**Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***Evaluating the Research on Social Media***

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| **Objective:** Watch a video about research on how social media affects your mood; share your reflections on the validity of various research studies. |

**Directions:** Watch the video titled, *How do Different Social Media Platforms Affect Your Mood* from Above the Noise, PBS[[1]](#footnote-2).

1. We’ll watch this video first all the way through just to familiarize ourselves with the content. Jot a few notes about what stands out to you from the video in the box below.

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| **Notes** |

**Second Watch: Social Media’s Impact on Mood**

In this second watch, our goal is to focus on what we can learn about social media’s impact on mood.

1. Play the video and pause at 2:55. In this section of the video, listen for a discussion of the **active use** and **passive use** of social media**.** *(****Note:*** *If you already worked on Lesson B, Negative Impacts of Social Media Part 1, then you’ve read about this study.)*

What is one takeaway you have about active vs passive use?

***Evaluating the Research on Social Media* (Continued)**

1. Play the video from minute 2:56 to the end.

In this segment, the video discusses the **ephemerality** of the social media site Snapchat. If something is **ephemeral**, it lasts for a very short time. On Snapchat, photos and “snaps” sent disappear quickly after they’re opened by the receiver.

What resonates with you from this this research about Snapchat?

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| **Notes** |

1. In the video, Myles, the host says, “Not all social media is created equal.” Explain this statement using your takeaways about Facebook use versus Snapchat use.

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***Evaluating the Research on Social Media* (Continued)**

**Third Watch: Questions to Ask about Research**

In this third watch, our goal is to learn more about questions we should ask when we see research presented in media.

1. Begin the video and pause it at minute 2:04. The video says, “Correlation ≠ Causation.” This is an important concept to know when evaluating scientific studies and it is described below.

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| **Correlation is not Causation**  **Correlation** means that there is a relationship between two variables. For example, a study on depression in pet owners and non-pet owners found that pet owners were 41% less likely to be depressed than non-pet owners[[2]](#footnote-3). This finding was a **correlation** because it shows that a relationship exists between owning pets and less depression. But this study doesn’t prove anything about whether owning a pet causes people to be less depressed. There could be other hypotheses about *why* that relationship might be occurring: What if less depressed people are more likely to get pets?  **Causation** is when we can definitively say that one variable causes another. Researchers use random controlled trials (experiments) to determine causation. They control for other variables (like age, economic and educational status, gender, etc.) to rule out the other variables as the cause. An example of a well-accepted **causation** relationship is that long-term smoking causes an increased risk for developing lung cancer.  **Correlation** is a relationship between two variables; there is no cause-and-effect relationship proven.  **Causation** is when one variable causes the other variable to occur. |

1. Return to the idea that more Facebook use **correlates** to higher incidents of depression in users. Why might this finding be a **correlation** and *not* **causation**? Why might that matter? Jot some ideas below.

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| **Notes** |

1. Play the video and pause at 3:25. When Myles discusses the study on Snapchat, he says that the study group included 154 undergraduates in Michigan. He then says this sample size is too small to apply to broader audience. Why might that be true? Jot some thoughts.

**Stamp Your Learning for** ***Evaluating the Research on Social Media***

1. When you see reports on social media use and how it can impact mood, what is one question you might ask?

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1. Consider what we already learned about the positive and negative impacts of social media. How does research in this video support some of our prior learning?

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1. "How Do Different Social Media Platforms Affect Your Mood? | Above the Noise." PBS Learning Video. July 20, 2017. Video, 0:04:54, [https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/social-media-brain-kqed/how-do-different-s ocial-media-platforms-affect-your-mood-above-the-noise/](https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/social-media-brain-kqed/how-do-different-s%20ocial-media-platforms-affect-your-mood-above-the-noise/) . [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8383123/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)