

## Mythbusting

Misinformation is **misleading content**.

When someone deliberately spreads misinformation with the intent to mislead, it is called **disinformation**.

Fake news is **false or misleading information presented as news**.

Organising student activities around myths and misinformation helps students develop critical awareness of the sources of information and their reliability.

Buzzfeed (<https://www.buzzfeed.com/uk/quizzes>) is an award-winning, online news service.

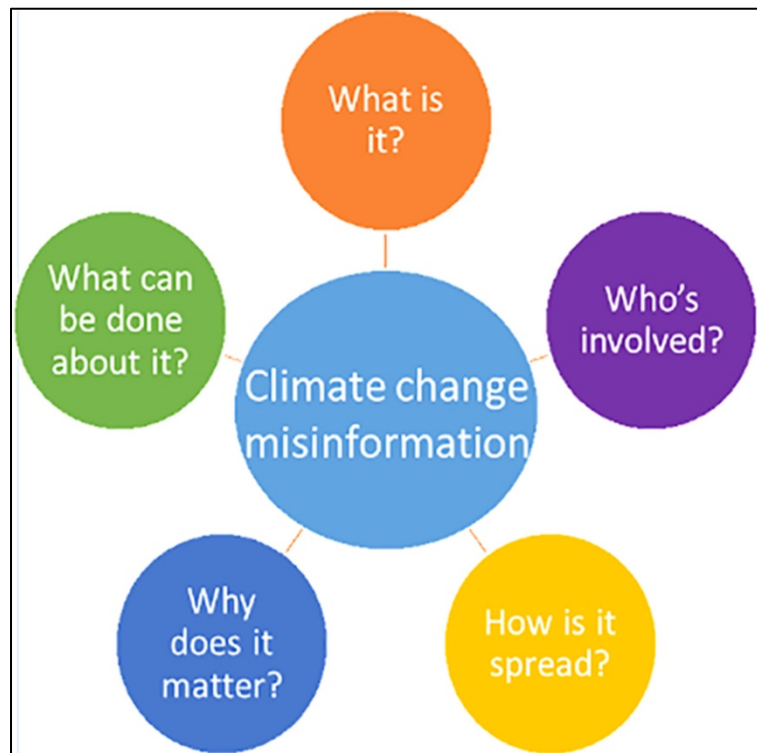
They publish **fake news quizzes**, where some questions use images that have been altered, while others use images or quotes taken out of context. Inviting students to consider whether the news is real or fake helps them to become critical of online information.

You can ask students to look at photos relating to real stories in today's news. Challenge them to come up with ideas of how they could misuse the real pictures to support a fictional headline of their own. Sharing these stories helps students discuss the issues.

Working on misconceptions can support student learning about climate. Skeptical Science have produced an extensive list of climate myths (<https://skepticalscience.com/argument.php>). Students could select and research a myth in order to "bust it".

WWF has a useful text on climate myths, which can serve as a good start in planning this activity, <https://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/here-are-10-myths-about-climate-change>

It is important to show students how data can be manipulated may be used to support the misconception rather than the truth. The different resources that are used can also be identified as more or less reliable.





Through the examples of poor research and bad data presentation, students can learn how to recognise situations in which the results are biased and the importance of knowing how to recognise data sets which are true, poor research design and identifying information and sources which are valid.

Teaching students to think critically towards all information they stumble upon is crucial as a lifelong learning skill.

Class debates can be used where students research and prepare their own arguments and those their opponents might use. Some websites have pages with useful language for debating (<https://www.eslbuzz.com/useful-phrases-for-discussion-and-debate-in-english/>) and on how to win an argument (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/how-win-argument>).

### **Some other resources**

Five techniques to spot fake news

<https://www.cypherlearning.com/blog/k-20/teach-your-students-how-to-spot-fake-news>

Fake News: Separating Fact from Fiction – learning activities, games and quizzes

<https://libguides.reynolds.edu/c.php?g=595619&p=8418956>

Managing controversy in the classroom – strategies for managing climate change discourse

<https://cleanet.org/clean/literacy/tools/controversy.html>