DW Akademie

MIL Heroes and Villains guidebook

Enhance your MIL workshops and trainings with a flexible storytelling approach

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

DW Akademie

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1. INTRODUCTION TO MIL HEROES AND VILLAINS

In this guidebook, we explore the adventures of five Heroes as they tackle common challenges young people face in both social media and the wider media landscape. These challenges include: cyberbullying, fake news, hate speech, propaganda, misinformation and disinformation.

This "How-To" guide provides MIL (Media and Information Literacy) educators with effective strategies to incorporate the MIL Heroes and Villains concept into their training curricula, using the power of storytelling to make the concepts memorable and relevant.

Storytelling power
Storytelling creates an empathetic bond, engaging learners both intellectually and emotionally.

Packaging abstract MIL concepts into characters and stories means they are more accessible.

It also makes it easier for the participants to remember to apply the techniques in real life.

Relevance
The characters are not just brave but also relatable and lovable. They navigate situations that mirror the learner's experiences and context.

Observing how these characters make choices, and face outcomes allows participants to immerse themselves in diverse roles and situations. This fosters not only MIL knowledge and skills but enduring empathy. In our experience, connecting MIL to a youth audience requires finding inspirational guides, and the MIL Heroes and Villains provide a strong foundation for this connection.

1.1 WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE, AND WHY?

This guidebook is a super adaptable toolkit for various teaching situations. It's not a strict rulebook.

The lessons serve as templates that you can change to fit your teaching style and your students' needs. Think of them like recipes that you can tweak and make your own.

This guidebook encourages your creativity. It supports you to use your ideas and experiences to make learning enjoyable and relevant for your students.

Let's see how this guide can assist you on your teaching journey!

Who is this guidebook for?

This guide is aimed at MIL curriculum developers, educators and trainers. It's crucial to have a basic understanding of communication processes, media, and information to effectively use this guide. You also need to have the power and/or authority to adapt the curriculum you use. If you already have a strict MIL playbook to follow, this guide may not be right for you.

We recommend checking with the MIL training material provider you work with before you start.

As a MIL curriculum developer and trainer, you'll find this guide flexible for various educational settings, formal and informal, like schools, universities, and community centers.

The MIL Heroes and Villains guide

– Specifically created to help educators teach MIL to young people.

– Simplifies complex MIL concepts, explaining them to young people in an engaging manner.

– Provides ideas on using storytelling for indepth discussions about their (social) media environment.

– Primarily for young people aged 14 to 25, but adaptable for different age groups based on context and media literacy knowledge levels.

Our aim is to provide you with a practical strategy

– To seamlessly integrate MIL Heroes and Villians into your MIL classes/workshops.

– To make lessons/sessions more engaging and provide a framework to promote critical thinking about media.

Why use stories, characters, and imagination?

– They foster increased engagement, encourage the sharing of experiences, promote constructive discussions, and prompt reflective thinking.

– They help to create relatable narratives, cases, and scenarios related to MIL topics.

– They are interactive and fun. Participants draw from their experiences to shape characters for role-play sessions and games.

Educators are supported in transforming complex media literacy concepts into lively discussions for young audiences using the MIL Heroes and Villains approach.

This method aims to engage students effectively by breaking down intricate ideas, fostering dynamic conversations, and promoting critical thinking.

1.2 WHAT IS THE CONCEPT BEHIND MIL HEROES AND VILLAINS?

The Heroes concept is a personification of the five MIL competencies (AACRA: Access, Analyze, Create, Reflect, Act). These are the skills needed to become MIL competent.

The Heroes illustrations capture these core skills in a dynamic style that reflects both the diversity of DW Akademie MIL support and engagement around the world, and youth culture.

Media literacy educators emphasize the importance of teaching individuals how to:

1. **Access** information from diverse sources and platforms.
2. **Analyze** information critically, evaluating credibility, bias, and impact.
3. **Create** media content, such as videos or articles.
4. **Reflect** on media consumption, production, and broader implications.
5. **Act** responsibly based on media literacy, advocating, discussing, or engaging in activism.

These principles empower individuals to become more critical and thoughtful consumers and creators of content in today's media-saturated environment.

It is recognized that utilizing and mastering AACRA's competencies makes a person critical, resilient, and equipped. This empowers them to apply basic tools and measures in their life to make the best of (social) media. So, when we teach MIL, we always aim to focus on those essential MIL skills.

By packaging those abstract MIL concepts into characters and stories, we can really connect with people on an emotional level.

Rather than saying: "Be analytical, reflective and in control of access to media to fight disinformation" we say: "Let your MIL Heroes meet the Villains and share that story!"

Or: "Let the five AACRA Heroes challenge the threats and pitfalls you face in your (social) media environment."

The theory of MIL and youth engagement

Youth Engagement

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) provides a framework for developing skills that enable youth to critically access, evaluate, and create media content.

However, to make MIL more engaging and relevant for them, we can integrate the MIL concepts into Heroes who are role models, and inspirational characters.

This approach engages and motivates young people as it captures their imagination. The Heroes embody qualities and values that society respects, such as courage, integrity, empathy, and resilience.

By weaving these figures into MIL education, we create relatable examples for youth to follow. We also provide concrete examples of how these traits can be applied in the digital world.

Tip! *It really helps to name the heroes in order to make the connection stronger.*

Who are the characters?

Access

Analyze

Reflect

Create

Act
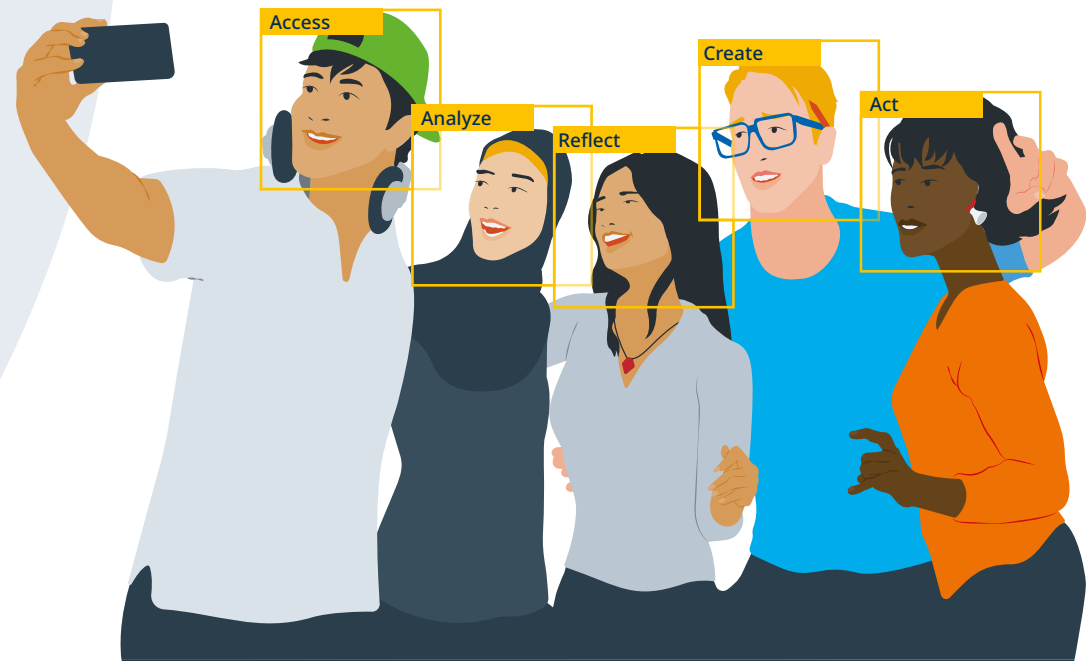
The Heroes

The MIL Heroes represent positive role models who embody responsible media use, critical thinking, and information evaluation skills. Our chosen illustrations (included here) also reflect global inclusion and diversity. They include a balanced representation of gender, ethnicity and ability (disability).

Tip! *As mentioned earlier, you can rename your heroes to local names that connect to your target group!*
Tip! *You can visualize your own heroes and villains and don't have to use our illustrations.*

The MIL Heroes form a team. They are a group of friends, each with their specific (MIL related) skill and competency: Access, Analyse, Create, Reflect, Act. The MIL competencies are interwoven into their characters, and they are at their most effective when they work together. In the interactive training sessions, your young people will see how the Heroes form a powerful, multiskilled team to tackle media issues.
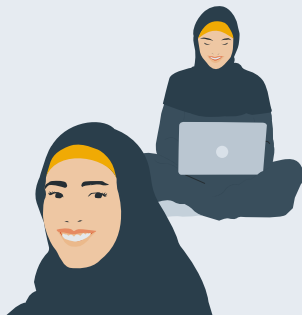
ACCESS

Andre is our *Access* Hero. He is great at accessing diverse and credible sources of information. He never relies on a single source. This means he avoids becoming trapped in echo chambers.

ANALYZE

Our *Analyze* Hero is **Amina**. She excels at identifying bias, misinformation and manipulation. She has a great toolkit of skills for analyzing all types of media.

CREATE

Caslav is our *Create* Hero. He channels his creativity into meaningful content and thrives on constructive media interactions.

REFLECT

Reaksmey is our *Reflect* Hero because she understands how addictive media can be but she also knows how to pause and consider her media consumption. She can identify patterns and highlight how media impacts convictions and attitudes.

ACT

Akosua wants to protect people from cancel culture and online mobs. That's why she's our *Act* Hero. She uses her media literacy skills to take thoughtful and responsible action.

The Villains

The Villains represent the full variety of evil and bad actors in our media environment: misleading information, bias, mis- and disinformation, unethical media practice, propaganda, cyberbullying, unsafe online practice, etc.

All those damaging and malicious issues are clustered in four different Villains:

THE MANIPULATOR

The *Manipulator* wants power and makes sure to get it by infiltrating our thoughts with censored, polarizing and targeted content.

THE AGITATOR

The *Agitator* loves to cause confusion and chaos. Its weapon? Spreading mis- and disinformation.
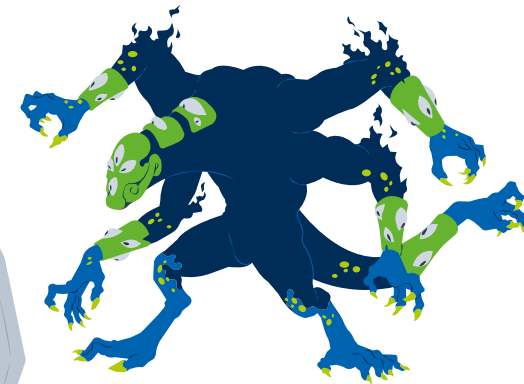
THE BULLY

The *Bully* loves to see people suffer, so it engages in cyberbullying, inflates hate speech with bots and trolls, and defames and lies about other people.
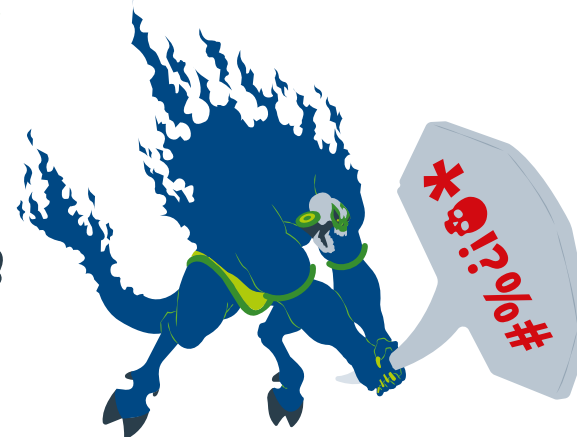
THE THIEF

The *Thief* is a passionate collector of our data and information. It uses tools and intelligent software to get hold of our private information and spy on our lives.

The Villains

Villains are not set in stone. They can change with new developments in the media landscape, and the dynamic nature of media consumption patterns.

– Answers and competencies to challenges will evolve accordingly: MIL Heroes need to acquire new awareness and skills for navigating the shifting media environment.

– The characters are adaptable. The Villains can incorporate emerging threats whilst the Heroes can include new skills. The Heroes and Villains characters serve as dynamic templates for curriculum developers and MIL educators.

– These templates can also be adjusted to meet the specific needs and context of the target group. They can be tailored to become age-appropriate and country specific.

– Once you have read through the Guidebook and appendices, if you want you can make your own versions of the MIL Heroes and Villains that better represent your context.

What does template, tailoring and contextualizing mean?

Template
The training session is initially provided as a template. It offers a basic structure and key content areas that the trainer can use as a starting point.

The trainer has the flexibility to adapt and customize the template to meet the needs and preferences of their audience. This might involve adding, removing, or rearranging content, as well as incorporating examples, real stories, or activities that resonate with the participants.

Tailor
Tailoring involves making adjustments and modifications to the training session template to ensure that it aligns with the unique characteristics and requirements of the target audience. This might include considering their age, educational background, cultural factors, and prior knowledge of MIL concepts.

Contextualize
Contextualizing means embedding the training content within the specific context in which it will be delivered. This includes taking into account the local, cultural or organizational environment, relevant issues, and any specific challenges or opportunities that exist. It also involves making the content relatable and applicable to the real-world circumstances of the participants. This may sound daunting but context can be provided in lots of different ways from an introduction to changing media names.

1.3 HOW AND WHEN COULD THE GUIDE BE USED?

Now you have met the Heroes and Villains and their corresponding concepts. You've started to think about how to tailor them for your audience, and you've probably already considered how and when you would use them. To help you get started, we've created engaging, interactive fun sessions based on Heroes and Villains. They can be adapted to carry any MIL topic and, similar to the characters, these sessions can be tailored towards your needs. The sessions can be used as standalone modules, or they can be incorporated seamlessly into existing media literacy curricula.

They are designed to work in classrooms, workshops, seminars, and training sessions. They aim to enhance learners' comprehension of media content, its multifaceted effects, and to promote responsible media practices.

We have identified three ways to integrate the MIL Heroes and Villains approach into curricula:
a. As one element within an existing MIL Curriculum (called a Short Journey)
b. As an introductory and wrap-up framework for a MIL session (called a Medium Journey)
c. As a standalone MIL session (called a Long Journey)

To make this guide easier to use, we've created three fictional educators: Elena, Youssef and Jia. They illustrate how educators and trainers with different goals and approaches can use and adapt the MIL Heroes and Villains concept to meet their specific needs in achieving MIL learning outcomes.

It means whether you are looking for a Short, Medium or Long Journey, whether you are searching for standalone lesson plans or incorporating a Heroes and Villains session into a broader curriculum, you can see how the sessions can be utilized.

The educators and their journeys

SHORT JOURNEY →

Meet Elena, Youssef, and Jia, three educators with diverse needs.

Explore their journeys in the MIL Heroes and Villains framework to enhance or create Media and Information Literacy curricula.

Navigate the Guidebook to resonate with educators at various stages, highlighting the framework's adaptability.

Tailor your MIL journey by picking and choosing from their experiences.

Do you want to enhance your existing MIL curriculum with a short session?

Then you are similar to:
Elena, a dedicated high school teacher
– Represents educators seeking to spice up their existing MIL curriculum with engaging Heroes and Villains sessions
– Aims to enhance her students' ability to discern credible information from sensationalized content.

Elena will follow a short journey, integrating some Heroes and Villain elements into her curriculum.

Short Journey (30 – 45 min.)
– Engage participants in short reflective MIL story sessions
– Adapt Heroes and Villains to prompt concise yet impactful discussions
– Explore how the Heroes' attributes can counteract media challenges in a compact timeframe

MEDIUM JOURNEY →

Do you want to create an immersive session that opens and closes with Heroes and Villains?

Then you are similar to:
Youssef, a passionate community organizer
– Recognizes the impact of a strong introduction and conclusion in a MIL session and seeks to incorporate exciting Heroes and Villains sessions at the beginning and end
– Aims to empower marginalized youth with media literacy skills

Youssef opts for the Medium Journey, using a Heroes and a Villain session for introductions and wrap-ups.

Medium Journey (90 min.)
– Involves constructive debates, with an opening session around a specific Villain to introduce the topic
– Includes a closing session with the Heroes to conclude and reinforce learning and skills acquired
– Deepens participants' media literacy insight through immersive activities like a card game
– Enriches media comprehension by encouraging learners to analyze scenarios and apply Heroes' attributes

LONG JOURNEY →

Do you want to build a new MIL session and curriculum, making use of Heroes and Villains?

Then you are similar to:
Jia, a committed MIL educator

– She represents educators who want to build an entirely new MIL curriculum from scratch, anchored in the Heroes and Villains framework

– Envisions crafting a comprehensive MIL course for her first-year students

She will embark on a Long Journey, using stand-alone MIL sessions to immerse learners in dynamic scenarios, interactive activities, and thoughtful discussions.

Long Journey (120 min.+)

– Embarks on a comprehensive exploration of Heroes and Villains dynamics

– Enables immersive role-play, discussions, and pragmatic applications

– Devotes time to in-depth analysis of media content, hands-on activities, and collaborative problem-solving

How to use Guiding Questions
In the following Journey templates we suggest guiding questions that you can use as necessary. They are here to give you a kick start for the discussion / reflection but they are only suggestions and you should use them as you see fit. You do not need to use all of them. Use your judgment in the moment. They can help move a session along if it stalls.

ELENA'S
SHORT JOURNEY

Introduction and team formation

MIL Hero showcase

Villain showcase

Interactive competition: Hero or Villain?

Group discussion

Learning Outcome: Participants are able to differentiate between trustworthy and sensationalized information, thus discovering mechanisms how media functions in either good or bad ways.

TIME	METHOD	GUIDING QUESTIONS
5 min.	Welcome students, introduce MIL Heroes and Villains concept, divide into teams with creative names related to MIL.	What are MIL Heroes and Villains?
5 min.	Display visuals of MIL Heroes, have teams choose a hero mascot.	What admirable qualities do MIL Heroes possess? Which Hero resonates with your team, and why?
5 min.	Present visuals of Villains, have teams choose a Villain arch-enemy.	How have Villains negatively affected media and information? Why did your team choose a particular Villain as your arch-enemy?
10 min.	– Show news headlines/social media posts, – Teams must label them as "Hero" or "Villain," – Assign points to the teams.	What criteria do you use to determine trustworthy or sensationalized information? How can you defend your choice of labeling an example as a Hero or Villain?
5 min.	Facilitate discussion on labeled examples, encourage debate and reasoning.	What factors influenced your team's decision regarding each example? How did your team engage in debates, and what were the key points of contention?

Reflection and strategy planning

| 3 min. | Teams reflect on distinguishing trustworthy information, devise a strategy. | What insights have you gained about distinguishing trustworthy information? What strategies can your team use to identify trustworthy information in the future? |

Competition conclusion

| 2 min. | Announce the winning team, celebrate MIL expertise, possibly award a prize. | How does winning this competition make your team feel about its MIL knowledge and skills? What lessons have you learned from participating? |

Conclusion and pledge

| 2 min. | Summarize importance of evaluating information sources, have students pledge to be MIL Heroes. | Why is it essential to critically evaluate information sources? How can you actively contribute to media literacy and responsible information sharing as an MIL Hero? |

Feedback

| 3 min. | Invite students to provide feedback, discuss insights and questions. | What are your key takeaways from today's session? Do you have any questions or suggestions for improving future sessions? |

YOUSSEF'S MEDIUM JOURNEY

Introduction

Villain gallery

Group discussion

Unmasking the Villains

Opening session

Participants are able to recognize the diverse strategies used to disseminate mis- and disinformation and manipulate media, understanding their personal consequences and thereby appreciating the importance of critical thinking and the use of fact-checking methods.

TIME	METHOD	GUIDING QUESTIONS
10 min.	Welcome participants and briefly explain the purpose of the session. Mention the importance of being media literate and critical consumers of information.	How does media impact our daily lives? Why is media literacy important today? What do you hope to gain from this session on media literacy?
10 min.	Display Villains and assign participants to describe them.	– What are your initial impressions of the Villains? – How might they influence public opinion or spread misinformation? – What stereotypes are associated with them?
10 min.	Participants share knowledge about assigned Villains and discuss their tactics and impact.	– Share what you know about your assigned Villain. – How do they manipulate media and spread misinformation? – How does this affect society?
10 min.	Reveal the true nature of each Villain. Discuss critical thinking and fact-checking importance. Reflect and connect (5 min.): – Reflect on learning. – Encourage countering misinformation.	– Were any misconceptions about Villains dispelled? – How can critical thinking uncover misinformation? – What steps can we take to verify information?

Reflect and connect

5 min. Participants will reflect on session learnings and consider how to counter misinformation and promote media literacy in their lives.

– How has your understanding of media manipulation evolved?

– Your role in countering misinformation and promoting media literacy?

– Specificactions or strategies for critical information consumption?

YOUSSEF'S MEDIUM JOURNEY

Introduction

AACRA Heroes

Personal connection

Group discussion

Closing session

Participants will be able to use the abilities which are associated with the AACRA Heroes to critically speak about and use media, thus becoming advocates for Media and Information Literacy.

TIME	METHOD	GUIDING QUESTIONS
10 min.	– Transition from Villains to MIL Heroes in media literacy. – Emphasize the importance of AACRA skills today.	– Why shift focus to discussing MIL Heroes? – Why are AACRA skills relevant today?
10 min.	– Display AACRA Heroes and their skills. – Share their stories of promoting media literacy and critical thinking.	– What are your impressions of the displayed AACRA Heroes and their skills? – How have these Heroes applied AACRA skills to promote media literacy and critical thinking?
10 min.	– Encourage participants to connect AACRA skills to their daily life, community, and society as a whole.	– How can you apply AACRA skills in your daily life to become a more critical consumer of information? – In what ways can you use AACRA skills to benefit your community and society?
10 min.	– Facilitate a discussion on participants' connections and ideas. – Encourage sharing of practical applications of AACRA skills.	– Can you share specific examples of how you plan to use AACRA skills in your daily life? – How do you envision AACRA skills making a positive impact in your community and society?

Empower advocacy

Closing remarks

5 min.	– Empower participants to advocate for AACRA skills. – Share resources for promoting media literacy.	– How can you advocate for the importance of AACRA skills in your personal and professional circles? – Are there specific resources you'd like to explore for media literacy advocacy?
5 min.	– Summarize the importance of AACRA skills. – Encourage participants to promote AACRA skills in their communities.	– What key takeaways regarding the significance of AACRA skills do you have? – How do you plan to promote AACRA skills in your community and society?

JIA'S
LONG JOURNEY

Introduction

**Understanding
Heroes and Villains**

**Brainstorming
countering measures**

Group presentations

Participants are able to identify personal strategies for countering negative media influences.

TIME	METHOD	GUIDING QUESTIONS
10 min.	Welcome, explain objectives, introduce MIL Heroes and Villains concept.	– What is the main purpose of this session? – How can we define the concept of MIL Heroes and Villains? – What do you hope to learn about MIL Heroes and Villains today?
15 min.	Present cards, facilitate group discussion on media influence.	– What are some examples of MIL Heroes and Villains? – How has media influenced society positively and negatively? – What is the role of media in shaping our perceptions and attitudes?
25 min.	Divide into groups, assign cards, brainstorm strategies.	– How can we counter the negative influence of media Villains? – What strategies can we brainstorm to mitigate the impact of media Villains? – How can critical thinking help us address media-related challenges?
20 min.	Groups present assigned topics, encourage creativity.	– How can your group creatively present the solutions you've come up with? – What insights have your group gained while working on this topic? – How can you effectively communicate your ideas to others?

Interactive discussion

| 15 min. | Facilitate discussion on MIL Heroes' role, encourage participation. | – What role do MIL Heroes play in our society?
– How can we actively engage in discussions about MIL Heroes and Villains?
– What ideas or opinions do you have regarding the influence of MIL Heroes? |

Prioritizing action

| 10 min. | Participants write actionable steps, share and discuss. | – What actionable steps can individuals take to address media-related challenges?
– How can we prioritize and implement the strategies discussed?
– How do personal strategies contribute to the collective effort? |

Creating a strategy

| 10 min. | Summarize countermeasures, guide strategy creation. | – How can we synthesize the countermeasures and strategies discussed into a collective plan?
– What are the key components of an effective strategy against media Villains?
– How can we ensure that our strategy is comprehensive and actionable? |

Conclusion

| 5 min. | Recap takeaways, empower participants, thank and close. | – What are the key takeaways from today's session?
– How do you feel about the concept of MIL Heroes after this discussion?
– Do you have any suggestions for improving future sessions on this topic? |

JIA'S
LONG JOURNEY

**Introduction to
the MIL topic**

**Understand the
topic's impact**

**Relate the topic to
personal experiences**

**Analyze the mechanisms
behind the topic**

**Develop countermeasures
and tools**

**Create a resilient
MIL persona**

**Understand competencies for
avoiding victimization**

Session 2
Learning Outcome: Participants are able to use the most effective measures thus becoming more resilient against challenges imposed by misinformation and media manipulation.

TIME	METHOD	GUIDING QUESTIONS
15 min.	Present the topic.	What interests you about this topic?
15 min.	Share a story illustrating the problem and impact.	How does this topic affect individuals and society?
20 min.	Share your views and experiences on the topic.	Can you share a personal experience related to this topic?
30 min.	Identify the Villain and discuss their agenda.	What negative aspects or agendas are associated with this topic?
45 min.	Brainstorm active measures.	How can we combat the negatives of this topic?
45 min.	Translate measures into traits for a Hero.	How can you apply these measures in real life?
30 min.	Explore AACRA Heroes and competencies.	What skills are essential for Media and Information Literacy?

Materials

Once you have decided on a journey for your MIL lessons/ workshops, this guide provides you with materials for using the MIL Heroes and Villains concept from cards and posters up to sample sessions for you to work with or adapt.

See some examples of provided materials and how they can be used:

Using cards
Make interactive cards from the provided material (appendices) with each card featuring topic descriptions, characters, and scenarios. They:
– Serve as powerful conversation starters on various topics

– Trigger reflections on media-related scenarios

– Prompt learners to discuss and debate scenarios

– Enable informed decision-making through a fun process

Utilizing posters
… as visual aids for instant reference:
– Display these posters in the learning environment for easy access

– Designed for quick reference to the Heroes and Villains framework

– Visual reminders of characters and concepts

… for post-workshop meta reflection:
– After a MIL workshop session, use the posters for meta-reflection

– Discuss core MIL competencies using the posters on the wall

Engaging scenario sessions
In the appendices, there are sample stories, intro-scenarios and sessions. They are all crafted to stimulate discussions and activities.
These sessions create a platform for learners to collaboratively analyze media content, identify Villains' tactics, and strategize how Heroes can counteract their influence.

It's all about adapting to your context

... selecting your approach:

Decide how you want to use Heroes and Villains in your teaching.

a. Integrate a few Heroes and Villains elements into your lessons

b. Use them at the start and end of your MIL lesson

c. Make a whole lesson just about Heroes and Villains

... tailoring the guide

– Think about where your students come from and what they like.

– Use examples and topics they know about in your lessons. Give the Heroes local names, give them local attributes. You can make this part of the learning journey: let your participants flesh out their local Hero, make them theirs.

Of course, once you are familiar with the way this Guidebook is built, you can mix the different tracks, personae and Journeys and tailor them to your needs.

Now that you know about the potential of using Heroes and Villains, and are considering using them for your MIL curriculum, you can have a look at the sample sessions in Part 2 and use or rework them according to your needs and context.

Tips and tricks

This Guidebook is all about adaptation, to make your MIL workshop more local and meaningful. It involves tailoring the content to the specific context, culture, and challenges relevant to your participants.

Here are some tips and hints for facilitators using the Heroes and Villains template sessions to make the workshop more locally relevant:

Know local problems
Before the workshop, collect examples of information and media problems specific to the area. This could be false news or issues related to how people communicate online.

Customize villains
When talking about online problems like fake news or online bullying, craft the Villain in the stories to match with what's happening locally.

Use local examples
Include stories or examples that are from the local area to show how the workshop topics are relevant to people's everyday experiences.

Talk about local heroes
Share stories about people or groups in the community who are working to solve information problems, emphasizing how their actions align with the AACRA MIL competencies They can be the real-life heroes in the workshop.

Discuss local issues in groups
When talking in groups, spend time talking about how to solve local problems. People can share ideas and talk about what works in their community.

Share personal stories
Encourage participants to share their own experiences or stories related to MIL challenges. This helps everyone understand each other better.

Give local resources
Provide resources and reading materials that are not only globally relevant but also include local references and case studies.

Bring in local experts
If you can, invite local people who know a lot about these topics to talk in the workshop. They can share ideas and answer questions.

Promote local initiatives
Encourage participants to get involved in or support local MIL initiatives. Share information about relevant campaigns, projects, or community efforts that they can join or contribute to.

2. SAMPLE SESSIONS AND MATERIALS

The "How to" section of this guide outlines how Elena, Yousef and Jia can make best use of available materials and session ideas, to integrate MIL Heroes and Villains learning sessions into their curriculum.

For all their Journeys, regardless of the length, the sessions are based on the following core materials:

– The illustrations of the Heroes and Villains

– Introduction of the MIL Heroes: Their back-stories and attributes

– Introduction of the Villains: Their malicious operations

In addition, you will find:
– The Villain's MIL topics. These are the lead-up stories featuring a Villain. These short stories serve as a problem statement around an MIL topic.

Resources (including the links to the actual material): You will find many more resources in the appendices online when you use the QR codes in the tables below.
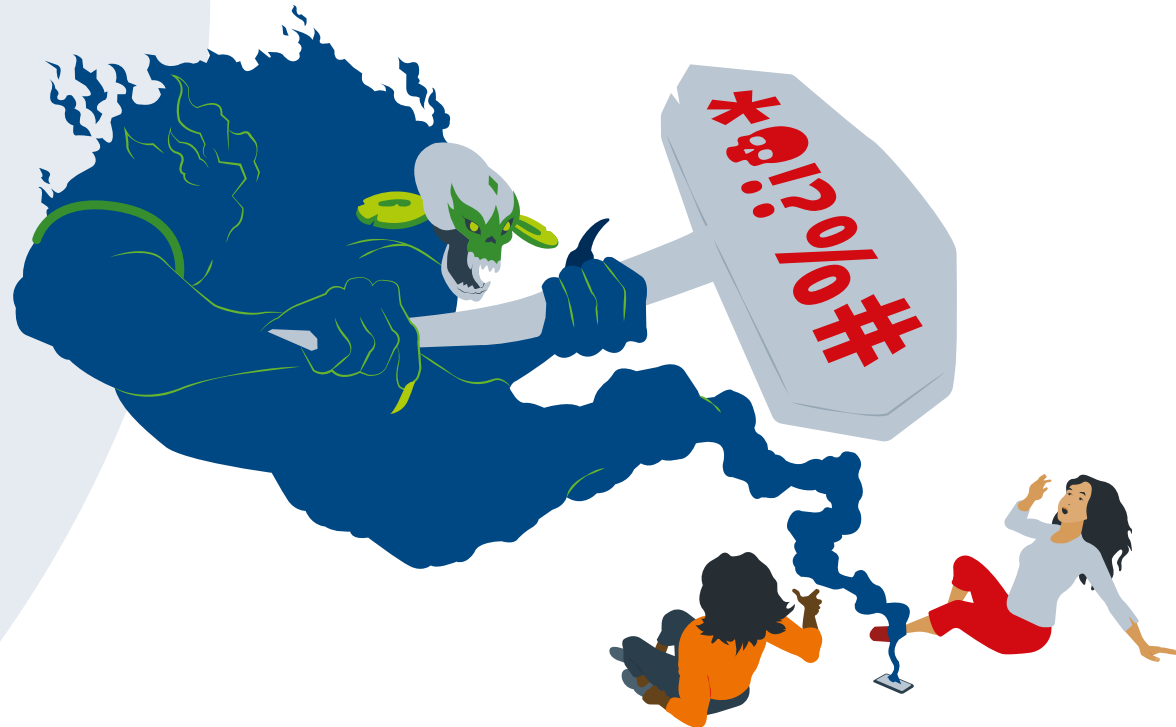
APPENDIX 1
Heroes and Villain illustrations

WHY

These sample illustrations are a global representation of young people that can be used as-is, or they can be completely adapted to cultural and regional context.

They tell the story (without text) of the Heroes on their path to becoming media and information literate, encountering the Villains challenges, and becoming victorious.

They serve to visualize and support storylines and characters.

POSSIBLE USAGE

– Send a selection to participants as a low-key collection to their mobiles
– Posters on the wall of the training venue or classroom, as a constant reference
– Cue cards
– Question cards

Add text to the visuals and use them in presentations.

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The complete set can be found here in lower resolution for online usage, or in higher resolution for print:

https://akademie.dw.com/ en/a-67054909

APPENDIX 2
Heroes' back stories

WHY

Who are this extraordinary group of friends? How did they learn about becoming media and information literate?

The Heroes' back-stories tell the story of each Hero and where their MIL journey started after experiencing media Villains in their personal lives.

POSSIBLE USAGE

Introductory session:

Divide participants into five groups, let each group discuss a Hero, and present them to the others. The five posters will be put up prominently on the wall.

(If there is no time for group work, the five stories can be presented as input/handout).

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The Heroes' back-stories can be found here:

https://akademie.dw.com/ en/a-67054909

APPENDIX 3
Villains' introduction

WHY

Who and what are they? How do they bother us; what topics are clustered under their skin? What is their agenda?

Each Villain gets a brief introduction by listing their areas of malicious involvement, and clustering MIL topics into that area.

POSSIBLE USAGE

Introductory session:

Divide participants into four groups, let each group discuss a Villain, and present them to the others. The four posters will be put prominently on the wall.

(If there is no time for group work, the four introductions can be presented as input / handout).

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The Villains' introduction can be found here:

https://akademie.dw.com/ en/a-67054909

APPENDIX 4
Villains' problem statements

WHY

These problem statements serve as the foundation or starting point for curriculum sessions.

They encourage the sharing of experiences, facilitate reflection and create empathy.

Overall, these problem statements not only set the stage for the curriculum but also make the learning experience more interactive, thought-provoking, and conducive to personal growth and developing emphathy.

POSSIBLE USAGE

This selection of problem statements forms the basis or starting point for curriculum sessions.

They can encourage learners to share their experiences. They can prompt reflection on the individual and societal impact, and discussions on how people become vulnerable to or deter malicious acts.

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The Villains' problem statements can be found here:

https://akademie.dw.com/ en/a-67054909

APPENDIX 5

Complete session templates:
– Short Journey
– Medium Journey
– Long Journey

WHY

They provide you with the structured flow and with ideas to effectively engage your participants on the topic.

Apart from the variety in methodologies you find the following for each element of the session:
– The learning outcome that tells you what to aim for.
– The guiding questions as suggestions for the conversation you have with the participants, for each session.

POSSIBLE USAGE

The session templates can be used as a starting point for creating your own heroes and villains' sessions for your MIL training.

Together with the other annexes they are helpful as templates or inspiration.

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The complete session templates can be found here:

https://akademie.dw.com/ en/a-67054909

NOTES

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