

Strömbäckaskolan

Piteå, Sweden



Workshop about internet influence



In 2018/19 the organization RISE Interactive, (Research Institutes of Sweden) started a project about internet influence among young people.

The goal was to investigate how to teach students about information influence and deceptive/malicious internet phenomena.



Workshop about internet influence

”The workshop is based on the challenge that it is difficult to be resistant to malicious internet phenomena in their everyday internet use. That is why we focus on the individual media use and the young people themselves.

The workshop allows the students to work based on their own identity and vulnerabilities and in group learn about influencing strategies they can encounter on the internet. The workshop is a good complement to work with source criticism.”

Workshop about internet influence

The workshop takes between 2 to 4 hours to do.
Groups of 4-6 students go through three activities:

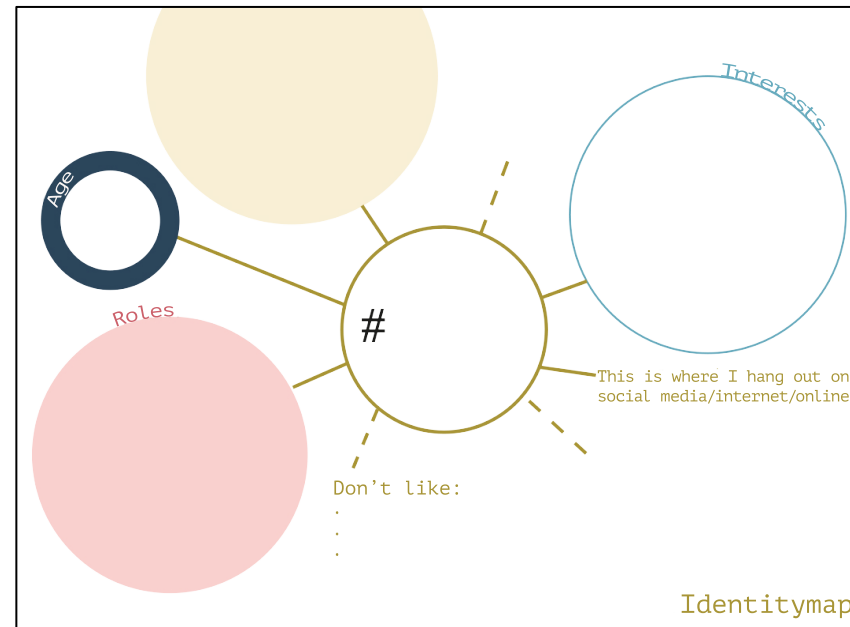
- **Identity map**
 - each person makes an identity map which is to be "swapped" with another person in the group
- **Group activity about influence phenomena**
 - the group solves a challenge with a card game about malicious impact phenomena
- **Impact campaign**
 - each person makes a malicious impact campaign aimed at a friend in the group and with support of their identity map

1. Identity map (individually)

The students create an overview of their interests, group affiliation and their internet usage. The identity map will be the starting point in understanding how we can become targets for malicious influence campaigns. A person's feeling is what is most often used in influence campaigns.

1a. How to fill in the map:

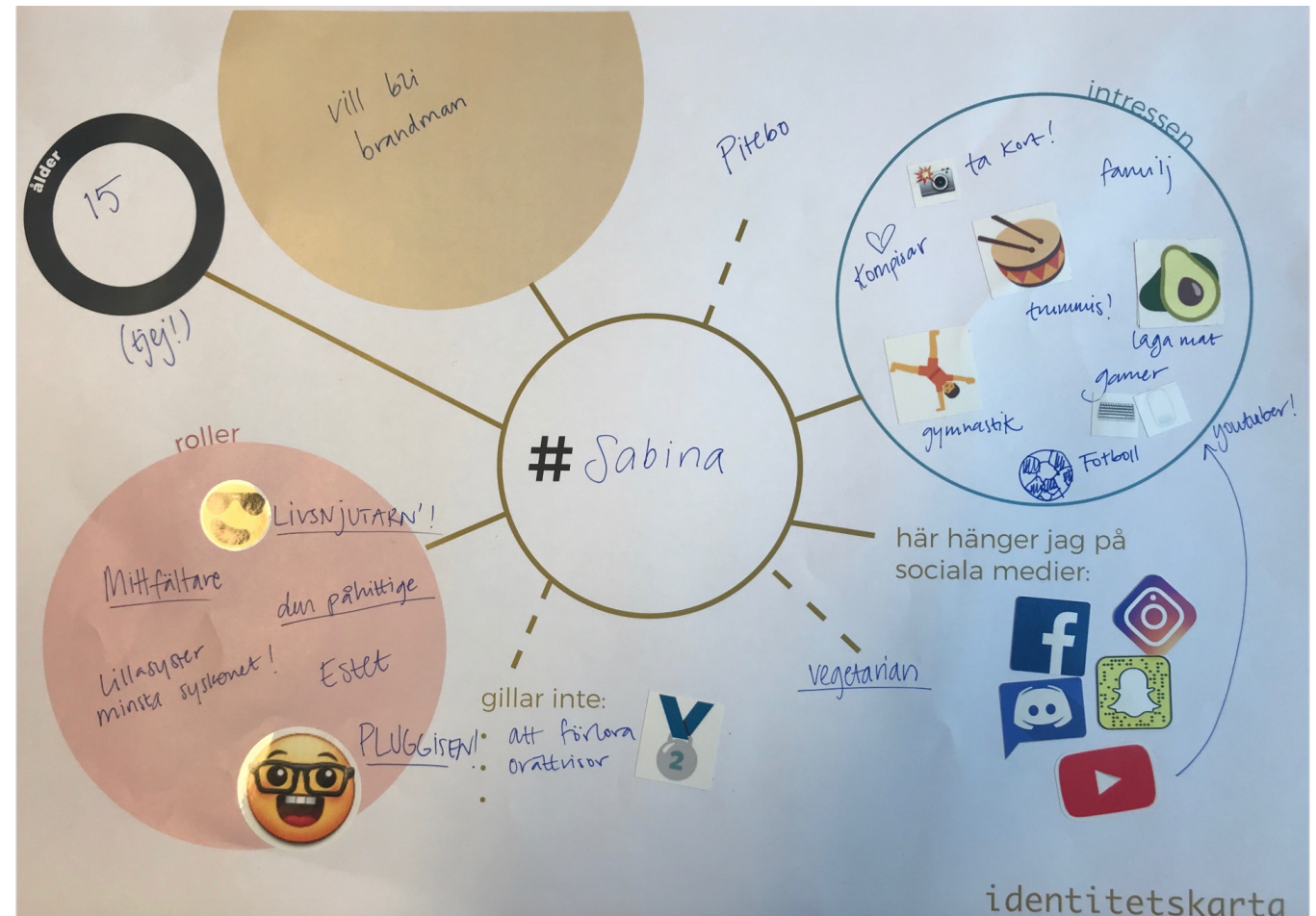
The student makes the map individually but can still sit in a group to be able to talk about their choices. They can both write and draw and use emoji stickers in the map. It will give inspiration and stimulates creativity in the exercise.



In the middle of the map the student writes his or her name or a nickname representing the person's identity.

Questions to getting the exercise going:

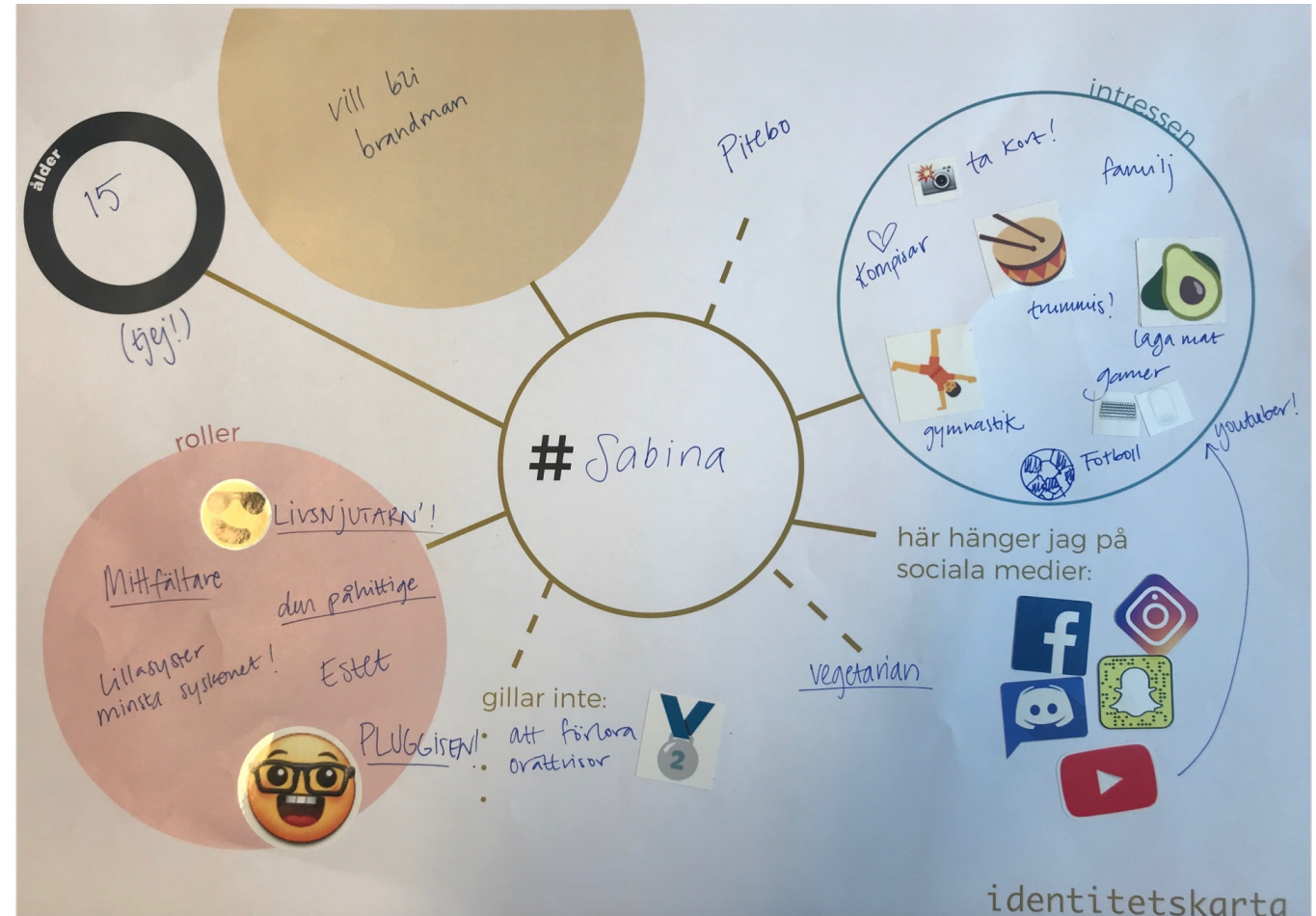
- Where do you come from?
- Family/relatives, ethnicity?
- Gender
- Who you are in the class? (the happy one, the studious one, the clown...)
- Outlook on life, religion
- Beliefs, position (vegan, environment, politics...)
- Your interests (horse jumping, gaming, hiking...)
- Context (little sister, adopted, musician, football player, boyfriend...)
- Characteristics that identify you (talkative, thoughtful, curious...)
- Ask a friend for anything to add



1b. Vulnerable points

To connect the map to the subject information influence, in the next step the students reflect over their "vulnerable points".

When the identity map is filled in, with a red marker the student picks 2-4 things on the map that creates a lot of feelings and are important to them. These points will be discussed later in the exercise, how they can be used as a target in order to influence.



2. The Card game about information influence

The stack of cards consists of 15 strategies connected to information influence on the internet. Each strategy is paired up with an example.

The goal is to create an understanding for some of the strategies, and get a insight into the fact that these forms of information influence is strategic and consciously designed at a higher level.

How to use the card game

The students are divided in groups of 4-5 people, and are encouraged to collaborate to pair up the cards. On the back of the cards there is a key in the form of a pattern.

"Jump on the bandwagon" is an American expression to give their support to someone who seems to be heading for victory.

bandwagon effect

People who feel they have the same opinion as the majority are more likely to share their opinion; bots and trolls can be used to give more likes, comments or shares on social media to give the impression that certain opinions are more popular than they are.

ex.

A bot is used to give a post more likes and shares to appear to be widely distributed. More people share the post when it already appears to be popular.

Kajsa Andersson, Peter Larsson och 1345 andra 1145 kommentarer

The word "straw man" comes from imaginatively building a "simple doll" that may symbolize the opponent's opinions.

straw man

to deliberately distort their opponent's arguments and positions and then argue against them instead of the opponent's actual opinions. The opponent is forced to put his/her energy into explaining what is meant while shifting focus from the issue



ex.

I don't celebrate Christmas, and I think it should be okay not to.

– So, you think Christmas should be abolished?!



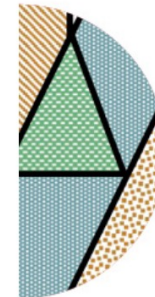
dark ads

Ads that are tailored and visible to a narrow audience but invisible to others e.g. researchers or journalists. Suitable recipients are identified through data from, among other things, social media and used to disseminate angled information. To those who are reached by the message, it appears that the information is visible to everyone.



ex.

Before the election, everyone registered as unemployed in the past year receives a message on social media that immigrants take all jobs from Swedish young people.



3. Influence campaign

This exercise ties together the previous exercises by using a strategy from the card game to construct a influence campaign using a classmate's identity map.

The students will create a message, either by themselves or with the teacher where they use the vulnerable red marked points from the classmate's identity map. They are encouraged to exaggerate, distort or use ugly tricks to enhance the message.

A good start is to let the student think about the reaction the campaign will create. In that way it will be easier to determine what can create strong emotions and which channels to use to get the message out.

The students will then present their campaign and the thought behind it and the group can discuss and reflect about information influence.

Budskap:
Skaffa överfallslarm

Välj något från din kompis identitetskarta, som du utnyttjar för att skapa känslor i din kampanj:
Terränglöpning
Shopping

Påverkansstrategi:
Dark Ads

Beskriv hur du använder påverkansstrategin och hur du går tillväga för att nå fram med ditt budskap:

Jag sprider riktade inlägg som påstår att risken är stor att råka ut för rån och överfall om man springer ensam i skogen. Inläggen visar bland annat statistik där det ser ut som att risken för överfall är hög och att ett larm gör dig trygg.

Känslor som du spelar med
Osäkerhet
Rädsla
Ilska

Facebook
Twitter
Kanaler

Påverkanskampanj



Bland botar och troll

Hur mycket kan du om informationspåverkan på nätet?
Testa dina kunskaper här.

Träna på begrepp

Starta quiz

Om

The card game is also available online (in Swedish though), as practice and a quiz

<https://botaroch troll.ri.se/>