

KILLER UNDERWEAR INVASION!

HOW TO SPOT FAKE
NEWS, DISINFORMATION &
CONSPIRACY THEORIES

By Elise Gravel
9781797214917 | \$14.99

ABOUT THE BOOK

A hilarious and timely tool to help kids learn how to tell what news is true and what isn't. Can peanuts give you super strength? Were unicorns discovered on the moon? Did Martians really invade New Jersey? For anyone who has ever encountered outrageous stories like these and wondered whether they were true, this funny yet informative book breaks down what fake news is, why people spread it, and how to tell what is true and what isn't. With quirky illustrations and a humorous tone, Elise Gravel brings her kid-accessible wit to the increasingly important subject of media literacy and equips younger readers with the skills needed to interact with global news.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elise Gravel has written and illustrated more than 30 books, including *La clé à molette* which won Canada's prestigious Governor General's Literary Award in the illustration category. She has published diverse projects with publishers in both Canada and the U.S. and her books have been translated into a dozen languages. Elise lives with her husband and their children in Montreal.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This educator guide contains discussion questions and activities that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

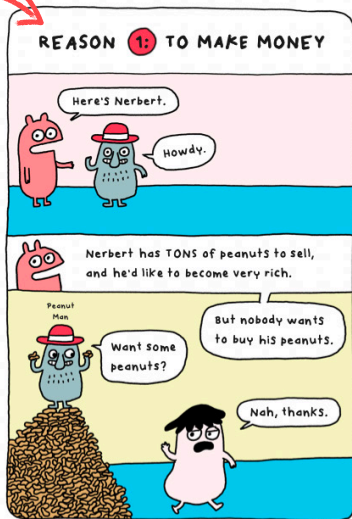


PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

GRAPHIC NOVEL COMPONENTS

Reading *Killer Underwear Invasion!* requires that students understand the different components of a graphic novel and the visual clues that help move the story along. Review the following components and corresponding vocabulary terms with students:

CAPTION

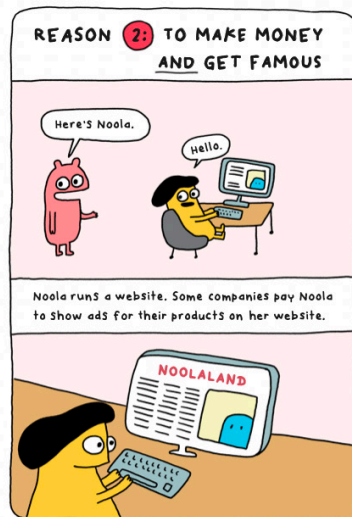


PANEL



EMANATA

GUTTERS



SPEECH BALLOON

THOUGHT BALLOON



- panel: a single frame or box that generally contains one sequence or segment of action
- gutters: the blank spaces between the panels
- speech balloon: indicates dialog (the tail points to the character that is speaking)
- thought balloon: indicates thinking (the tail points to the character that is thinking)
- captions: information bubbles or boxes that are generally separate from the rest of the panel or page
- emanata: unrealistic pictorial elements drawn emanating from a character, symbolizing something about that character

COVER, TITLE, AND FORMAT

Ask students to analyze the cover, title, and format. Explain that every choice made in publishing is very deliberate, and that the topic of fake news is a very serious one. Ask students to answer the following question:

- Why do you think the author and publisher decided on this title and format?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- Where do people get their news from?
- Why do people read/listen to the news?
- How does knowing the news impact your life?
- How did people get their news in the past?
- Have you ever been fooled by fake news?
- Do you worry about sharing fake news?
- What do you think “the internet never forgets” means?

VOCABULARY

Have students research the following vocabulary terms:

- fake news
- disinformation
- clickbait
- social media
- conspiracy theory
- confirmation bias
- critical thinking
- reliable
- journalist
- fact checker
- credible
- certified
- satire



CHAPTER 1 READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- If fake news has always existed, why should we be concerned now?
- Why do you think people create fake news?
- What are some fake news stories you have heard about?

ACTIVITY

First, have students research one of the following older fake news articles:

- *New York Sun* Great Moon Hoax, 1835
- Jack the Ripper’s “Dear Boss” and “Saucy Jacky” letters, 1888
- Mark Twain dying in poverty, 1897
- Child murder on Easter Sunday, 1475 (note: due to graphic subject matter and antisemitism, this topic is better suited for older students)
- German cadaver factories, 1917 (note: due to graphic subject matter and antisemitism, this topic is better suited for older students)

Next, ask students to answer the following questions based on their research:

- What was the purpose of the article?
- What were some of the consequences of the article?
- Did the reporter or news source suffer any consequences?

CHAPTER 2 READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- This chapter outlines some of the reasons why people create fake news. How do these reasons compare to yours?
- Rank the reasons for fake news in order of maliciousness. Explain your reasoning.

ACTIVITY

This activity can be done in pairs or groups. Have students scroll through a Twitter or Facebook feed and write down the headlines of 3–5 news articles they see. Then have them answer the following questions about each article:

- Based on the headline, what do you think the article is about?
- How do any images support your theory?



- After reading the article, did you find that your theory was correct? What was it actually about?
- How did the headline and images support the actual article?
- How many advertisements did you see while reading? What type of advertisements were they?



CHAPTER 3 READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on the following question:

- What are some current real-life consequences of fake news?

ACTIVITY

Divide students into groups of four and assign each student a news article. Distribute the “Types of Information” worksheet to each group. Have each group work together and use evidence from the text to determine which types of information are featured in each student’s assigned article.



TYPES OF INFORMATION

News stories are based in fact and allow readers to draw their own conclusions using all the facts available. Fake news stories are completely made up. Each group member will receive their own news story to analyze. Read each story and determine what kind of information is being presented. Use text evidence to support your answer.

Type of Information	Text Evidence
<p>Factual information is information that solely deals with facts.</p>	
<p>Analytical information is the interpretation of factual information.</p>	
<p>Subjective information is information from only one point of view.</p>	
<p>Objective information is information that is understood from multiple viewpoints and presents all sides of an argument.</p>	

Conclusion:



CHAPTER 4 READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- What is a conspiracy theory?
- How is the article titled “Candidate Fmith and Evil Doctors Send Robot-Scorpions to Pinch Your Puppies” an example of a conspiracy theory? (p. 42)
- What are some popular conspiracy theories you have heard?

ACTIVITY

Lead the class in a game of Telephone:

- Make sure at least 10 students are spread out well enough so that they can’t accidentally overhear other players.
- Have the player starting the game think of a word or phrase and whisper it into the next player’s ear only once, **with no repeats allowed**. The longer or more complex the phrase, the more visible the results.
- The listener then whispers that same word or phrase into the next player’s ear.
- The last person in the line or at the end of the circle repeats the phrase or word aloud.
- The player who started announces the correct word or phrase. Allow a moment for giggles if the message is “broken” or changed.
- Players take turns thinking of the next phrase or word to pass through a whisper.
- Sample phrases:
 - » Did you know that the answer key to Monday’s psychology test will be online at 3:00 am tomorrow for an hour?
 - » I honestly believe that Michael Keaton played the best Batman since Adam West.
 - » Children should be required to have a 10 o’clock curfew until they are 21.
 - » If the school had uniforms, it would be a better place because kids wouldn’t worry about getting dressed in the morning.
- Ask students to explain how/why the original message got lost.
- Ask students to share examples of real-life “telephone” situations, which may include differing accounts of things like:
 - » A fight at school
 - » Something funny that happened at a party
 - » How a date or social event unfolded
 - » An argument with a parent



CHAPTER 5 READING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- What is confirmation bias?
- How do people react when faced with information that contradicts their beliefs?
- How can confirmation bias impact the way people react to information?

ACTIVITY

The picture in the “Examining an Image” worksheet comes from a pool safety poster distributed by the Red Cross. It sparked outrage on social media and prompted an apology from the Red Cross. Distribute the worksheet and have students analyze the image before answering the questions on the sheet.



Holley, Peter. ““Super Racist” Pool Safety Poster Prompts Red Cross Apology.” *Washington Post*, 27 June 2016, www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/06/27/super-racist-pool-safety-poster-prompts-red-cross-apology/. Accessed 30 Apr. 2022.



Examine the image closely, then answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of this poster?
- What is the first thing you noticed?
- What are some of the cool behaviors?
- What are some of the uncool behaviors?
- How does this poster reinforce implicit bias? How can that be turned into confirmation bias?
- Where have you seen implicit bias before?

CHAPTER 6 READING

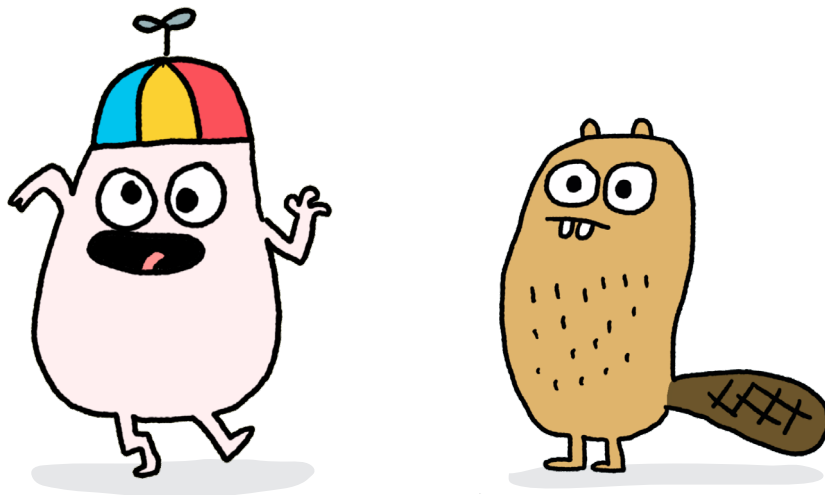
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lead the class in a discussion based on student answers to the following questions:

- Are people who share fake news “bad” people?
- What is satire? How can it be mistaken for news?

ACTIVITY

This activity can be done in groups or individually. Start by explaining that many articles have sensational headlines but aren't necessarily fake news. Then share a variety of articles with both sensational and mundane headlines for students to evaluate. Distribute the “Evaluating the News” worksheet for students to fill out.



EVALUATING THE NEWS

Criteria	Yes/No	Evidence
Identify the publisher of the information. Is the publisher trustworthy?		
Do you know who the author is?		
Is the article current?		
Does the article give a thorough overview of the subject?		
Does the article have any spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors?		
Are other news sources reporting this?		
Are there any suspicious quotes?		
Does the language of the article try to evoke an emotional response?		
Are there advertisements? If so, how many and what for.		



**Remember there are numerous fact-checking websites available to check information.*



THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE

Vocabulary Review Crossword Puzzle

Complete the crossword puzzle below using the vocabulary words from the book.

ACROSS

- 5. Affirmation
- 7. Misleading
- 8. Scheme

DOWN

- 1. Reporter
- 2. Dependable
- 3. Duplicity
- 4. Parody
- 6. Authorized
- 9. Trustworthy

This guide was created by Arlene Laverde, an educator at the NYC Department of Education for over thirty years. She is the current librarian at Townsend Harris High School at Queens College and academic advisor for the School Media Program at Queens College.

