



IS IT TRUE? OR NOT?

KEY STANDARDS

CASEL Competencies: Responsible Decision-making (5.d,e).
ISTE Standards: Knowledge Constructor (1.3.b).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will...

- Learn that anyone can post anything online.
- Gain three strategies for assessing the veracity of online information.
- Practice the three strategies they learn.



VOCABULARY

EVIDENCE: Information that can be used to prove something.

THE LESSON

1. Begin this lesson by asking students this question: *Who can post information on the Internet?* The answer, of course, is anyone and everyone! Explain this is why they can't believe everything they see online. Fortunately, you will be teaching them some simple strategies that will help them determine if information they find online is true, or not.
2. Introduce and make sure students understand (and record) the vocabulary term.
3. [Screen the video.](#) Discuss the key points:
 - While the Internet is an awesome place to find information on just about anything, we can't always believe the information we find online. Remember, not everyone who posts information online is an expert on the information they share.

THE LESSON, continued

- One of the first things we can do when we see something online that seems unbelievable is to find out who posted the information. Ask: *Is this person an expert? Is the information from a recognized news organization? Or is it from an ordinary person (with an extraordinary imagination)?*
 - The second thing we can do is check to see if the person who posted the information provides any “evidence.” We can discover if there is evidence supporting the author’s claims by asking: *Does the post include photos or comments from authorities or experts?*
 - The third thing we can do is search the Internet to see if others are posting information about the topic too. When unbelievable things happen that are true, usually lots of reputable organizations post stories of their own.
4. Explain that doing research on everything they see online might seem like a lot of work, so sometimes the easiest and most logical thing to do is to ask a parent, teacher, or other adult about any information they’re unsure of. Ask: *Does this seem true to you?*

ACTIVITY

Have students try the strategies above on the two articles that follow. Here is your answer guide:

- “Willy Wonka, that you? A ton of chocolate leaked from a factory and flooded a German street” is true. It was written by an expert (Amy Wong is a national politics reporter who has worked for several organizations). It was posted by a recognized news organization (The Washington Post). The article includes a link to a statement from the Werl fire department. A Google search would show others reporting the story too. [Here](#) is the original article.
- “Dogs and Humans Are Able To Communicate” is untrue. It is not written by an expert (David Doglover is a made-up person). Newzy Nation is not a recognized news organization. There is no evidence or statements from experts. A Google search would not show anyone else reporting this story.

GOAL

Students learn three easy strategies for assessing online information.

FOR STUDENT

Read the articles that follow, and then use the checklist to determine if they are true, or not.

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

WORLDVIEWS

‘Willy Wonka, that you?’ A ton of chocolate leaked from a factory and flooded a German street.



Spilled chocolate covers a road in Westonnen, Germany, on Monday in this photo obtained from Social Media. (Feuerwehr Werl/Reuters)

It was an accident. It was a municipal headache. It was a Roald Dahl fan’s dream.

Just before 8 p.m. Monday, liquid chocolate began streaming out of the DreiMeister chocolate factory in Westonnen, a suburb of Werl, Germany.

A tank at the factory had overflowed, prompting a river of chocolate to breach the factory grounds and ooze onto Weststrasse, the nearest road.

Soon, the leaked liquid chocolate — about a ton in all — solidified in the crisp December air, creating something of a magical carpet that blanketed Weststrasse.

“A ten-square-meter choco-pancake formed,” the Werl fire department explained in a dramatic statement that warned chocolate lovers to “stay strong” before reading about the incident.

Comparisons to “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” were inevitable.



By [Amy B Wang](#)

Amy B Wang is a national politics reporter. She joined The Washington Post in 2016 after seven years with the Arizona Republic. [Twitter](#)

Is It True or Not Checklist

	Yes	No
The author seems like an expert.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The article looks like it is from a recognized news organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The article includes evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others are reporting the story too (you would have to search the Internet, with permission from a teacher or parent, to answer this).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the article true?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FOR STUDENT, continued

**NEWZY
NATION**

Science

DOGS AND HUMANS ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE



David Doglover
January 2, 2023



Dog and man carrying on a conversation. Photo obtained from Canva.

A man in Louisville, Kentucky was reportedly seen carrying on an entire conversation with his dog, a white Labrador named Buddy. According to local rumors, the two talked about the weather for about 30 minutes before heading out for a walk. Some people even reportedly took videos of the two talking that they planned on posting to their social media accounts.

Many people know that animals have the same vocal chords as humans. It has long been suspected that humans and their pets can communicate and this story proves it.



David Doglover has 7 dogs and 4 cats and is a local baker.

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Is the article true?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>