

Prebunking

A prebunk is a preemptive refutation of a false claim¹. Prebunks essentially warn people that a false narrative is circulating. They might mention the false narrative, explain why it's wrong, and urge people not to fall for it. Ideally, a prebunk arrives *before* the problematic misinformation itself arrives, preparing the mind to produce cognitive “antibodies”—the kinds of questions and doubts that can prevent misinformation from becoming (mis)belief.

Applications

- Introduce students to **games** designed to prebunk common manipulation techniques.²
- Inoculate students against common **manipulative techniques**.³
- Learn **how to prebunk** and/or teach your students how to prebunk.⁴



Notes

There are many different approaches to pre-bunking. What's important is that you expose a falsehood to a person or group before they've come to believe in it, making sure to expose the manipulative tactics that people are using to spread the misinformation. Unfortunately, you can't always get ahead of viral misinformation using prebunks. Sometimes the falsehoods have already spread. This is when debunking and other techniques come in handy.

Learn More

“Can you outsmart a troll by thinking like one?” 5-min video from TED-Ed⁵

¹ The Cyber Wire, [Prebunking](#); Psychology Today, [What Is Prebunking?](#)

² [Inoculation Science - Interactive Games](#)

³ [Inoculation Science](#)

⁴ Prebunking with Google, [How to Prebunk](#)

⁵ Ted-Ed on YouTube, [Can you outsmart a troll \(by thinking like one\)? - Claire Wardle](#)