TO BE FOOLED - OR NOT?

This module was developed by the European Parliament - Spokesperson's Unit and not by the author of the other modules.
WATCH: Bizarre claims UFOs were flying past Twin Towers during 9/11 terror strikes

A BIZARRE video has alleged that UFOs were caught on camera flying past the Twin Towers during the world's worst terror strike.

By JON AUSTIN

CONSPIRACY theorist Phil Young claims these were UFOs filmed during 9/11
ICE-BREAKER

RELIABLE OR NOT?

A courageous nurse debunks the coronavirus lie. She says that they are trying to introduce a New World Order and they are using COVID-19 as a coverup. She also talks about the dangers of 5G radiation.

twitter.com/Veganearther/s...

ICE-BREAKER

RELIABLE OR NOT?
ICE-BREAKER

REAL OR FAKE?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_N9SZLtc2k
CLASS ACTIVITY

KNOWING WHAT HAPPENS

Where do you get the news?
(or what information sources do you know?)
CLASS ACTIVITY

THINKING ABOUT OUR SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Have you come across news that seems strange over the past week/month?
CLASS ACTIVITY

STRANGE IN WHAT WAY?

a. Simply not true
b. I completely disagree
c. Exaggerated or twisted
d. Too good (or too bad) to be true
e. Contradicts everything I know on the subject
f. Fits my wishes or beliefs a bit too easily
g. Disgusting
h. Joke
i. Other
CLASS ACTIVITY

OPINION OR FACT?

A fact is something that can be checked and backed up with evidence.

An opinion is based on a belief or point of view. It is not based on verifiable evidence.
WHAT IS DIS-INFORMATION?

- **What?** False or misleading information
- **How?** Made or spread on purpose
- **Why?** To make money or deceive
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH DIS- INFORMATION?

1. Fools you into...
   - only seeing one (twisted) side of the story
   - having strong feelings for the wrong reasons
   - acting differently
   - looking stupid in front of others

2. Makes it harder to get the right information when you need it

3. Can have negative impact on society
EXAMPLE

DISINFORMATION CAN DO REAL DAMAGE IN REAL LIFE

Attacks to 5G towers as a result of disinformation about 5G

Conspiracy theorists set fire to 5G towers and equipment

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5_gzTl9ADg
DISINFORMATION CAN PUT PEOPLE’S LIFE AT DANGER

Like this viral picture has done.
WHO CAN BE FooLED BY DIS-InFORMATION?

EVERYONE!
All age groups, genders, backgrounds, regardless of education levels.

We are easier to fool when:
• strong feelings involved (love, fear, hope)
• message comes from someone we trust
• message is in line with our existing beliefs
WHO SHOULD FIGHT DIS-INFORMATION?

EVERYONE . . .
- Journalists and influencers
- Politicians
- Media and social media companies
- Educators

... YOU too!
- Be alert and verify strange news
- Think before you share news
- Talk to friends who may have been fooled
FINAL PRESENTATION

FAKE NEWS, WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

FALSE

MIS-INFORMATION
- False Connection
- Misleading Content

DIS-INFORMATION
- False Content
- Imposter Content
- Manipulated Content
- Fabricated Content

INTENT TO HARM

MAL-INFORMATION
- (Some) Leaks
- Harassment
- Hate speech
KNOWING WHAT IS TRUE AND FALSE

Which ways are there to check whether a news story is true or not?

Some ideas:
• Read the whole article — do the content and the headline match?
• Search the story on the internet — do other sources corroborate?
• Do you know what kind of sources they are?
• Verify the date and author
• Check if pictures look strange
FINAL PRESENTATION

THE SAD BUT TRUE STORY OF PENKA THE COW

‘How Penka the cow, sentenced to death by Brussels for straying from Bulgaria into Serbia sums up all that is wrong with the EU’

‘EU madness: Penka the cow faces death sentence for straying outside the bloc without paperwork’

Often it is not about the facts but how you tell a story.
THE FACT-CHECKING COMPASS

1. CHECK THE CONTENT
Are the facts and figures accurate? Is the article biased? A credible media outlet keeps one-sided opinions where they belong — in op-eds, not in news articles.

2. CHECK THE OUTLET
Do you know it? Does the URL look strange? Check the ‘about’ section. Who is behind it? Who is funding it? Double-check what other (trustworthy) sources say.

3. CHECK THE AUTHOR
Does this person even exist? A well-respected journalist always has a track record. If the author has made up his or her name (or does not mention it), the rest is also likely to be fake.

4. CHECK THE SOURCES
Does the author use reliable sources (for example, well-established and respected media outlets)? Are the quoted experts real specialists? If the story uses anonymous (or no) sources, it could be fake.

5. CHECK THE PICTURES
Images are powerful, and it is easy to manipulate them. An image search can show if it has been used before in a different context. The InVID plugin can help you detect manipulation of videos or pictures.

6. THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE
The story could be a distortion of real or old events — or it could be satire. The headline could be designed to spark strong emotions. If an event is real, reliable media will cover it.

7. QUESTION YOUR OWN BIASES
Sometimes a story is just too good or entertaining to be true. Take a deep breath, compare with reliable sources and keep a cool head.

8. JOIN THE MYTH-BUSTERS
Keep on top of the latest tricks and narratives used by those spreading disinformation. Report fake stories. Tell your friends.
EU MEASURES AGAINST DISINFORMATION

- “EU vs Disinfo” – special team for disinformation abroad
- Improve ways to identify disinformation quickly
- Warn citizens about risks of disinformation
- Put pressure on social media companies so that they also do their part
- Support fact-checkers and journalists inside and outside the EU
FOLLOW FACT-CHECKERS

• Lists of fact-checking organisations in your country are updated through the Poynter Institute and Facebook

• EU’s own anti-disinformation group and “think before you share” campaign
TO BE FOOLED – OR NOT?

CONTACT

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