

Accuracy Nudges

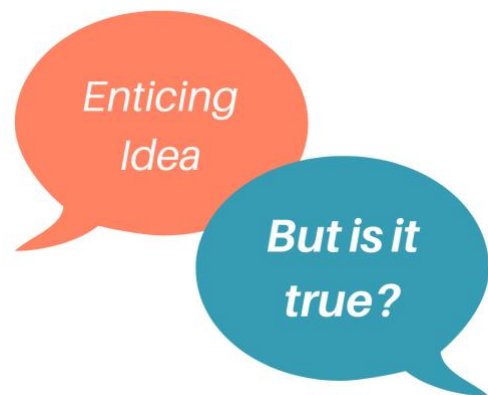
Also called “accuracy prompts,” accuracy nudges are simple remarks encouraging people to seek accuracy rather than settle for merely appealing or convenient judgments.¹ It is easy to mistake the usefulness of an idea for truth. When we come to rely on ideas that are useful but false, though, our thinking can go badly astray. “But is it true?” is a great way to remind students that usefulness does not guarantee truth. It’s also a reminder that, to think clearly and well, we need to check our claims for accuracy.

Applications

- **Point out** that usefulness and truth are different things, and illustrate why it’s often a mistake to settle for convenient fiction. Going the extra mile for true beliefs often works out better in the long run.
- **Prompt** students to raise their hand if they think such-and-such claim is true. After students respond, ask “But is it *really* true?” and “How can we find out?” Then find out together.
- If a student makes a questionable claim, invite them to share their reasons or **evidence**. “Help us understand why we should rely on that claim as true.” “Is there an experiment or study that shows this?” When you nudge students to check the accuracy of their statements, it fosters a classroom culture of curiosity and accountability.

Notes

The concept of an accuracy nudge comes from research on how to improve (online) social networks.² Given that the classroom functions as a unique social network, we believe accuracy nudges will prove useful to educators. Encouraging students to seek accuracy should help improve their evidence-based reasoning skills and cultivate a shared drive to seek truth. This shared interest in truth-seeking is characteristic of communities of inquiry, which will be a topic of focus in a future post!



Learn More

On the Efficacy of Accuracy Prompts Across Partisan Lines: An Adversarial Collaboration³

¹ Nature Communications, [Accuracy prompts are a replicable and generalizable approach for reducing the spread of misinformation](#)

² Misinformation Review, [Developing an accuracy-prompt toolkit to reduce COVID-19 misinformation online](#)

³ Psychological Science, [On the Efficacy of Accuracy Prompts Across Partisan Lines: An Adversarial Collaboration](#)