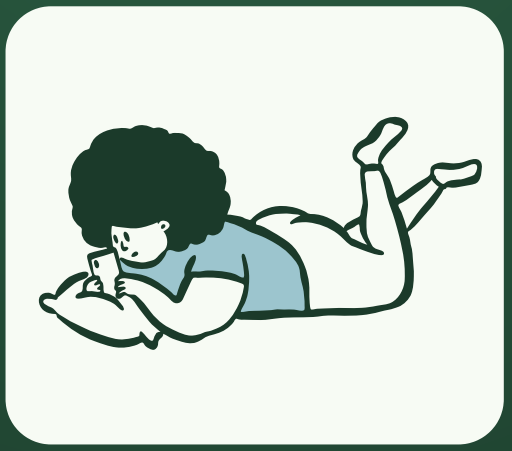
RESULT 5 · ACTIVITIES FOR SENIOR & INTERGENERATIONAL GROUPS

Real or Robot?

Teams of detectives examine evidence pairs of messages, pictures and phone calls. One is real, one was made by AI or a scammer. Find the clues, then face the final case with no clues at all.



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ACTIVITY 06 · DETECTIVE GAME

06

Real or Robot?



Teams of detectives examine evidence pairs of messages, pictures and phone calls. One is real, one was made by AI or a scammer. Find the clues, then face the final case with no clues at all.

FORMAT	TIME	GROUP
Detective game	45–60 min	6–24 · teams of 3–4
LETTERS	**YOU NEED**	
P	Real or Robot evidence pairs and clue checklist (Printable E), magnifying glasses, pens, one tablet or laptop for the picture round (optional)	

THE ACTIVITY IN PLAIN WORDS

Each team is a detective agency. The facilitator hands out "evidence pairs": two messages, two pictures, or two phone-call scripts. In each pair, one is real and one was made by AI or written by a scammer. Teams use a clue checklist to decide which is which, and they must name their clues to earn full points. In the last round, the "case with no clues", teams meet a fake that looks perfect. That is the lesson that matters most: newer AI fakes may show no visible mistakes at all, so the real detective work is checking the source, not just staring at the picture.

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You will need

- Real or Robot evidence pairs and clue checklist (Printable E): one set of case envelopes per team, one clue checklist per person
- Magnifying glasses (cheap ones are fine) and pens
- For the picture round: printed picture pairs that you prepare yourself (see below), or one tablet or laptop with a large screen
- Detective badges or name cards for fun (optional)
- A scoreboard and a timer

Before the session

- Prepare the picture pairs. Take three photos yourself on a phone: for example a cup of coffee on a table, a street in your town, and your hands holding a book. Then ask an AI image tool to create a similar picture of each ("a photo of a cup of coffee on a wooden table, natural light"). Print each real photo and each AI picture the same size, without file names. Label them A and B on the back and note which is which.
- For the final "case with no clues", choose the most convincing AI picture you made, one in which you yourself cannot find a mistake.
- Print the message pairs and the call scripts from Printable E. Put each case in an envelope.
- Read the handbook chapter on staying safe, especially "Fake voices" and "Fake videos and pictures".

OPENING LINES · READ ALOUD

"Good morning, detectives. Our town has a problem. Fake messages, fake photos and fake voices are arriving every day, and some of them are very good. Each case in front of you has two pieces of evidence. One is real. One was made by a machine or by a criminal. Find the fake, and tell me how you know. A guess without a clue earns one point. A guess with a clue earns three. And be warned: the last case is the hardest one in the building."

How to run it

1 Detective school 5 min

Hand out the clue checklist. Read the five headings aloud: *Who sent it? What does it want? How does it feel? What looks wrong? How can I check?* Explain that the first two and the last one matter most.

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2 Case 1: the messages 10 min

Each team opens the message envelope: pairs of text messages and emails, for example a real parcel notice and a fake one, or a real bank reminder and a fake "your account is blocked" message. Teams have 3 minutes per pair. They circle clues on the paper (urgency, a strange link, a request for a code, odd spelling) and write their verdict. Score: 1 point for the right answer, 3 points with a correct clue.

3 Case 2: the pictures 10 min

Teams examine the printed picture pairs with magnifying glasses. Clues to look for: hands and fingers, writing on signs and labels, reflections, shadows, backgrounds that melt or repeat, skin that looks too smooth. Teams write their verdicts. Reveal the answers one pair at a time.

4 Case 3: the voice on the phone 10 min

Two volunteers read a phone-call script from Printable E aloud: a "grandchild in trouble" call. The voice may sound right, so teams cannot use their ears; they must listen for the *story*. What does the caller want? Why the hurry? Why the secrecy? Teams agree the three things they would do next (for example: hang up, call back on a number you know, ask the family safe word).

5 Case 4: the case with no clues 5 min

Show the final picture: your best AI image, next to nothing. Ask: "Real or robot?" Let teams argue. Most will find no clue. Reveal that it is AI. Then ask the key question: "If your eyes cannot tell, what can?" Collect answers: who posted it, where it first appeared, whether trusted news sources show it, a reverse image search, asking the person directly.

6 Name it and debrief 10 min

Award the "Chief Detective" title to the highest-scoring team. Read the key idea and run the debrief.

EXAMPLE

In a seniors' club in Kraków, the "Sherlock z Podgórza" team, Krystyna (70), Józef (77) and Wanda (66), opens Case 1. Message A says their parcel is held and asks them to pay 1.99 zł through a link within 24 hours. Message B, from the same courier, gives a tracking number and no link to pay. Wanda spots the urgency and the payment request: 3 points. In Case 2, Józef uses the magnifying glass on a picture of a market stall and finds that the price signs are written in letters that are not quite letters. Another 3 points. In Case 4, nobody can find a single mistake in the photo of a cup of coffee. Krystyna says: "Then I would ask: who sent me this, and why?" The facilitator writes it on the flip chart as the lesson of the day.

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KEY IDEA

Some AI fakes still show tell-tale signs: odd hands, nonsense writing, impossible reflections or shadows. But AI tools keep improving, and newer fakes may show no visible clues at all. So the strongest checks are about the **source and context**: who shared it, where it first appeared, whether trusted sources report the same thing, and, for calls and messages, whether you can confirm it through a channel you already trust, such as calling back on a number you know. Sources: European Commission, EPALE adult learning platform, guidance on recognising AI-generated content; Europol advice on deepfakes; G-PRO Handbook, Staying safe.

Debrief

1

What happened?

Which case was easiest? Which fooled your team? Which clues on the checklist helped most?

2

So what?

If the best fakes have no visible mistakes, what does that mean for photos and calls we receive every day? Which checks still work when our eyes and ears cannot tell?

3

Now what?

What will you do the next time you receive an urgent message or a surprising photo? Who in your family should agree a safe word with you?

Make it work for your group

- **Limited mobility, sight or hearing:** Print pictures large (A4 or A3) and in good light. Provide magnifiers. For Case 3, give out the call script on paper as well as reading it aloud. Let teams stay seated; the facilitator brings the envelopes.
- **Intergenerational version:** Younger participants are "forensic assistants": they handle the device, zoom into pictures and run a reverse image search in Case 4 if you have Wi-Fi. Older participants are the "senior detectives" who make the final decision and explain the clue. Seniors often spot the human tricks of a scam story faster than young people do.
- **No-device version:** Use only printed messages and pictures. Prepare the pictures in advance and print them.
- **Online or hybrid version:** Share each evidence pair on screen and let teams discuss in breakout rooms. Teams type their verdict and clue in the chat.
- **Short version (20 min):** Play Case 1 (two pairs) and Case 4 only, then ask the "Now what?" question.

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WATCH OUT

Use only made-up messages and your own photos. Never use a real person's face or voice to make a fake, even as a joke, and never make a fake of someone in the room. Do not click on any link in a real suspicious message, even to "show" it. Some participants may have been victims of scams: speak about scams as crimes done *to* people, never as a sign of foolishness. If someone mentions a recent scam, offer to talk privately afterwards and suggest they contact their bank and the police.

OWN IT

"This weekend I will agree a family safe word with my children and grandchildren, in person." Or: "Before I share any surprising photo or video this month, I will check who first posted it."

Related: Staying safe · G-PRO cards: AI-08 The Voice Scam, AI-17 Find What AI Gets Wrong, AI-12 The Follow-Up Question

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