



EXPLORING HIGH MEDIA LITERACY
AMONG CHILDREN AND ADULTS
METHODOLOGY

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METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

OVERVIEW

Magenta undertook an iterative, multi-staged approach to the research. It comprised of a literature review, a digital pre-task and an in-depth interview with 40 participants identified as being highly media literate. Participants were given the option to feedback via a post-interview diary for up to one week after the interview.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To ensure Magenta had a comprehensive understanding of the online media literacy landscape, we began by undertaking a literature review. This involved critically evaluating the evidence upon which Ofcom's internal data mapping exercise was developed and building on this knowledge through wider evidence. This stage of the research allowed us to identify and define what high media literacy might look like across gaming, social media and search and understand the nuances within each of these areas of focus. It informed the research design and enabled us to create a screener which accurately defined participants with high media literacy (see 'screening participants' below).

More specifically, the literature review built upon our knowledge and understanding of:

- Highly media literate behaviours and less media literate behaviours
- How media literacy is exemplified across each of the focus areas;
- What media literacy looks like at different points in the user journey; and
- The ways in which platforms can enhance/are enhancing media literacy.

DIGITAL PRE-TASK

Participants were asked to complete a range of tasks linked to internet searching, use of social media or online gaming over the course of a week. Individual participants were assigned tasks in a primary area (search, social media or gaming) in which they recorded a high media literacy level, and a secondary area in which they had any level of media literacy. The tasks were tailored according to the focus area and participants engaged for a minimum of 2 hours over the course of the week via selfie videos, audio clips, screen sharing and texts.

Two separate task guides were developed for those aged 13 to 17 years and those aged 18 years and above, tailoring the tasks and wording accordingly. Tasks were based upon a range of topics, informed by the literature review. Example topics included online identity, staying safe, using platforms in a secure way, interacting with others and creating and sharing content (the latter specific to social media).

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Individual online interviews, lasting one hour were conducted with each participant after the pre-task. Approximately 45 minutes was spent exploring participants' primary area of focus and 15 minutes exploring their secondary area of focus, although this varied across interview. The discussion flow was modified for each individual after carefully reviewing their pre-task entries and was adapted to the area of focus and age of participant. Topics included:

- Reflections of the pre-task and past week.
- Assessing pre-task responses (why and how they did what they did, where they acquired the skills/knowledge/awareness, how they make sure their online experience is positive).

- Exploring the transfer of high media literacy skills between gaming, social media and searching.

Before Magenta conducted the bulk of fieldwork, we undertook six pilot interviews across each of the focus areas: three with adults across each area and three with those under 18 years across each area. These were used to test the format, flow, content and techniques used.

DIARY FOLLOW UPS

Magenta recognised that taking part in the interviews could lead to a heightened awareness of online behaviour and usage. Participants were invited to complete a post-interview diary for up to one week, allowing us to capture observations around online behaviour and engagement and its impact not previously mentioned.

SAMPLE

SCREENING PARTICIPANTS

To identify highly media literate participants, we undertook a two-staged approach. Potential participants were first asked a series of attitudinal and behavioural questions, including their interpretation of social media posts, search engine results and scenarios in online gaming, depending on the area being recruited for. The second stage involved asking potential participants to submit a short video response during screening. For the purposes of this research, a highly media literate individual was defined as having the skills, knowledge and understanding to be safe and savvy, as well as the confidence to flourish, online. Conversely, 'less media literate behaviour' online was identified as behaviour which was not appropriate for the circumstances, which was at odds with the participant's own goals, or which introduced risk.

Participants were recruited based on demonstrating high media literacy in one of three areas of focus (search, social media or gaming). Participants could have any type of media literacy in the areas they were not recruited for.

SAMPLE BREAKDOWN

The 40 participant sample included:

- Those aged 13-70 years, evenly split between those under 18 years of age and those over aged 18 years of age.
- A spread of participant across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- A mix of urban and rural areas.
- A mix of employment status and household income.

DETAILED BREAKDOWN

Table 1: Detailed sample breakdown

	Recruited
Gender	
Female	21
Male	19
Segments	
13-15yo Social Media	4
13-15yo Online Gaming	3
13-15yo Search	3
16-17yo Social Media	3
16-17yo Online Gaming	3
16-17yo Search	4
18-25yo Social Media	2
18-25yo Online Gaming	2
18-25yo Search	1
26-44yo Social Media	2
26-44yo Online Gaming	2
26-44yo Search	2
45-59yo Social Media	2
45-59yo Online Gaming	1
45-59yo Search	3
60yo+ Social Media	2
60yo+ Online Gaming	1
60yo+ Search	0
Locations	
Wales - under 18s	3
Wales - over 18s	3
Speak Welsh	1
Northern Ireland - under 18s	1
Northern Ireland - over 18s	4
Scotland - under 18s	3
Scotland - over 18s	4
Income	
0-£10,999	1
£20,000- £20,999	10
£30,000- £49,999	15
£50,000- £79,999	9
£80,000- £99,999	3
£100,000 or more	2

Employment	
Working - Full-time	25
Working - Part-time	7
Unemployed	2
Retired	2
Homemaker	1
Student	3
I have other source of income	0
Location	
Large city	16
Smaller city or large town	5
Medium town	10
Small town	4
Rural or isolated area	5

