

Fake or Real?

(Notes for moderation)

13-16 Years

Fake or Real – Notes for Moderation

Content: Raise awareness and educate with false reports,
initiate discussion on impacts and countermeasures.

Form: In pairs or groups

Duration: 2-5 min, can be extended as desired

Material: tablet or screen with download image file or printout of this file

Instructions:

- Presenter shows picture and by using the information from this file
- Viewers give their opinion: Fake or real? Discussion questions and background information are also available in the hints for each picture and can be added as desired.
- Questions for discussion that always fit:
 - Why might this photo have been distributed?
 - Who might be interested?
 - Is it okay to spread the picture like this?
 - What can be done to avoid being easily fooled?

Important information about Fake News - please read before starting

What is Fake News?

- Fake News are lies - as distinct from accidental false reports or satire.
- That means: false/manipulated images and/or texts; false connections between images and texts; misinterpreted facts, e.g. from studies.

Why is it important to take action against Fake News?

- The boundaries between opinion and facts are becoming blurred - around 40% of Germans consider facts to be a matter of perspective.
- Fake results become alternative facts and thus become alternative realities.
- We are particularly interested in fake news in social media that have political relevance and thus the goal of shaping opinion. Fakes spread by politicians are particularly problematic - they poison the discourse and manipulate debates.
- It is not the individual fake that is relevant, but the high number in social media.
- Fake news has always existed, but digitalization has enabled it to reach enormous proportions at high speed. Bots play a decisive role in this.
- Massive increase in fakes, especially in social media: 7 of the 10 most popular articles about Angela Merkel, the former German Chancellor, are fake news - people are losing track of who they can believe what.

Important information about Fake News - please read before starting

How can you take action against fake news?

- Improve your media and democratic literacy: everyone should know how the digital world works.
- Listen to your gut feeling before you share or like something
- Use fact checks:
 - **Perceive language**, especially spelling and grammar mistakes as signs
 - Check **source** and **imprint** for seriousness
 - Check images with reverse searches e.g. on **Google Image Search** (www.google.de/imghp) and videos with **Youtube DataViewer** (<https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/>). It costs little time and brings surprising results!
 - Do you find **fact checks** from well-known NGOs like correctiv or mimikama? Share the links!
 - **Report** things that seem strange to you on fact checker platforms on the Internet.
 - Don't just use Google as your only **search engine** - that brings different results!

Why do people share fake news?

- Fakes are often more exciting and can be retained better than serious news.
- Due to the daily flood of information, no one reads more than the headline.
- It is shared and liked mainly because of the sender, content is secondary. The question "is it true?" is subordinated to the question "are you for or against us?".
- Fears are independent of facts and seek allies





Notes for Moderation

Possible approach:

Did you know that? Because the sun is getting stronger, the lions get black fur!

Solution: Fake!

- On the second picture you can see well: the lion has the color, which he has also in reality.
- In the first picture, the color of the fur was changed with a computer program.

Possible questions for discussion

- With this picture someone could want to say: The climate is changing, the sun is getting stronger and even the animals are changing! What is to become of us humans?
- Is it ok to use wrong photos, so that people start to discuss about important things?



There are more poor children in Germany.

Notes for Moderation „There are more poor children in Germany“

<p><u>Possible approach:</u></p> <p>"It's shocking! Children have to collect bottles to get money with the deposit to buy food."</p>	<p><u>Likes and Appearance Information</u></p> <p>Similar photos have been on Social Media for a long time. Well-known newspapers have also fallen for it and have even written stories about the "poor" children pictured.</p>
<p><u>Solution:</u> Fake!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The picture is posed. It is a "symbolic photo".▪ Child poverty is a problem, yet this picture is not proof of child poverty.	<p><u>Also interesting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Symbol photos are normal when there is no real photo. This is not a problem, if you follow the rule and note it under the photo. So that there are no misunderstandings. But this often does not happen.
<p><u>Possible questions for discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Which lie on the Internet have you ever believed? And shared?	



Notes for Moderation „9/11“

Possible approach:

Point out the time stamp “9/11” in the lower right corner.

Solution: Fake!

- Fact-checked by correctiv.
- Easy fact check for professionals:
 - Plane is a different type than those involved in the attack.
 - Plane is too sharp to see for the fact that the speed must have been high.
 - There was no such viewing platform on the top of the building.

Likes and Appearance Information

This image appeared immediately and extremely long after 9/11.

Also interesting:

- 9/11 is one of the most widespread conspiracy theories ever (number 1 is the moon landing, which e.g. over 50% of Russians believe took place in a theater).
- Although this fact check was done shortly after publication and published, the image continued to be shared nonetheless.

Possible questions for discussion

- How would you do a fact check here? How could we find the results of further fact checks? How could the fact check be published?

Fifty times higher than admitted: 500,000 violent left-wing extremists in Germany



Notes for Moderation: “violent left-wing extremists in Germany”

<p><u>Possible approach:</u></p> <p>How do you assess the readiness of the left to use violence against the right in Germany?</p>	<p><u>Likes and Appearance Information</u></p> <p>The fake itself is not so interesting, but the fact that it is suggested again and again that left-wing extremism is the problem (or at least as big as right-wing extremism).</p>
<p><u>Solution:</u> Misquoted study Fact-checked by correctiv.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Author refers to a study from 2015 of the Free University of Berlin.▪ Head of the research institute explains: "It was asked: 'For the enforcement of political goals, the use of violence against persons is also permitted.' - This asks about attitudes, not one's own willingness to use violence.	<p><u>Also interesting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Often used for Fake News: falsely used or invented studies.▪ Typical for Fake News from the right-wing scene: Presenting the left as a problem for violence.▪ This was refuted by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (figures 2017): Crimes committed in Germany<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Right-wing extremist motivated: 18,413▪ Left-wing extremist motivated

California: Passerby films lifeless bees falling to the ground between two 5G-antennas!



Notes for Moderation: “lifeless bees between 5G antennas”

Possible approach:

If it was recorded in a video, it must be true!

Likes and Appearance Information

Adopted in various media worldwide since July 2019. Shared more than 7,300 times on Facebook, the video has been viewed a total of 240,000 times.

Solution: Fake!

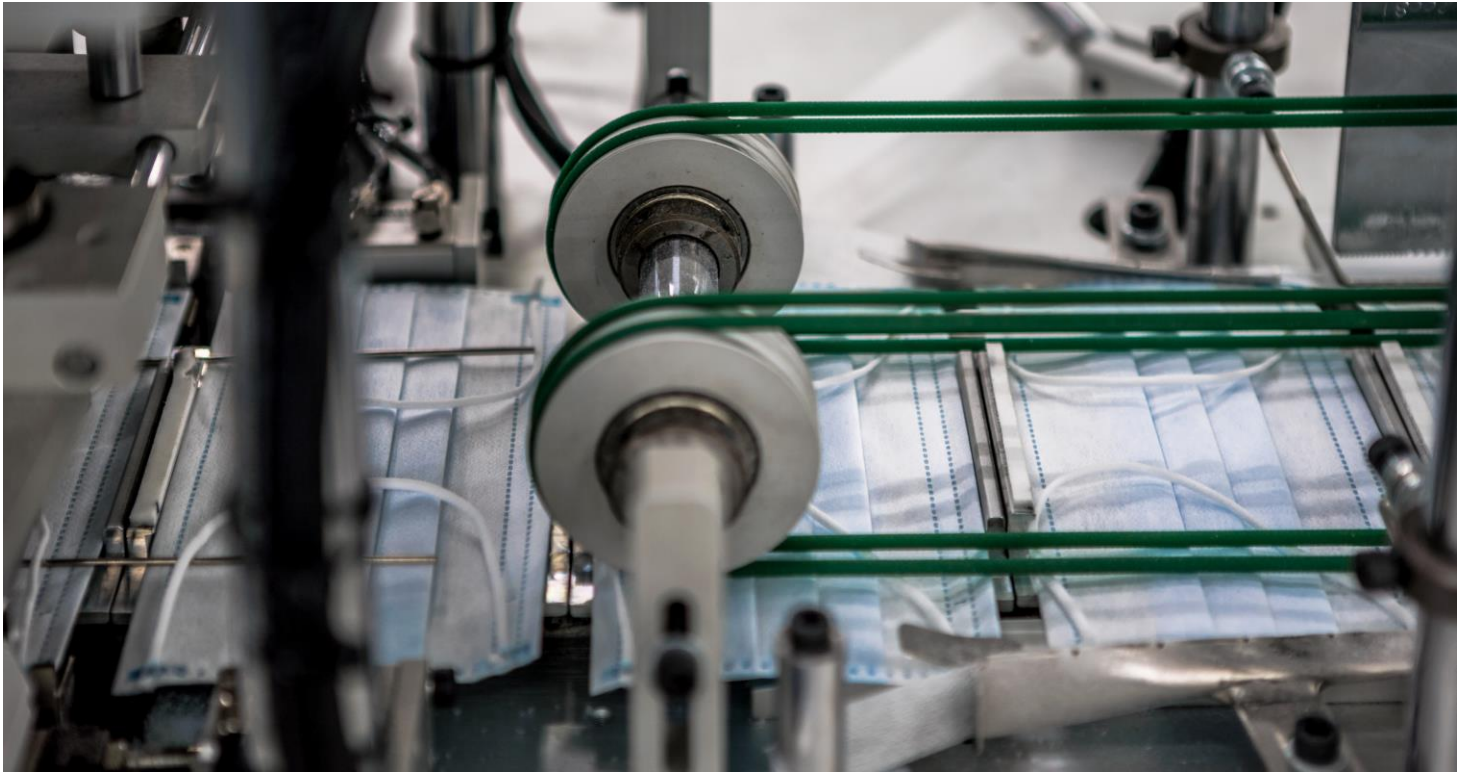
- Fact-checked by correctiv.
- Youtube-Video suggests bees would die near 5G masts in Sierra Madre. Allegedly proves major health risk from 5G.
- Experts confirm: 5G poses no risk to animals
- Fact check: City of Sierra Madre has no 5G antennas at this time.

Also interesting:

- Mobile technology has always been used to stir up fears.
- For some time now, the Internet has been stirring up sentiment against 5G.
- This is also part of conspiracy theories around Corona, according to which world power is to be taken over via 5G.

Possible question for discussion

Germany gives away medical protective equipment to China to fight corona



Notes for Moderation: „Germany gives away medical protective equipment”

Possible approach:

That's how it is: we help others and end up without protective equipment ourselves!

Likes and Appearance Information

The right-wing blog Journalistenwatch claims that Germany has given away protective clothing and disinfectants to China. These are now allegedly missing in Germany to fight corona. The text was shared around 1,200 times on facebook in just a few hours.

Solution: Real

Fact-checked by correctiv:
The German Foreign Office has confirmed the donation. Deliveries were made twice in February 2020.

Also interesting:

- The German Foreign Office on the issue of shortages in Germany: “In principle, care is taken to ensure that donations in the humanitarian field do not have a negative impact on the supply situation in Germany.”
- Fake News about Corona are booming.

Possible question for discussion

Why do fears play a major role in opinion making?

Ministry of Family demands:

Father and mother to be abolished



Notes for Moderation: „Father and mother to be abolished“

Possible approach:

That is going too far! Equality is important, but father and mother must remain!

Likes and Appearance Information

Topic started on website "TierHerz" but only gained attention when two political parties picked it up for themselves on Social Media

Solution: misinterpreted!

It all started with the "Regenbogenportal" (engl. "Rainbow Portal"), a website run by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. It was about diversity and raising awareness of bullying. As a tip against discrimination, they wrote: "In forms, pay attention to gender-neutral formulations such as parent 1 + 2".

Also interesting:

The whole indignation is senseless. The terms "mother" and "father" are not to be abolished. Nor it is demanded, but only suggested, to use gender-neutral designations in forms.

Possible questions for discussion

- Why did the political parties find it interesting to take up the issue?
- And why without the background explanation?