

Spotting fake news



Fake or real headlines – teacher notes

As an alternative to using these slides, students could try the online [fake or real headlines quiz](#).

All of these stories appeared in the news and are therefore real news or genuine examples of 'fake news'. For your information we have included the source below. If you decide to view these stories online in the classroom, be aware that advertising and other stories may pop up. It is therefore best to select the relevant sections and prepare these as a teaching resource to ensure safe use in the classroom. When researching stories at home, students and parents should be made aware that online news portals may include adult content. Please note that we cannot be responsible for other content and advertising on these websites.

Real

- Teenager on trial after refusing to pay fine for feeding a chip to a pigeon: Wales online, November 2016:
<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/teenager-stand-trial-feeding-chip-12179988>
- Canadian zoo fined after taking bear out for ice-cream: The Guardian, May 2018:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/09/canada-alberta-zoo-bear-fed-ice-cream-charges>
- School boy carries books to school in a microwave: BBC Newsround,

- November 2018: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/45967760>

Fake

- Queen asks for Ronaldo's autograph: Twitter, September 2021 (Fact check by Snopes: <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/queen-elizabeth-ronaldo/>)
- KFC serves deep fried rat: Facebook, 2015 (Report by ABC with DNA evidence proving it was chicken: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/dna-test-debunks-claim-chicken-tender-fried-rat/story?id=31949186>)
- Theme parks in California ban screaming because of Covid-19: The Mercury News, March 2021: <https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/03/16/no-screaming-on-california-roller-coasters-and-thrill-rides-theme-park-association-recommends/> This one is tricky as the actual report is true, but the headline is misleading; there was guidance saying it was a good idea to reduce shouting and screaming, but theme parks in California did not ban screaming (Fact check by Poynter: <https://www.poynter.org/tfcn/2021/no-california-theme-parks-arent-banning-screaming-on-rides-because-of-covid-19/>)

Fake or real?

Teenager on trial for feeding a chip to a pigeon, after refusing to pay fine



Pupils vote on whether each headline is real or fake, making a 'gut reaction' decision. (Don't reveal the answers yet!).

Alternatively, students can try the online [fake or real headlines quiz](#).

- *What do you think about this story headline?*
- *Is it easy to tell if a story is real or fake (especially if we only read it quickly)?*
- *Did you have enough information to make an informed decision?*
- *How might people react to each of these headlines?*

Photo: Brett Jordan via Unsplash

Photo: Sneha Cecil via Unsplash

Fake or real?

Queen asks for
Ronaldo's autograph



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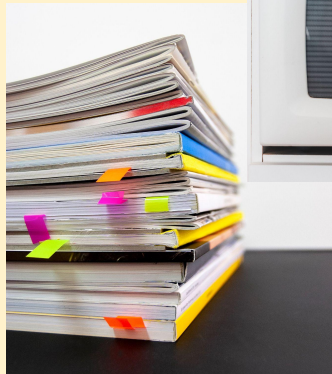
Photo: Dan Chung/Guardian

Photo: Tom Jenkins/Guardian

Fake or real?

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School boy carries
books to school in a
microwave



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Photo: Erik Mclean via Unsplash

Photo: Bernd Klutsch via Unsplash

Fake or real?

KFC serves deep
fried rat



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Photo: Aleks Dorohovich via Unsplash

Fake or real?

Canadian zoo fined
after taking bear out
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Photo: Becca via Unsplash

Photo: Ian Dooley via Unsplash

Fake or real?

Theme parks in
California ban
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Photo: Christopher Thomond/Guardian

How to spot fake news



1. Who is sharing this story? Are they trustworthy? Have you heard of them before?

2. Who else is reporting on this? What are they saying? Look out for fake news clue words!

Investigate two of these news stories using News story 1 and 2 and the Fake news checklist. Introduce the two questions on the checklist to help students identify fake news – *Who is sharing the story? Who else is reporting on it? Are there any fake news clue words?*

If a news story is true, it's likely to come from a trusted and respectable news source (see some examples on the fake news checklist) and have also been reported on by at least two other trusted news companies. Students decide for each story whether it's real or fake. Can they explain why they made that decision based on the checklist?

How to spot fake news

Well known and trusted
news companies

sky news

The Telegraph

FREE METRO

**BBC
NEWS**

**The
Guardian**

THE INDEPENDENT

Fake news clue words

Hoax

Satire

Fictitious

Parody

Fact-check

Myth

False

This is also on a printable sheet for students to use as they look at news story 1 and 2.

Learning Check

1. What are three words that might suggest something is fake news?
2. If you didn't think a news story is real, what might you do?



Students can answer orally or in writing.

1. Possible answers: hoax, satire, fictitious, parody, myth, false, fact-check
2. Possible answers: see if it's from a trusted source, see what other people are saying about it, see if you can find the story elsewhere

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These slides reveal the answers to the fake or real stories

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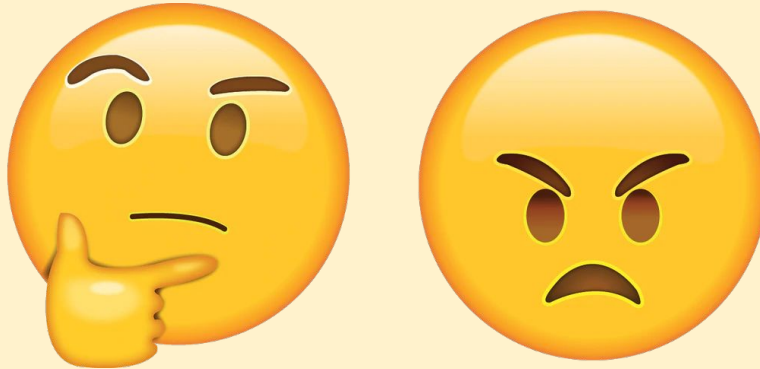


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How does news change our feelings and actions?



Students read two examples of fake news stories on the Fake news stories slides.
(Teacher note: You may wish to print the fake news stories out for students to read.
These are not genuine examples of fake news but have been created for educational purposes.)

- *How might someone feel reading this story?*
- *What would happen if someone believed this?*
- *Could it change what they think or what they do?*
- *Why might fake news be dangerous?*
- *Why is fake news created?* (As a joke, to make money, to change what people think about a person or place or product.)

Learning check

1. Name three words that might suggest a news story is fake.
2. Your friend sends you a link to a news story and you think the story doesn't look real. What could you do to try to decide if it is real or not?



What have you learnt?



- *What is fake news?*
- *How do you spot it?*
- *Is everything online and on social media real/ true?*
- *Why can fake news be dangerous?*

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theguardianfoundation.org

For more media literacy resources from Behind the Headlines and Newswise, visit
<https://theguardianfoundation.org/>.