



# CHAPTER 7:



**DO NOT TRUST  
THIS CHAPTER!**



# BREAKING NEWS

## Would you believe it if you read something absurd in this booklet?



And would you immediately tell your friends? Or would you think it's a lie?

Let's take an example. You may be aware that Neil Armstrong was the first human who walked on the moon, in 1969. **What if you read here that no human ever went to the moon, that the videos of the astronauts on the moon were actually staged and shot in a movie studio in Hollywood?** Would you believe it?

Well... it could depend on a lot of things.

If you take your time to think slowly (remember chapter 6!), you may find that it's very surprising that journalists and trusted media did not speak about the fact that the moon landing was staged.

You may become curious, start to investigate (remember chapter 4!) and discover that astronauts actually brought back more than 300kg of moon rock through six missions to the moon. That other countries such as Russia, Japan and China confirmed the landings, that images from the NASA Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter even show us the tracks left by the astronauts! You will also discover that in 1969, we had the technology to send humans to the moon and back (albeit in a rather risky way), but we did NOT have the special effects technology to fake a moon landing as if in a movie (Yes, this is surprising, but please do investigate to check if it is true).



## So why do some people still believe that the moon mission was fake, or similar hard-to-believe stories?

Those stories are often very strong and they generate intense emotions in us. So we tend to react to them quickly instead of taking the time to think and investigate. If the story fits with the way we see the world, with our beliefs and values, we may be biased and accept it more easily (remember the confirmation bias in chapter 6). If a story mixes some elements

that are true with some things that are not, we may be convinced by the true parts and thus believe also the false parts. And if we learned the story from a trusted friend, we will also tend to trust the story... and we may even make the mistake of sharing it, and spreading the false story around.

## There is a name for false information that is spread to trick, manipulate or just confuse us: disinformation.

### TIPS

## So, whenever you find a piece of news that is emotionally strong, before you share it, DO:



TAKE YOUR TIME, CAREFULLY ANALYSE IT, DON'T LET EMOTIONS DRIVE YOU TOO QUICKLY.



BE CURIOUS AND INVESTIGATE: WHAT INFORMATION CAN YOU FIND ABOUT THE SUBJECT?



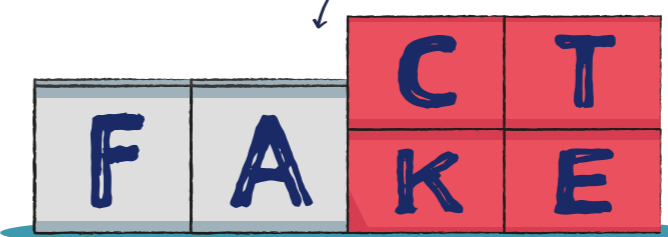
QUESTION THE SOURCE: WHERE DOES THE STORY COME FROM? IS IT A SERIOUS AND CREDIBLE SOURCE?



CHECK OTHER SOURCES: ARE TRUSTED MEDIA MENTIONING THE SAME THING? IF NOT, IT DOES NOT MEAN THE STORY IS A LIE, BUT IT MEANS IT SHOULD BE CAREFULLY INVESTIGATED.



SOME WEBSITES SPECIALISE IN DEBUNKING AND FACT-CHECKING NEWS: SEE IF THEY MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT THE STORY...



IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES, YOU WILL PLAY WITH DISINFORMATION. LEARN HOW IT IS MADE AND HOW TO SPOT IT. ENJOY!

ACTIVITY 1

# WRITE YOUR OWN DISINFORMATION!

IN THESE ACTIVITIES, WE WILL BUILD A PIECE OF NEWS THAT IS FAKE, WRONG AND FALSE. WHY? NOT BECAUSE IT'S GREAT TO LIE, BUT BECAUSE UNDERSTANDING HOW DISINFORMATION WORKS WILL HELP YOU SPOT IT WHEN YOU SEE IT! FIRST OF ALL, WRITE A STATEMENT THAT IS FALSE, CRAZY, IMPOSSIBLE. FOR EXAMPLE:

THE PLANET JUPITER IS MADE OF CANDY.

APPLE JUICE CAN CURE ALL THE DISEASES OF THE WORLD.

CATS FULLY CONTROL ALL HUMAN MINDS.

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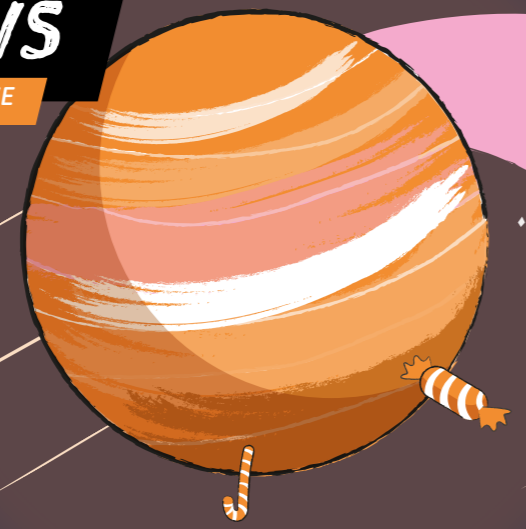
Now, you will try to write an article about that awfully wrong idea. First of all, write just a few lines, for example:

EXCLUSIVE

## BREAKING NEWS

24 NEWS LIVE

# JUPITER IS MADE OF CANDY!



“

Scientists have discovered that the planet Jupiter is actually made of candy. The white colour is sugar, and the brownish colour is caramel. The planet is very sticky, but many astronauts wish to go there to try its wonderful taste.

ACTIVITY 2

# ADD SOME REALNESS!

Well, that's not credible yet... Let's go to activities 2 and 3. To make your article "work", we need two more ingredients.

IF WE WANT PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT THE INFORMATION IS TRUE, WE SHOULD ADD SOME TRUE ELEMENTS TO OUR ARTICLE. DO A BIT OF RESEARCH, FOR EXAMPLE ON THE INTERNET, TO FIND SOME FACTS OR RELATED, TRUE NEWS. YOU MAY EVEN SPOT SOME SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES! ADD REFERENCE TO THOSE FACTS AND ARTICLES IN YOUR TEXT. IT MAY BECOME SOMETHING LIKE:

EXCLUSIVE

## BREAKING NEWS

24 NEWS LIVE

# JUPITER IS MADE OF CANDY!



“

Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun, and is made of hydrogen and helium. However, scientists have discovered that a part of it is made of sugar dust and bits of caramel, which would mean the planet is a kind of gigantic piece of candy. The planet is probably sticky, but no astronaut has yet been able to go there.

ACTIVITY  
3

# ADD SOME DRAMA

IF WE WANT READERS TO THINK TOO QUICKLY AND BE TRICKED BY YOUR ARTICLE, WE NEED THEM TO BE EMOTIONAL. CAN YOU ADD SOME DRAMA, SOME EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE? SOMETHING STRIKING, THAT WILL BRING A STRONG EMOTION, MAYBE SOME FEAR OR PANIC?

FOR EXAMPLE:



**Extra resources:** To discover how to spot disinformation, you can check various activities from the BBC, such as [videos](#) or the [iReporter-game](#). You may also enjoy the game [Bad News](#), which shows you how disinformation is created.