



## Activity 2: Acting on misinformation





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## Objective:

To explore the consequences of acting on misinformation.





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Omar

Olive



**Newsi:**

Hi! My name is Newsi and these are my friends Omar and Olive. We are members of our school's News Club. Every week, we create a school news bulletin called "Newsflash!".







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**Omar:**

We're always on the lookout for stories for our paper. This week, some students have sent us photos, messages and links to websites because they think that they would make good news stories. Now WE have to decide whether or not we are going to include them in this week's paper.



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Olive:

We can't decide which stories to include in our newspaper and we need **YOUR** help.

Which stories should we share with the whole school community?





As we read the stories you could think about:

- What is the news story?
- Should you share it?
- Is there anything that you should do before you share it?
- What could the consequences be if you share the information in the story?



# Let's look at the stories

1

Instagram

Teen Influencer shares miracle drink

2

Apples from local shop linked to poisoning scandal

3

Message

Student discovers address of unpopular teacher and vandalises his house

4

Man discovers climate change conspiracy

5

Facebook

Local dogs in bizarre owner attack spree

6

Email from Police warning of Bank details scam



## Discussion Task:

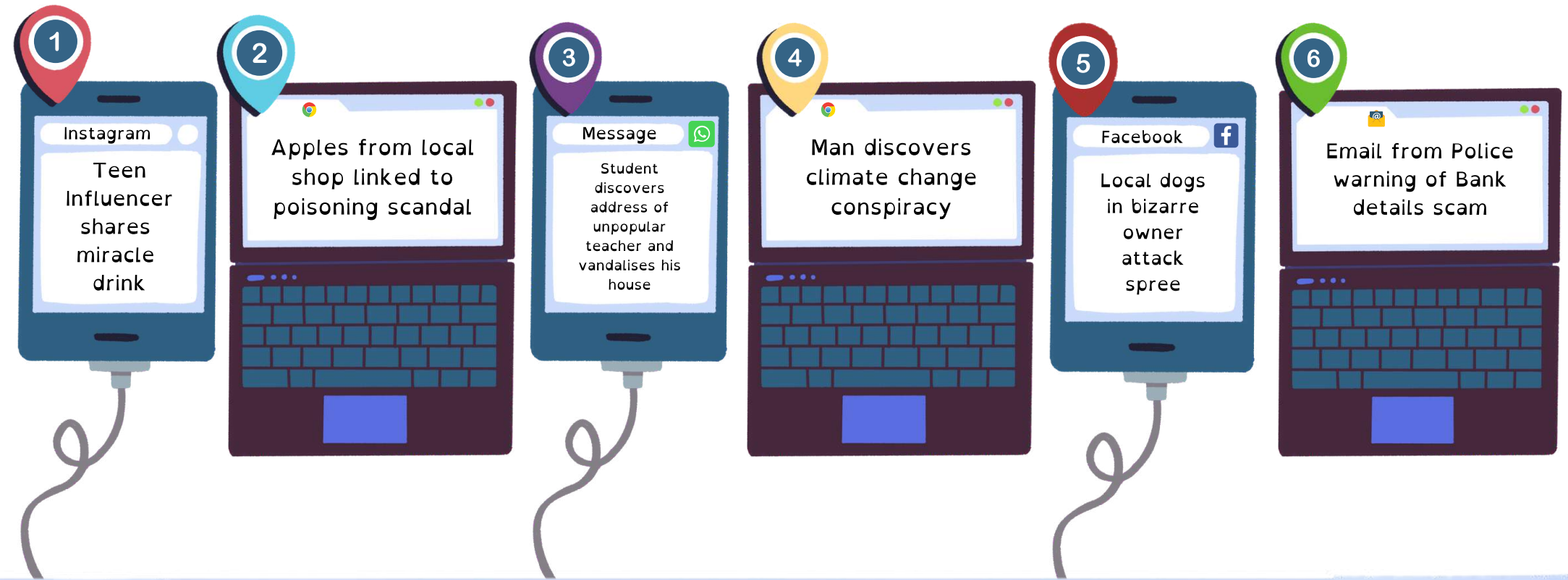
- Get into groups of 6.
- Each person will take a 'Lead Card' from the resource pack and share it with the group.
- Your task is to decide which stories to include in the School News Bulletin.



## Consider:

- What is the source?
- How reliable is the source?
- Is there anything that you should do before you share it?
- What are the possible consequences of sharing the story?





What did you decide to share?

Why did you come to that decision?

If you chose to share



- The drink becomes popular with year 11s and year 13s about to sit their exams.
- Local shops sell out of the drink.
- Share price of the drink rockets.
- Kaya received 3% commission on the sales of the drinks and makes around £275,000 from the partnership.
- Students that have bought the drink begin to suffer nausea, vomiting, hallucinations, anxiety, rapid heart rate, dizziness, trouble sleeping, and seizures. Upon reading the ingredients they realise that it contains 100mg of Caffeine per can.

Instagram




Teen  
Influencer  
shares  
miracle  
drink



## If you chose to share

2

- News site [www.suttonbiz.me.uk](http://www.suttonbiz.me.uk) reports a 35% boost in engagement following the story being posted.
- Author is given more a high-profile role in the company that run the website.
- Sales of apples fall by 60% locally.
- Karim Djalwi, owner of the greengrocers shop, sees a massive fall in sales and has to sack two of his employees.
- The independent, organic producer of the apples loses all of its orders and has to let apples rot in their barn.
- The link between the food poisoning and the apples is never proven.



Apples from local shop linked to poisoning scandal

## If you chose to share



- Students find the story hilarious and re-share and make jokes about it for days.
- More students vandalise the house in the following days.
- Mr Catterfold is bemused to hear about what had happened and explained that no-one had vandalised his house and car.
- The friend of a friend had made a mistake and they had accidentally attacked the home of an elderly couple who had no link to the school.
- Local police become involved.
- All those who attacked the house are given an official police caution which then appears on DBS checks in the future.

Message



Student discovers address of unpopular teacher and vandalises his house.



## If you chose to share

4

- A number of students use this website as a source for a Geography essay.
- These students receive low grades for their essays.
- The school increases the number of blocked websites on the school's network.
- A group of pupils join a Facebook group that shares more websites that detail conspiracy theories.
- These conspiracy theories fuel discrimination, justify hate crimes and make the students susceptible to extreme groups.
- Some students begin to mistrust the "mainstream media" and scientific and medical information.



Man discovers  
climate change  
conspiracy

If you chose to share



5

- Local dog owners begin to become concerned that their pet dog is going to be affected by this high-pitched frequency.
- Dog owners begin to keep their dogs away from their young children.
- Other dog owners abandon their dogs entirely.
- Local animal rescue centres are overrun with abandoned dogs.
- The story disappears from social media.
- The dog attack is proven to be a one-off.



Facebook



Local dogs  
in bizarre  
owner  
attack  
spree



If you chose to share



6

- Some students question why this story is in their news bulletin, they comment that they aren't elderly and are also not stupid enough to fall for a scam.
- Other students share the story with their parents, grandparents and elderly neighbours.
- Older people in the area are prepared for the scam and know to report any attempts to take their bank details over the phone to the police.
- After a few weeks the police announce that they have caught the perpetrators and charged them with fraud.



Email from Police  
warning of Bank  
details scam

Omar:

We decided to share story **6** with our readers.  
We fact-checked the other stories and discovered  
that they were...





## Biased

The influencer was being paid to promote the drink.

## Misleading

She said that it contained "previously undiscovered botanicals" without stating that it contained Caffeine.



## Hidden Agenda


She was not being honest about why she was sharing it.

# NEWS FLASH!



## Sensationalised

The writer was exaggerating to make the story sound more interesting and so that more people would read it.



Apples from local shop linked to poisoning scandal

## Not fact-checked

Lots of the article was inaccurate.

## Anonymous

The author "John Smith" is not the author's real name.

## Unreliable sources

The sources were not named and were possibly invented for the story.



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## Hoax

The "friend of a friend" thought that it would be a funny joke.

### Message



Student discovers address of unpopular teacher and vandalises his house.

## Damaging

The events in the story led to crimes being committed, innocent people being harmed and police cautions being issued.

## Not fact-checked

The house did not belong to the teacher in question.



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## Opinions

The website presented opinion as fact.



Man discovers  
climate change  
conspiracy

## Inaccurate

Lots of the information on the website was not fact-checked.

## Distorted

The author took real facts and changed them to support their biased argument.

## Unreliable sources

The sources were not reputable academic or scientists.



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## Sensationalised

The author took one event and created a story around it for attention.

## Damaging

The events in the story led to an increase in dogs being abandoned.

Facebook



Local dogs  
in bizarre  
owner  
attack  
spree

## Not fact- checked

There is no evidence of a high-frequency noise or more than one dog attack.

# NEWS FLASH!



It is important to be aware that damaging misinformation can be spread easily if people do not scrutinise what they see, hear and read.

To make sure that you do not spread misinformation, remember to:

- Choose what you read, watch or listen to very carefully.
- **FACT-CHECK** the things that you hear before you act on them or share them with others.
- Consider the consequences of sharing information that could not be true.





Have you played the



game yet?

Go to [www.newsflashgame.org](http://www.newsflashgame.org) to solve the mystery and uncover the truth!

