

What's in the News? Teacher's Notes A2-B1

This worksheet is based on an article which can be labelled A2+ as far as understanding is concerned, but the final writing activity should target B1 for a good number of students. Therefore, we suggest starting with easy activities to engage everyone in the class and gradually move on to more demanding work.

It is also possible to work with part of the article and activities at A2 level: using the introduction and Activity A along with the Teens and News infographic and activities D and F.

Media-related units have become common in 3ème with the new curriculum establishing links between school subjects, and the *Semaine de la Presse* is obviously a good time of the year for this kind of work. However, any time is better than never, and providing students with reliable tools to detect fake news is definitely worth considering.

Vocabulary and Structures

- quantifiers
- media-related vocabulary
- prefixation (opposites)
- expressing an opinion

Pronunciation

- *reliable, truthful, (h)onest...*
- **Word stress:** *o'pinion, ri'diculous*
unbel'ievable

Speaking, reading, writing activities

- We suggest starting by introducing the theme of the unit by having students say what they can about the first picture. This is a good opportunity to teach some new vocabulary in context. The rest of **Activity A** can be seen as a first step towards **Activity F**, as it takes students through the various phases of writing a report based on a survey. It is a combination of short speaking and writing activities, and alternates class work and group work, although some students may choose to

work individually.

- **Activity B** gets to the core of the issue of fake news, and is both meant to have students understand the problem and start to express their views.

■ In **Activities C-E** pupils will learn some new vocabulary with a view to writing their own article in **Activity F**. This could be a good opportunity to have them look up words in an online English dictionary (not a translator!) and show them how to work from definitions.

The stories in **Activity E** are all fake, but pupils will probably assume at least some are true and try to come up with reasons why. It's a good opportunity to have them check logic (25kg baby?) and notice things like the deliberate mistake in "Women Gives Birth" – a typical giveaway of fake news. They may also mention Photoshopping images, which is another important topic. See our fact-checking webpicks for teaching tools.

- **Activity F** can be time consuming but it is

worth spending some useful time on making a real survey at school to point out what needs to be done to draw valid conclusions. Make sure each student or group actually gets to work on something that really interests them.

■ The resulting articles can be entered in our **journalism competition**.

Solutions

A.1. Answers will vary from one class to the other.

4. In the United States most people / 67% of people get their news from social media.

B.1. false news, fabricated news

2. TV / Newspapers:

The news is the same for everybody.

The news can be accessed by everybody.

The news must be realistic.

Social Media

You get news which corresponds to your opinions.

The news travels very fast.

The news is sent to someone in particular.

Some of the news you get is shared with your online friends.

3.a. the 2016 U.S. Presidential election

b. Donald Trump supporters saw lots of positive stories about him, and negative stories about Hillary Clinton. The same was true for Clinton supporters.

C.1. manipulative, deliberate, intentional, dangerous for democracy, dishonest

2. deliberate (discredit/manipulate), funny/satirical, to make money

D. These answers are only examples.

In our class most students get their news

from social media, whereas most of the British teens in the survey get theirs from TV.

TV: I think TV is more reliable than social media.

Social media: the news on social media is often untruthful and unbelievable. A lot of it is inaccurate.

Friends and family: I believe my family is honest and reliable. Sometimes my friends try to manipulate me, they are not always reliable.

Radio: I don't listen to the radio a lot, but I think it's usually honest.

E.1. All the stories were fake.

2. Examples:

I think 1 is fake because a headteacher has to have feelings.

I believe 2 is fake because footballers can't play in a national team at 14 years old.

3: I'm quite sure UFOs don't exist but a lot of people say they've seen one.

4: In my opinion a panda can only turn yellow if someone paints it.

I think 5 is ridiculous. It's unbelievable.

I know 6 is fake because there's a grammar mistake. It should say 'woman', not 'women'. Anyway, I'm sure a baby can't be as heavy as that.