

## Summary of Assessment Results: The Checkology® Virtual Classroom 2023-2024

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 44,499 people completed at least one question from the post-assessment survey at least one week after completing the pre-platform survey, while 39,511 students provided their grade (5-12) and were considered for future analysis during the 2023-2024 school year. Students who completed at least one Checkology lesson and answered the post-survey indicator ranged from 447 who completed the lesson associated with metric 2.1 to 11,995 students who completed the lesson associated with metric 1.1. A total of 41.0% of students who took the pre-survey did not answer any post-lesson questions (n=27,430), 35.1% of students completed questions for 1-2 lessons, and 24.0% of students completed questions for 3 or more lessons. Less than 0.1% of students (n=25) completed questions for all fifteen lessons.

Results show that students who completed the Checkology lessons improved their accuracy in responses for 13 metrics and remained relatively stable for four metrics<sup>1</sup>. Looking at point growth shows that students made significant gains on 12 metrics with growth ranging from 9.7 points to 28.7 points. Students showed slight growth, 3.5 points, on one metric. The metrics are grouped into five standards with each standard containing two to four metrics.

**Standard 1** showed improvement on two metrics with point growth of 11.2 points and 9.7 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 – 33.5% and 48.7% – answering correctly remained below 50%, suggesting continued room for improvement.

**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 28.7 points and achieved

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<sup>1</sup> Stability is defined as any change of less than two points in either direction.

55.8% accuracy. The item that asked students to rate the importance of a free press to a democracy showed substantial growth and increased to 81.4% agreeing with this claim.

**Standard 3** also showed significant improvement on all four metrics associated with this standard with growth of 12.2, 25.5, 26.7, and 11.7 points, respectively. All four metrics also had final accuracy percentages of 58% and above, with one metric increasing to 83.9% accuracy in the post-survey from 57.2% in the pre-survey. This item asked students to select the more credible item from a list of choices. Overall, Standard 3 showed significant improvement from pre- to post-survey.

**Standard 4** showed improvement on all four metrics as well with 18.3-, 13.4-, 13.1- and 17.6-point growth respectively. The percent of students who recognized that the post provided did not provide credible evidence rose to 86.5% accuracy in the post-survey, an increase of 18.3 points. This item had the highest post-survey accuracy of the four metrics for Standard 4. While the remaining three metrics had a final accuracy of below 60%, they demonstrated substantial point growth.

Finally, **Standard 5** showed little growth. The percent of students who said that they verify before sharing on social media rose from 67.6% in the pre-survey to 71.1% in the post-survey (3.5 points). The number of civic activities that students said they would participate in remained relatively stable at just over 5 activities in both the pre-survey and post-survey.

Standard	Metric	N*	Pre-Platform Responses	Post-Platform Responses	Change
<b>Standard 1</b>	Metric 1.1	11,995	22.3%	33.5%	11.2
	Metric 1.2	1,268	39.0%	48.7%	9.7
<b>Standard 2</b>	Metric 2.1	447	51.2%	51.7%	0.5
	Metric 2.2	4,215	27.1%	55.8%	28.7
	Metric 2.3	1,038	67.0%	81.4%	14.4
<b>Standard 3</b>	Metric 3.1	7,187	55.2%	67.4%	12.2
	Metric 3.2	7,748	35.9%	61.4%	25.5
	Metric 3.3	6,984	57.2%	83.9%	26.7
	Metric 3.4	6,242	46.7%	58.4%	11.7
<b>Standard 4</b>	Metric 4.1	1,115	68.2%	86.5%	18.3
	Metric 4.2	4,282	29.8%	43.2%	13.4
	Metric 4.3	555	34.8%	47.9%	13.1
	Metric 4.4	4,051	40.9%	58.5%	17.6
<b>Standard 5</b>	Metric 5.1	5,464	5.02	5.31	0.29
	Metric 5.2	11,391	67.6%	71.1%	3.5

## Summary of Findings

Metric	N*	Pre-Platform Responses	Post-Platform Responses	Change
<b>Standard 1:</b> <i>Students distinguish news from other types of information and can recognize both traditional and nontraditional advertisements.</i>				
% of students who correctly match the information with its type (1.1)	11,995	22.3%	33.5%	11.2
% of students who correctly identify four advertisements on webpage (1.2)	1,268	39.0%	48.7%	9.7
<b>Standard 2:</b> <i>Students acknowledge the importance of the First Amendment in American democracy and a free press to an informed public.</i>				
% of students who correctly identify the two scenarios that violate the First Amendment (2.1)	447	51.2%	51.7%	0.5
% of students who recognize three examples of the press playing a watchdog role (2.2)	4,215	27.1%	55.8%	28.7
% of students who rate importance of a free press to democracy at least "7" (2.3)	1,038	67.0%	81.4%	14.4
<b>Standard 3:</b> <i>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.</i>				
% of students who correctly identify four standards of quality journalism (3.1)	7,187	55.2%	67.4%	12.2
% of students who recognize not all information is designed to mislead (3.2)	7,748	35.9%	61.4%	25.5
% of students who select the more credible item (3.3)	6,984	57.2%	83.9%	26.7
% of students who identify the best way to verify whether website is credible (3.4)	6,242	46.7%	58.4%	11.7
<b>Standard 4:</b> <i>Students demonstrate increased critical habits of mind, including effective verification skills and the ability to detect misinformation and faulty evidence.</i>				
% of students who recognize that the post does not provide credible evidence** (4.1)	1,115	68.2%	86.5%	18.3
% of students who recognize common characteristics of conspiracy theories (4.2)	4,282	29.8%	43.2%	13.4
% of students who identify three common characteristics of misinformation (4.3)	555	34.8%	47.9%	13.1
% who don't believe government stages catastrophes to mislead public (4.4)	4,051	40.9%	58.5%	17.6
<b>Standard 5:</b> <i>Students express and exercise civic responsibility by seeking, sharing and producing credible information as effective participants in a democracy.</i>				
Average # of civic activities students say they will probably or definitely engage in (5.1)	5,464	5.02	5.31	0.29
% of students who say they verify before sharing on social media (5.2)	11,391	67.6%	71.1%	3.5

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