

**MOSTLY HELPFUL BECAUSE:**

- Users can quickly and freely access other viewpoints.
- It enables users to seek out reassuring voices which help to resolve their internal conflicts.

**MOSTLY HELPFUL BECAUSE:**

- Advertising and personalisation work in unison to create opens our minds.
- Exposure to different moderating views effectively the best content for users.



## DISCUSSION TASK WORKSHEET

### Is the internet helpful or harmful in shaping the opinions of its users?

#### SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

- Divide the class into groups of 4.
- Every group gets one task sheet.
- Each member of the group is given a corner of the sheet with its two main arguments, and spends a few minutes preparing supporting arguments that back them up.
- Each member of the group presents and argues in support of their two main arguments ("The internet is helpful in shaping the opinions of its users because...").
- After all four members have presented, the group discusses and agrees on which three arguments they believe to be the best (the group does not need to agree on only helpful or harmful arguments, but can argue that the internet is both helpful and harmful).
- Class conversation in which each group tells the class what three arguments they have decided on and presents their supporting arguments ("We believe the internet is harmful to shaping opinions because...").
- The teacher may tally the strategies mentioned by the different groups, ending the class discussion with an overview of the opinions of the class as a whole.

On the basis of Alan Martin's text "The web's 'echo chamber' leaves us none the wiser", pages 149-150 in E2.

1. Mostly helpful/harmful because:

2. Mostly helpful/harmful because:

3. Mostly helpful/harmful because:

Time: 30 minutes

**MOSTLY HARMFUL BECAUSE:**

- It allows users to believe that their views are mainstream.
- It creates and increases biased thinking.

**MOSTLY HARMFUL BECAUSE:**

- Any dissenting voices may be quickly dismissed as "trolls".
- People are less reserved online and communication becomes more polarized.