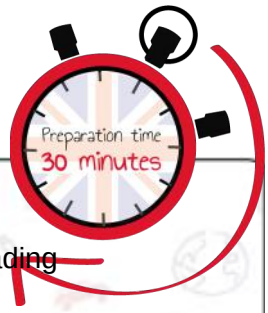
POST TRUTH

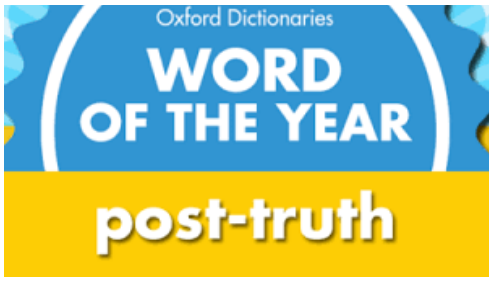


EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Discuss curent affairs, give your opinion, learn new expressions. Test your reading and listening comprehension. Learn and practice using past modals.

Activity One - **Discussion**

- ☑ Do you know what the term 'post truth' refers to?
- ☑ What is propaganda?
- ☑ Which régimes or governments historically used 'false news', or propaganda to influence public opinion?
- ☑ Which political figures or governments are using it currently?
- ☑ Where do you read the news?
- ☑ Do you read news on social media?



Activity Two - **Two truths and a lie - Let's play**

Sit in a circle. Each person must think of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements, and one must be false. For each person, he or she shares the three statements (in any order) to the group. The rest of the group has to guess which statement is true and which is false.



Activity Three - **Liar Liar...**

Which of these news stories are true in your opinion? Let's vote…

Read the Headlines: All of these stories were published and went viral.

1. Congress Threatens to Leave D.C. Unless New Capitol is Built
2. The UK left the EU
3. Study Finds That President George W. Bush has Lowest IQ Among Presidents of Last 50 Years
4. Lion Mutilates 42 Midgets in Cambodian Ring Fight
5. Donald Trump became president.
6. Mandatory gun training in Tennessee schools
7. Scotland left UK
8. Check out these truths and lies - http://www.politifact.com/personalities/donald-trump/



Activity Four - **Urge Caution..**

These expressions are used to urge people to be cautious or careful. Let's look at the different modal verbs used in some of these expressions. (On the next page)…

- Watch out!
- Pay attention.
- Be careful.
- Tread carefully.
- Consider the source.
- You should be careful about that.
- I wouldn't do that if I were you.
- You should watch out for fake news!
- You shouldn't believe everything you read!
- We should have seen this coming!
- You must be aware that…
- You really should be more careful.
- In future you should always check where the news came from.



Activity Five - **Past Modals**

Here are some examples of modal verbs in the past.

- You should consider the source of information before believing it. Present.
- *You should have considered the source. Past.*
- You can't believe everything you read in social media. Present.
- *You couldn't believe everything you read. Past.*
- You should never post news stories on your Facebook page or Twitter account unless you know they are true. Present.
- *You should never have posted news stories on your Facebook page or Twitter account unless you knew they were true. Past.*

More Practice *- Answer the following questions in the past tense.*

(1)What should have been done to avoid the influence of social media in the US elections?
(2)What would you have done if you had mistakenly published a fake story in social media?
(3)What could the American public have done differently if Clinton was to have won the elections?

Activity Six - **False News**

With a partner make up a false news headline. Then act out a situation where one person tells the other about this fake news and the other person urges caution and says they don't believe it!

Activity Seven - **Reading Comprehension**



More Facebook users engaged with top fake election news than most popular real reporting, report says By Anita Balakrishnan

Fake stories generated more engagement on Facebook than real, mainstream news among top election-related articles, according to data analyzed by BuzzFeed News.

In the last three months of the presidential campaigns, top-performing false headlines from hoax sites and hyperpartisan blogs generated more than 8.7 million shares, reactions and comments, BuzzFeed News estimated. That's compared to nearly 7.4

million shares, reactions and Facebook comments on the 20 best-performing news stories from mainstream websites, according to BuzzFeed's Craig Silverman.

"It may seem like the top stories get a lot of traction, but they represent a tiny fraction of the total," a company spokesperson told BuzzFeed. CNBC has reached out to Facebook for comment.

Fake news that Hillary Clinton sold weapons to terror group ISIS, and that the Pope endorsed Donald Trump, were the top false stories, BuzzFeed said. One fake news site, Ending the Fed, got more engagement on its top viral news than the best-performing content from the Washington Post and The New York Times, BuzzFeed News found.

BuzzFeed's report comes after Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has bucked accusations that viral content swayed the election, writing, "Of all the content on Facebook, more than 99 percent of what people see is authentic."

Here are some examples of Fake News which impacted on the 2016 US presidential elections;

During the election, Facebook hosted false news stories that included reports that actor Denzel Washington and Pope Francis had endorsed Trump. Both posts went viral on the social media website, according to NBC News.

A fake blog post suggesting that Trump had won the popular vote shot to the top of Google's search engine for those looking up final election results. In fact, Hillary Clinton's popular vote lead has been growing.

Multiple reports and leaked information from inside the Clinton camp claim that the Clinton campaign was given the entire set of debate questions an entire week before the actual debate.

'Post Truth' is the Oxford Dictionaries' word of the year for 2016.
Defined by the dictionary as an adjective "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief", editors said that use of the term "post-truth" had increased by around 2,000% in 2016 compared to last year. The spike in usage, it said, is "in the context of the EU referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the United States".

1. How do we know that Fake news stories are generating more interest than true ones?
2. Which were the top false stories?
3. Which stories had an impact on the US elections?
4. What stance is the Facebook CEO taking?
5. What is he accused of?
6. What do you think about the worrying trend of fake news?
7. What does 'Post Truth' Mean.

Here's an article for further reading: https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/15/post-truth-named-word-of-the-year-by-oxford-dictionaries

Activity Eight - **Listening Comprehension**

Listen to your teacher reading the text and answer as many as the following questions as you can. The aim is to test your listening comprehension. Listen actively for the important words, the ones which are pronounced louder or more slowly.

Your teacher will read a part of this article of his/her choice and then ask you some questions about what he/she has read - https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/nov/17/facebook-fake-news-satire

This article is about how fake news stories, written for profit and entirely made up, were more influential in the 2016 US elections than genuine news stories from the traditional press.

After the comprehension test give your opinion on that fact.
Use some of these words to express your opinion:

It seems clear that
To my mind
In my opinion
Ultimately
basically
clearly
obviously
It seems to me that
I really feel that
In all honestly
When you look at the facts..
What seems clear is that..

Activity Nine - **Sing Along...**

Listen to the song and then say if you disagree or agree with the message it conveys. Then have a sing along!
Billy Joel - Honesty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuFScoO4tb0

Activity Ten - **Act It out.**

With a new partner act out one of the following situations.

A. You tell your boyfriend you are pregnant, as a joke, just to see the look on his face!
B. You are the Queen of England, you read a fake newspaper story about your husband cheating on you. You confront him about it.
C. You are a famous singer and you read on Facebook about your own death! You call your agent to shout at him about it!
D. You are a concerned parent trying to explain to a teenager why they shouldn't believe everything that they read.

