you angry, euphoric, or aggressive, double-check. Fake news is designed to manipulate emotions.
4. Report fake news and verify the content—always READ BEYOND THE TITLE!
5. Careful with hyperreality! (And this turns you back to tip number 2)

For teachers: Make your classroom reflective. Ask students their opinions, challenge them to analyze news, and guide them to think critically. For students: Think. Analyze. Compare. Question. Ask “why?”, “why not?”, “why this way?” Get high on information from reliable sources. Be independent thinkers. Don’t swallow everything the media feeds you—chew it, and if necessary, spit it out.

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CURIOSITY MEETS RESPONSIBILITY:

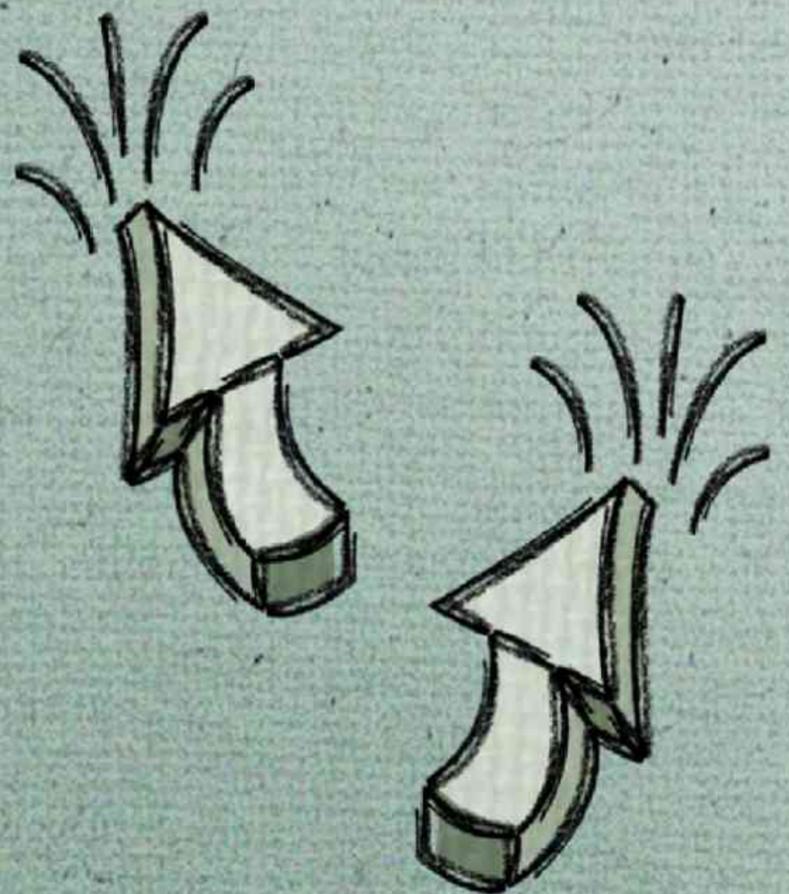
GUIDING STUDENTS SAFELY THROUGH THE DIGITAL UNIVERSE

By
Ms. Donna-Maria

There's a certain magic in watching a student's eyes light up when they discover something new; whether it's a scientific principle, a creative idea, or simply an answer they've been searching for. That spark, that hunger to know more, is the heart of education. And in today's world, that hunger leads students straight into the vast, fascinating network of digital knowledge.

As a teacher and faculty advisor of the Science Club, I see this every day. My students are explorers of an infinite library, one where every question seems to have an answer just a click away. The possibilities are endless: virtual experiments, global collaborations, AI-powered research tools. It's exciting, it's dynamic, and it opens doors that previous generations could only dream of.

But here's the truth I've come to accept; with endless opportunity comes an equal weight of responsibility. The digital world is not just a space for learning; it's a space where misinformation spreads faster than truth, where unsafe practices are disguised as "fun science hacks," and where hidden risks threaten the very safety of the children we are entrusted to protect.



I don't just say this as a teacher. I say this as someone who carries another role close to my heart: Child Protection Officer. Behind every viral challenge, every trending "experiment," there are real students, real lives, and real vulnerabilities. And that means we, as educators, cannot afford to look away.

I often think about how different learning is today compared to when I was a student. Back then, knowledge had clear boundaries: books, classrooms, teachers. Now, it flows like a river without walls. This freedom is beautiful, but it's also overwhelming. Students can easily stumble upon unsafe content, misleading instructions, or even individuals with harmful intentions, all while they believe they are simply learning.

Take science for example. A quick search for a "cool chemistry experiment" might lead to videos suggesting dangerous chemical mixes. Online forums, while designed for collaboration, sometimes open doors to unsafe conversations. The line between genuine learning and harmful exposure is thinner than ever.

That's why our role has evolved. Teaching facts is no longer enough. Today, I see myself as a navigator and a guardian, someone who helps students explore the vastness of knowledge without losing their sense of safety, responsibility, and truth.

So how do we do this? How do we allow students to dream big, explore widely, and still stay safe? For me, the answer lies in building a culture of conscious learning, where digital literacy and protection go hand in hand with curiosity and creativity. The best approach as teachers is to incorporate some strategic practices in our classrooms in order to educate our students not just the curriculum, but beyond that.

First of all, all my students know how much I love assigning group projects. Before giving the green light for students to start their digital research, I take time to discuss the basics of cybersecurity, because protecting personal data is as important as getting the right answer. We talk about why strong passwords matter, why oversharing can be risky, and how to spot suspicious links.

Science thrives on collaboration, and I love seeing my students connect globally. But before we dive in, we create what I call a digital safety contract. Together, we set rules for respectful communication, privacy awareness, and reporting mechanisms. This empowers students to not only stay safe but also take responsibility for the spaces they are part of.

When I think about the future of education, I don't just imagine advanced labs or AI tutors. I imagine something deeper: a generation of students who are not only knowledgeable but wise, who know that true learning is not about finding quick answers but about seeking truth with integrity and care.

This isn't just my job; it's my purpose. Every time I help a student question a source, every time I make them pause before sharing personal details online, every time I encourage them to explore without fear but with awareness, I feel like I am shaping something bigger than a science project.

I am shaping a mindset, a value system, a way of being. Because at the end of the day, education is not about filling minds, it's about protecting dreams, nurturing curiosity, and building a future where knowledge and safety coexist beautifully. And if I can play even a small role in that, then every effort is worth it. In a world where information is infinite, let us teach our students that wisdom comes not from knowing everything—but from knowing what truly matters, and how to keep themselves safe while reaching for it.

HOW TO CRITICALLY EVALUATE THE CREDIBILITY OF ONLINE INFORMATION

By
Ms. Hind Agayou

We've all been there: you're working on an assignment, start searching online, and in just a few seconds, you get hundreds of results. Some of them look official, while others seem a bit sketchy. In today's world of online learning, the real challenge isn't finding information—it's determining whether that information is trustworthy.

As a teacher and someone who has studied educational evaluation—the process of measuring and checking the quality of information and learning—I want to share some real-world tips to help you act like an investigator every time you're online.



Five Questions to Ask Before Trusting Any Online Source

1. Who wrote this?

- Check if the writer is an expert, a journalist, or just someone from the internet.
- Find out if the author is qualified or if the website is run by a reliable group, like a university, news company, or a trusted organization.

2. When was it published?

- Old information might not be correct anymore, especially when it comes to topics like science, medicine, or technology.

3. Where is the information from?

- Look at the website. Is it known for being accurate, or does it seem like a personal blog with no references?
- Websites ending in .edu, .org, or .gov are usually more trustworthy than random pages.

4. Why was this written?

- Was the goal to share facts, sell a product, or only present one point of view?

5. Can I double-check it?

- The best information is supported by more than one source. If three different websites say the same thing, it's likely true.

Why Does This Matter for You as a Student?

In online learning, you often have to work on your own more than in a regular classroom. This means you're responsible for managing your own learning. Being able to find trustworthy information helps:

- Make your schoolwork better and more persuasive.
- Stop you from sharing false or incorrect information.
- Develop your ability to think clearly and carefully—an important skill for college and everyday life.

A Quick Example

Imagine you're working on a project about climate change.

You come across a TikTok video that says "climate change is a hoax." The person making the video doesn't have any scientific training, doesn't cite any sources, and uses a lot of dramatic music.

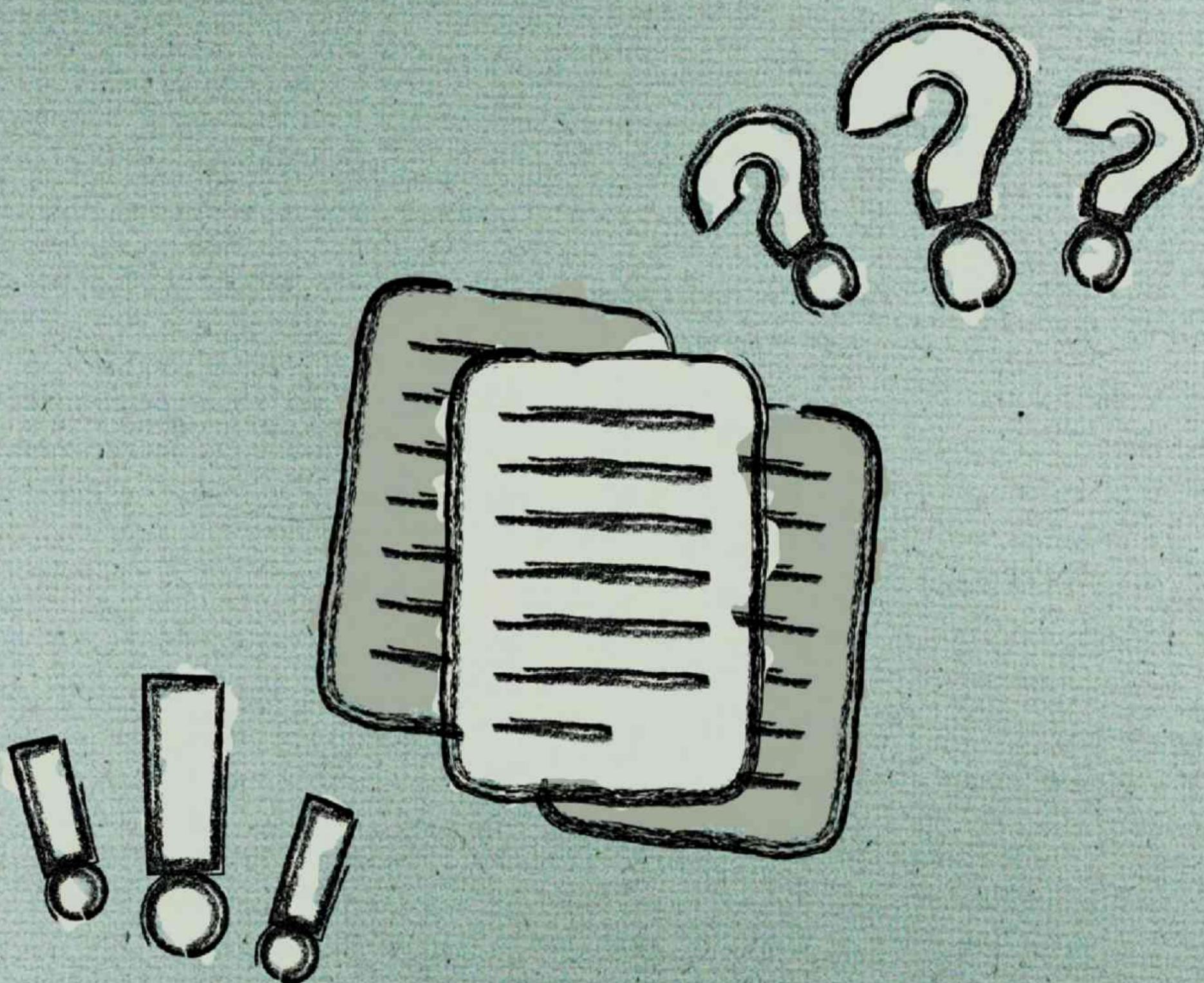
Later, you find an article from NASA's official website that explains the science using facts, research, and proper references.

Which source should you rely on for your project?
(Exactly!)

Final Thoughts

Being a student now means you need to be a smart digital researcher. Don't just believe what you find online the first time. Instead, ask questions, check the facts, and think carefully about what you read. This habit will help you with your schoolwork and also make you more confident when using the internet.

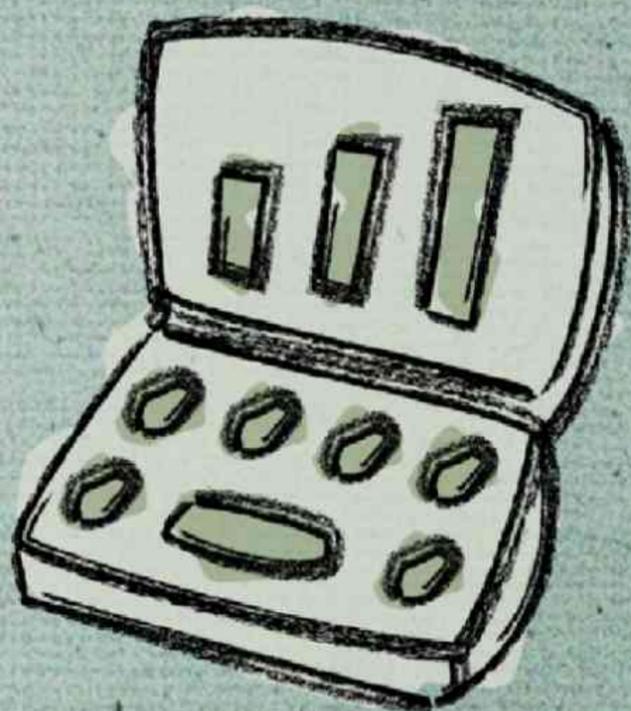
So, the next time you search for something online, remember to ask five important questions, think like a detective, and make smart choices.



300 MILLION ON THE HORIZON: THE FUTURE OF KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

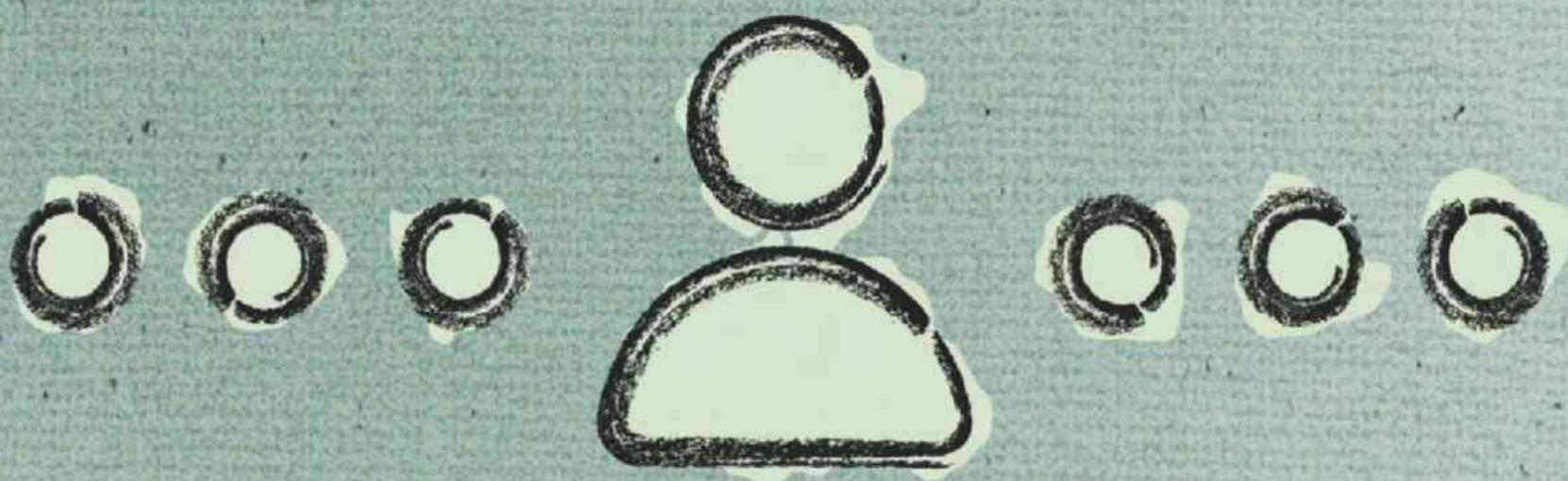
By
Ms. Milena

“The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) projects that the number of 25- to 34-year-olds with a university degree will reach 300 million by 2030.” This is more than double of the amount of 137 million “degree-holders” in this age group in 2013, according to the article “OECD: Number of degree-holders worldwide will reach 300 million by 2030”. Even though the future of education raises concerns both in teachers and parents at times, multiple articles and educational organizations support the idea of education having a very promising future. The fact that we can find well-organized online schools helps us realize young individuals have more chances for growth and development than was the case in the past. The future of knowledge is bright owing to the fact education is more accessible and exceeds geographical and social barriers.



First of all, education is more accessible and engaging than in the past. As we all know at International Schooling, virtual classrooms and personalized learning platforms are making education more available and appealing for the students worldwide. Courses are tailored in such a way that active athletes and busy children can follow and complete the curriculum successfully.

In addition, advancements in Artificial Intelligence support and improve the whole process. Now, professors are strongly against copy-pasting ChatGPT and plagiarism, but they accept its use for its benefits like time-saving and creative lesson planning. Technology-enhanced learning is here to stay, and we witness the benefits of it every single day in our live sessions.



More importantly, education is breaking geographical and social barriers. Once again, at International Schooling, students are valued and supported regardless of their background. Every student and every teacher in our school knows how much the setting is inclusive and fulfilling, and this only shows there are no social constraints whatsoever. According to Julie Phillips Randles, “exposing students to global collaboration builds cultural understanding, communication skills, and knowledge and awareness of the wider world.” For example, no one could have imagined that a student from Africa would have a best friend in UAE, just a decade ago. And no one could have imagined we could learn so much just by teaching individuals from different cultural settings.

THE OCEAN OF INFORMATION

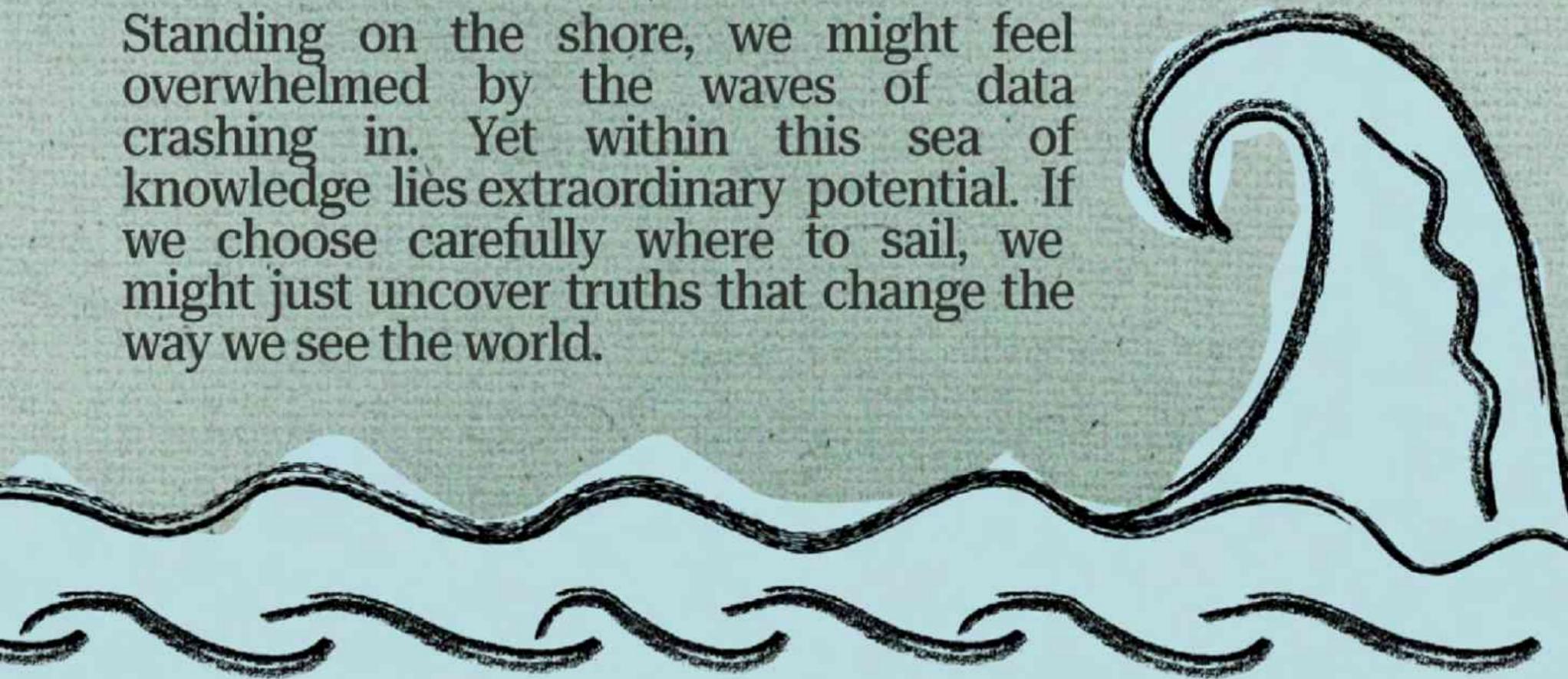
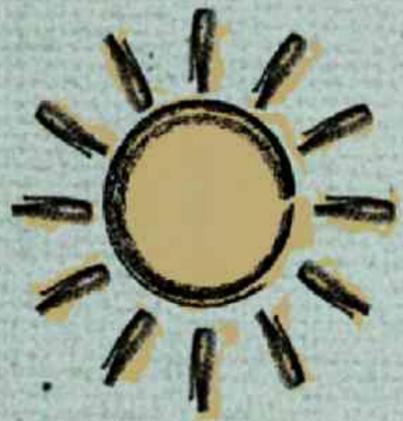
By
Ms. Claudia

The internet is like an ocean — vast, endless, and full of mysteries. Every click feels like dipping a net into the waters, never quite knowing what will surface. Sometimes it is a pearl of wisdom: an inspiring lecture, a rare book, or a life-changing story. Other times, it is only driftwood or debris: rumors, half-truths, or distractions that cloud our vision.

As learners, we are sailors on this ocean. Our challenge is not whether the information exists — it always does — but whether we can navigate wisely. Without a compass, we drift aimlessly; with guidance, we can discover treasures that enrich our lives.

Perhaps the future of learning lies not in memorizing knowledge but in learning how to find, question, and use it. The internet is a library without walls, but it requires skillful readers who can separate truth from illusion.

Standing on the shore, we might feel overwhelmed by the waves of data crashing in. Yet within this sea of knowledge lies extraordinary potential. If we choose carefully where to sail, we might just uncover truths that change the way we see the world.

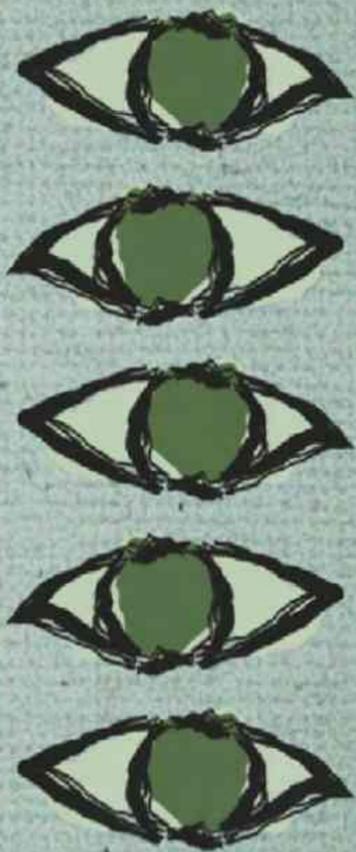


THE CHALLENGE OF MISINFORMATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

By
Ms. Claudia

In today's hyper-connected world, information spreads faster than ever before. Unfortunately, not all of it is reliable. The rise of misinformation (false information shared unintentionally) and disinformation (deliberate deception) has created one of the greatest challenges of our time. Social media platforms, powered by algorithms that prioritize engagement, often amplify sensational or polarizing content, regardless of its accuracy.

This is especially dangerous in education. Students are constantly exposed to unverified "facts" online. When they cannot distinguish between credible research and viral falsehoods, the very foundation of learning is at risk. Beyond classrooms, misinformation influences elections, health decisions, and even global diplomacy.



So, what can *we* do? The answer lies in digital literacy. Teaching learners how to verify sources, question motives, and recognize bias is as essential as teaching reading and writing. Teachers can use fact-checking sites, compare multiple sources, and guide students through critical discussions about what they encounter online.

The digital world is vast, but truth still matters. By equipping students with the skills to question, evaluate, and discern, we can ensure that knowledge remains a tool for empowerment, not manipulation.

INVISIBLE ROLE OF A TEACHER

By
Ms. Claudia

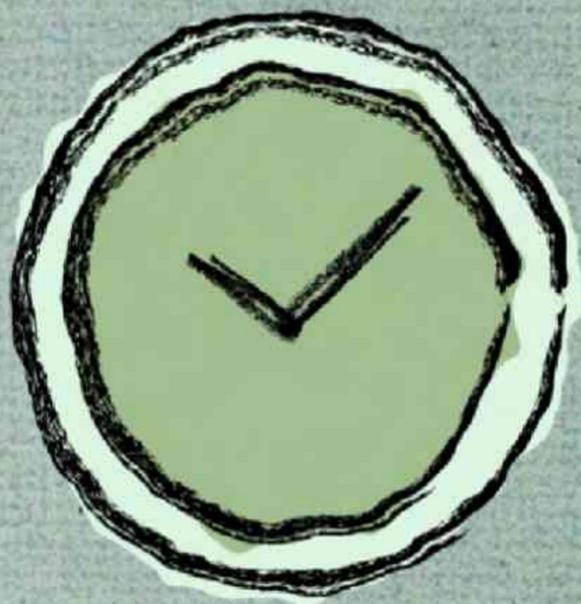
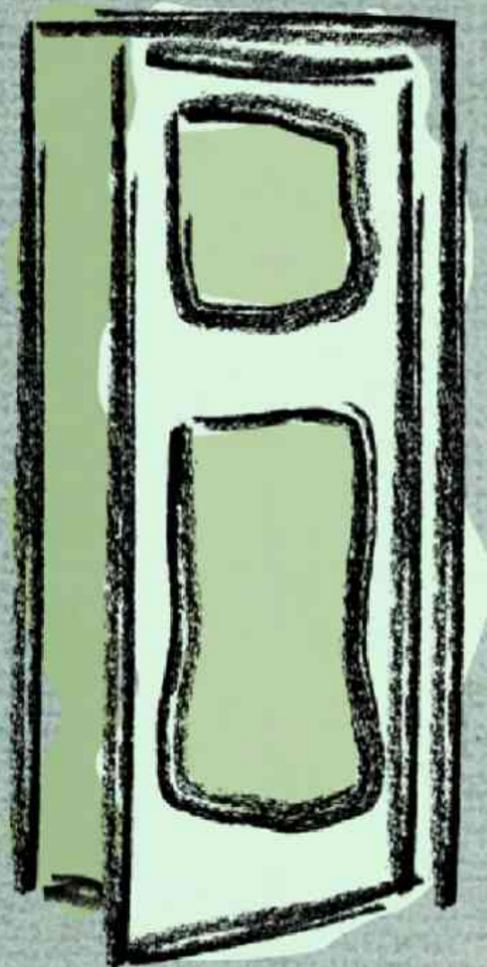
The role of a teacher often extends far beyond the classroom walls. While lesson plans, assignments, and exams form the visible structure of education, it is often the quieter, less obvious moments of mentorship that leave the deepest marks on students' lives. These invisible threads of guidance, encouragement, and care weave themselves into the fabric of who students become.

Mentorship is rarely a grand, dramatic gesture. More often, it appears in subtle ways: a teacher pausing after class to ask if a student is doing alright, noticing when someone's confidence is slipping, or suggesting a book or project that sparks a hidden passion. These small acts may seem fleeting to the teacher, but to the student, they can be life-changing.

Consider the student who doubted their abilities in mathematics until a teacher offered not just extra help, but genuine belief in their potential. That encouragement might inspire the student to persist, eventually pursuing a career in engineering or science. Or the shy, reserved child who found their voice when a teacher asked them to share their perspective, proving to them that their words held value. Such stories are rarely captured in academic reports, yet they shape futures as much as any formal curriculum.



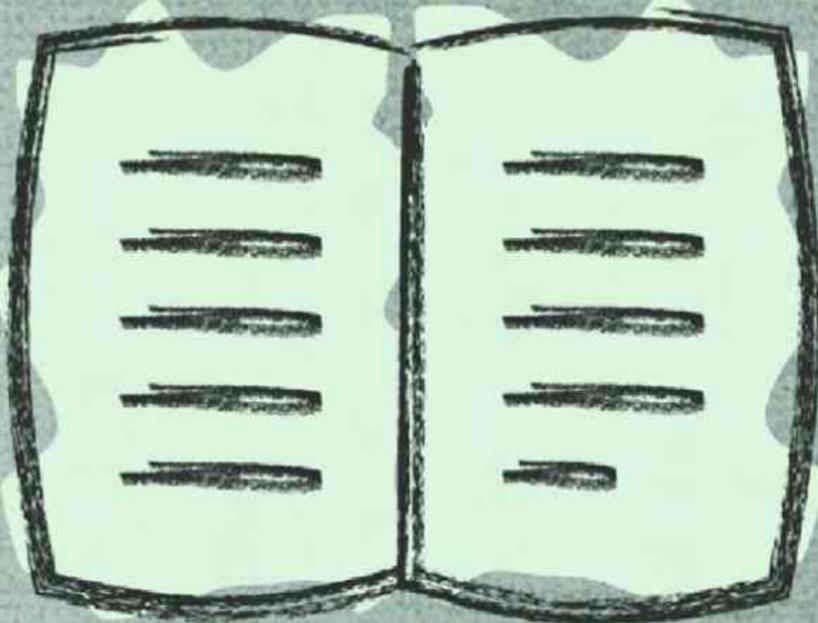
What makes mentorship so powerful is that it creates possibility. When a teacher invests in a student as a whole person, not just as a learner, they open doors that the student may never have considered for themselves. The invisible work of mentorship builds resilience, self-worth, and curiosity — qualities that carry students far beyond the classroom.



Many teachers may never know the full extent of their influence. Years later, students often recall not just what they learned, but how a teacher made them feel. A kind word during a difficult time, a nudge toward leadership, or a patient explanation when frustration threatened to overwhelm — these are the moments that echo quietly in a person's life.

Every educator, knowingly or unknowingly, becomes a mentor. And it is often in those hidden, unplanned moments that their greatest legacy is created.

The stories of mentorship remind us that teaching is not just about transferring knowledge; it is about shaping character and nurturing growth. The invisible ways teachers guide, inspire, and believe in their students may never be measured by standardized tests, but they are written into the stories of every life they touch.



A NOTE TO THE NAVIGATORS OF TOMORROW

As we close this special August edition of Horizons, Knowledge in the Network, my heart is full of gratitude for our esteemed teachers and mentors. They have not only graced these pages with their insightful articles but have also, once again, demonstrated that their role is to empower us to be more than just learners. They are here to shape our character and nurture our growth. As Ms. Claudia so eloquently stated in *The Invisible Role of Teachers*, "The role of a teacher often extends far beyond the classroom walls. While lesson plans, assignments, and exams form the visible structure of education, it is often the quieter, less obvious moments of mentorship that leave the deepest marks on students' lives."

The wisdom shared within these pages is a gift. It has armed us with the tools to navigate the digital world, teaching us that the future of learning isn't about memorizing facts, but about mastering the art of the navigator. As Ms. Thais wisely reminded us in *Independent Minds in Dependent Times*, we must learn to use these resources thoughtfully, to teach fact-checking and critical evaluation, because the world has changed. Our teachers have provided us with a compass of five essential questions: Who, When, Where, Why, and Can I double-check it? They are our wise guardians, not seeking to block our access to this digital ocean, but to empower us to become its most thoughtful inhabitants.

This is our time. We stand at a unique point in history, the first generation to grow up with AI as a tool. Our legacy will not be defined by the information we consume, but by the integrity with which we seek truth, the creativity with which we use our knowledge, and the courage with which we think for ourselves. The true power lies not in the answers AI can give us, but in the questions we learn to ask. The philosopher Voltaire believed that a person's worth is revealed not by the knowledge they possess, but by the profound and insightful questions they pose. A thoughtful question is a lamp that illuminates the darkness, guiding us toward genuine discovery, while a passive acceptance of information leaves us adrift in the shadows.

So, let's carry these lessons forward. Let's be mindful in our exploration, critical in our thinking, and intentional in our learning. The ancient philosopher Aristotle held that education is not merely about filling a vessel, but about kindling a fire within the soul. He argued that to truly learn is to engage with the world not just intellectually, but morally, and to use knowledge to cultivate a virtuous character. This is our charge: to make our learning a force for good, a testament to our own wisdom and empathy.

Be a truth-seeker. Be a critical thinker. Be unforgettable.

Until next month,
Shreya Maharaj Chettiar
Managing Editor

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THE HORIZONS | AUGUST 2025

