

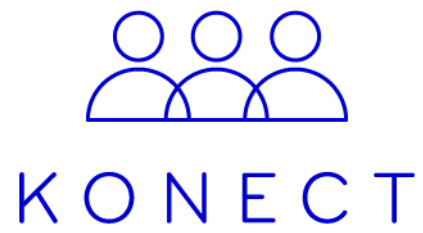
# Teaching Critical Digital Literacy to Combat Fake News

A resource for teachers and teacher educators

**Ron Darvin**







**Teaching Critical Digital Literacy to Combat Fake News**  
**A resource for teachers and teacher educators**

**Ron Darwin**



**These materials were developed for the KONECT project, with funding by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry & Competitivity: Proyectos I+D del Programa Estatal de Fomento de la Investigación Científica y Técnica de Excelencia**

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**KONECT Teaching Materials, No. 1**  
**KONECT Project**  
**Barcelona, Spain**  
<https://www.konectproject.com>

**Teaching Critical Digital Literacy to Combat Fake News: A resource for teachers and teacher educators / by Ron Darwin**  
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# **Teaching Critical Digital Literacy To Combat Fake News**

A resource for teachers and teacher educators

*Ron Darwin, University of British Columbia*

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## **Introduction to the KONECT Teaching Materials**

### **M. Dooly**

There has been considerable talk about the future of research and practice in education. Occasionally the discourse tends to the euphoric, sometimes it strays more to the dystopic. Public debates often explore how educators can and should meet society's demands in the globalized, interconnected geopolitical situations of today. Voiced concern about learners (as future 'global', 'digitalized' citizens) regarding what skills and competencies that they must have and what knowledge they are constructing (or not), both formally and informally, are prevalent in frequent public debates. However, no matter where one stands on the issues of debate, there is a general consensus that education will be transformed in the next decades in order to accommodate the rapid technological, sociopolitical, geographical, and environmental changes the world is experiencing, not to mention the many changes on the human level that we all live on a daily basis.

Of course society –and subsequently education- have always undergone continual change. Nonetheless, the past decades have brought about an almost vertiginous sense of change. Twenty years ago Appadurai (1996) described these changes in model of 'transcultural flows' that theorizes five different domains of transcultural movements: ethnoscapas (involving flow of people); mediascapas (flow of information); technoscapas (flow of technology); financescapas (flows of finance); and ideoscapas (flow of ideology or ideas). These changes have an impact on how the world is perceived: for milleniums social life was largely inertial; traditions marked and influenced learning and individuals perceived a relatively finite set of possibilities for their future.

Now education must find a way to encompass, address and embrace all of these shifting 'scapes'. This can be disconcerting. As the online journal 'Education Week'<sup>1</sup> has pointed out, "When it comes to predicting the future of work, top economists and technologists are all over the map". And faced with this uncertainty, teachers, administrators and policy makers inevitably feel consternation and anxiety. Educational research, carried out in conjunction with teachers and students, can provide key answers to how to shape the future of learning.

The KONECT<sup>2</sup> project (EDU2013-43932-P) set out to gather and analyze innovative approaches to education in primary and secondary education in several countries in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/09/27/the-future-of-work-is-uncertain-schools.html>

<sup>2</sup> Knowledge for Network-based Education, Cognition & Teaching (KONECT). Funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry & Competitiveness: Proyectos I+D del Programa Estatal de Fomento de la Investigación Científica y Técnica de Excelencia, Grant number: EDU2013-43932-P; 2013-2017 (grant extended to March 2018). Principal Investigator: Dr. Melinda Dooly, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. <https://www.konectproject.com>

order to draw up guidelines and teaching materials that are based on transnational, technology-enhanced, multilingual, interdisciplinary and issue-based teaching and learning. These materials are compiled in this set of teaching modules. The modules can be used as stand-alone materials or as whole sets and range across a wide array of themes and approaches, with the nexus of a focus on preparing students of today with some of the required competences for tomorrow (or to repeat a now familiar phrase, preparing them with 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies).

The modules do not follow a set format given that the subjects are very diverse and do not necessarily have to be addressed in a similar fashion. Moreover, in a nod to one of the recognized 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies; creativity, we have opted to allow each of the teacher/author's 'voice' and personality to come through in the texts. And of course, these materials are aimed as guides, not as top-down models of how these topics should be dealt with in different classes around the world.

In the spirit of knowledge-sharing, the materials are open educational resource and are available in at least two of these four languages: English, Spanish, Catalan and Chinese (choice made by the individual authors). We hope that other teachers around the world find them useful for their own contexts and we would enjoy hearing about how others have used these materials in their own classrooms.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Melinda Dooly  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Reference:

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

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<sup>3</sup> Feel free to contact the lead researcher of the KONECT Project at [projectkonect@gmail.com](mailto:projectkonect@gmail.com)

## **Modules in the KONECT Teaching Materials**

Module 1: Teaching critical digital literacy to combat fake news. A resource for teachers and teacher educators. Ron Darvin, University of British Columbia

Module 2: Teaching in and for plurilingualism in the 21st century. A resource book for teachers and teacher educators. Emilee Moore, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Module 3: Fan fiction for 21st century language and literacy development. A resource book for teachers and teacher educators. Shannon Sauro, Malmö University

Module 4. Educational proposals to work and reflect on gender identities, gender diversity and gender equality. A resource book for teachers and teacher educators. Claudia Vallejo and Laura Giménez, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Module 5. Emergent information gap tasks for language classrooms. A resource book for teachers and teacher educators. Ufuk Balaman, Hacettepe University

Module 6. A proposal for 21st century education: An introduction to dual language book reading. A resource book for teachers and teacher educators. Rahat Zaidi, University of Calgary

Module 7. Co-creating language learning journeys: A designerly approach to supporting experiential language learning practices. A resource for teachers and teacher educators. Brendon Clark and Nicholas B. Torretta, Umeå Institute of Design, Umeå University

## Introduction to module 1

### R. Darvin

In 2016, the Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year was “post truth”, a term that signalled how we have begun to live in an age where public opinion is shaped more by emotion and personal belief than objective facts. With the saturation of information online, truth has become more elusive, and fuelling this crisis is the distribution of what has been called *fake news*: fabricated, deceptive or distorted information meant to mislead the public. In recent years, fake news has become a catch-all term for everything from hoaxes and conspiracy theories to pseudoscience. It has also been used by some to refer to news that they just don’t want to hear or don’t agree with.

Despite its currency during these times, fake news is not new. Deception through media has always existed, and since the invention of the printing press and the camera, fake news about everything from sea monsters to dancing fairies have been designed to deceive people for different reasons. The issue of fake news however has become more challenging in the digital age. Before the internet, disseminating information on a large scale required sizeable overhead and labour costs. To recoup such expenses, publishing companies had to earn and maintain the trust of a large audience, and therefore took every step to preserve their credibility. With Web 2.0 and the social media revolution, how information was created and shared drastically changed. Anyone could publish and share content at zero cost, and the amount of circulated information grew exponentially, making it difficult to regulate. Speed replaced accuracy, and the amount of information people receive each day has made it more challenging to sort the real from the fake. Troll farms, bots, and other digital functionalities have also emerged, armed with the power to drive certain messages and manipulate debates and public opinion. At the same time, the algorithms of social media are designed to maintain a comfortable environment for users, pushing information that already aligns with their values and beliefs, constructing a filter bubble (Pariser, 2011) that shields them from more diverse perspectives.

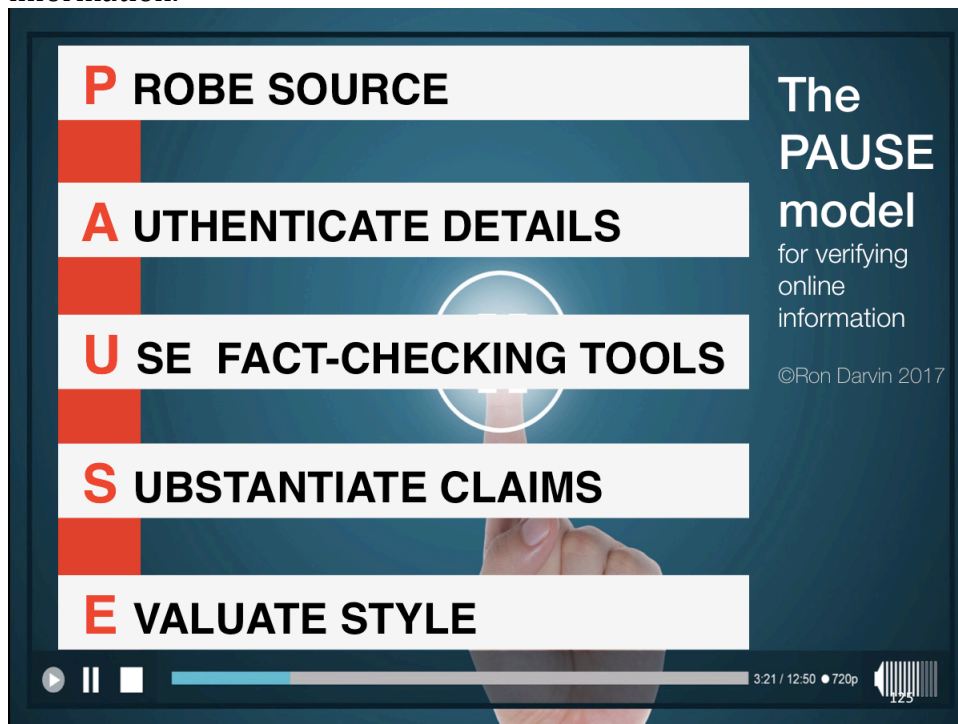
Motivations to produce fake news can range from the political to the personal and financial. Some create fake news to get their fifteen minutes of fame, while others use it to support a political candidate, promote certain ideologies, or to sow division and hatred. Fake news websites that get a lot of traffic also earn money through advertising. Companies like Google AdSense, Infolinks, and Clicksor pay website owners to place ads in their sites, and while they only get a fraction of a cent for every click, getting hundreds of thousands of visitors could generate a sizeable income. Because of these different motivations, there is no shortage of disinformation on the internet, and the proliferation of fake news has become a threat to democratic processes and civic engagement. It has consequences on who we elect, the laws we pass, and the life choices we make. Active and responsible citizenship depends on one’s capacity to navigate the mediated world, consume and produce legitimate knowledge, and participate responsibly in both offline and



online spaces. For students to participate meaningfully in the digital age, they need to think critically about information that they consume online so that they may discern the truth.

To become critical consumers of information online, students need to develop a *critical digital literacy* (Darvin, 2016) that allows them to filter through the abundance of information, to contest, deconstruct, critique and discover legitimate knowledge. They need to acquire a sharper understanding of how media representations “structure our perceptions of the world, the economic and cultural contexts within which mass media is produced and circulated, the motives and goals that shape the media they consume” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 31). By equipping students with the tools to examine the linguistic and nonlinguistic features of digital media, they are able to locate legitimate knowledge and identify the embedded biases and assumptions of different texts. They also need to learn how to engage in *lateral reading*, the practice of opening new tabs to search for information that can verify claims made in a story, and evaluate the reputation of sources and authors. By recognizing the diversity of *online genres*, their linguistic and discursive structures, conventions and purposes, they could develop a greater metaliteracy (Cooke, 2017) that allows them to distinguish the real from the fake.

Recognizing how digital texts have structures and features different from print, this resource introduces the PAUSE model that outlines ways to verify specifically online information.



The PAUSE model for verifying online information

This model poses different questions that allow students to investigate the text in different ways:

1. Probe source:
  - Is there an author? Can you verify the existence of this author? Is the author a credible source?
  - What is the reputation of the source / news platform?
  - What purpose does the story serve?
2. Authenticate details
  - Is the URL, social media handle or any identifier of the source legitimate?
  - If there is a logo of the source, is the logo authentic?
  - Are the images in the story genuine?
3. Use fact-checking tools
  - Does the story appear in Snopes / Politifact?
  - Has it been flagged as unreliable by BS Detector
4. Substantiate claims
  - Is the story reported in other reputable sources?
  - Is there concrete evidence that supports the claims of the story?
  - Are there named experts who were interviewed
5. Evaluate style
  - Does the writing reflect credible standards?
  - Does the visual style reflect credible standards?

To create critical digital literacy lesson plans relevant to students, it would be useful to diagnose where they are at in terms of applying a more critical lens to online information. This is the objective of Materials Set 1, which allows the teacher to take note of the steps that his or her students do take to evaluate the truthfulness of a news story. Recognizing how fake news has become a catch-all phrase for so many things, Set 2 expands the vocabulary of students and allows them to classify further the types of fake news they encounter. By learning how disinformation takes different shapes, the students can become better at detecting them and recognizing their distinct discursive features and purposes. Set 3 allows students to explore how fake news is circulated, and by investigating how a specific example of fake news becomes viral, students can become more familiar with sources of disinformation. Set 4 invites students to pay closer attention to layout and other multimodal features of a website to determine which is an ad and which is not. While Set 5 lets students focus on the multimodal clues in a webpage or tweet to determine its authenticity, Set 6 allows them to investigate a news story more comprehensively by answering questions and engaging in lateral reading. Recognizing how the process of designing a text can raise a more critical awareness of the constructedness of texts, Set 7 challenges students to remix existing news stories and explore how they can manipulate media themselves.

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- Pariser, E. (2011). *The filter bubble: How the new personalized web is changing what we read and how we think*. New York: Penguin.

## Materials set 1: Diagnosing the critical digital literacy of students



Author: Ron Darvin

Objectives: To observe existing strategies students may have to verify information

### Instructions

1. Form groups of three and identify a note-taker.
2. Each group will be given a link to a news article. Your task is to decide if the articles are real or fake.
3. As your group determines the veracity of the news article, the note-taker will list down the steps you took in chronological order.
4. Discuss the steps your group took.

Assign a story to each group from the set of stories below:

Story A: China starts televising the sunrise on giant TV screens because Beijing is so clouded in smog (Daily Mail, 16 January 2014)

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2540955/Beijing-clouded-smog-way-sunrise-watch-giant-commercial-screens-Tiananmen-Square.html>



Story B: Apple does slow down older iPhones - but not for the reason you think (The Telegraph, 21 December 2017)

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2017/12/19/apple-does-slow-older-iphones-not-reason-think/>

The Telegraph

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Technology

### Apple does slow down older iPhones - but not for the reason you think

26



An iPhone 6 on display in the Apple store after its launch in 2014. credit: GETTY



MORE STORIES

- 1 Actor Richard E. Grant taken to hospital after being hit by metal bar
- 2 What is bitcoin, how does it work and what affects its price?
- 3 Sir Elton receives no money from late mother's will while former assistant blamed for feud 'gets...'
- 4 Remembering Khaled al-Asaad: the heroic archaeologist who died defending Palmyra from Isis

Story C: 'Tinder for Fighting' app lets you challenge people to brawls: Rumblr pits users against each other in bare-knuckle clashes

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3310184/Tinder-Fighting-app-lets-challenge-people-brawls-Rumblr-pits-users-against-bare-knuckle-clashes.html>

Feedback Like 14.2k Thursday, Mar 1st 2016 9PM 46°F 12AM 47°F 5-Day Forecast

# Daily Mail

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### 'Tinder for Fighting' app lets you challenge people to brawls: Rumblr pits users against each other in bare-knuckle clashes

- Rumblr has been developed by two New York-based recreational fighters
- They claim the web-based app makes it easier to arrange and find brawls
- App was rejected by Apple but has attracted interest from 300,000 people
- The developers warn that in some areas fights may be in breach of the law

By RICHARD GRAY FOR MAILONLINE  
PUBLISHED: 07:01 EST, 9 November 2015 | UPDATED: 07:38 EST, 9 November 2015

Story D: Skydiver Luke Aikins Jumps 25000 Feet into a Net WITHOUT a Parachute (VIDEO)!! (YouTube News, 30 July 2016)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgkhAysnRNY>

YouTube Search

Skydiver Luke Aikins Jumps 25000 Feet into a Net WITHOUT a Parachute(VIDEO)!!

558,958 views 991 likes 84 comments SHARE ...

**YouTube News**  
Published on Jul 30, 2016

Daredevil skydiver Luke Aikins Becomes the first person to jump 25,000 feet from a plane WITHOUT a parachute  
 An American skydiver has become the first to jump 25,000 feet from a plane without a parachute  
 SHOW MORE

SUBSCRIBE 15K

- Highest Cliff Jump in the world**  
MAD LAB 5.5M views 13:46
- Felix Jumps At 128k feet! Red Bull Stratos - freefall from the stratos**  
roux 9.5M views 14:03
- Alicia Vikander: "My Breasts Are Not As Pointy As The First"**  
The Graham Norton Show Recommended for you 4:20
- If it were not FILMED, no one would BELIEVE IT | Videos you**  
ViralDark7 31M views 10:08
- Heaven Sent: Skydiver Luke Aikins jumps 25000 feet**  
RT 10M views 2:01
- Queen Elizabeth II funny moments**  
HM The King Recommended for you 8:12
- 4 Oscar Experts Predict Best Picture: Anne Thompson, Pete**  
GoldDerby Recommended for you 14:52





## Materials set 2: Identifying types of fake news



Author: Ron Darvin

Objective: To classify fake news based on purpose and features

Instructions:

Examine the examples of fake news below and identify what particular type of fake news each one falls under. Explain your choices.

TYPE OF FAKE NEWS	DEFINITION
Hoax	Fabricated content spread intentionally to disinform
Conspiracy Theory	An explanation of a particular phenomenon or event not based on concrete evidence
Pseudoscience	Claims that are guised as based on scientific evidence; Misrepresentations of real scientific studies
Counterfeit	Websites or social media accounts that pose as reputable news platforms or reputable sources
Manipulated content	Modified texts made to appear as real or legitimate e.g. Photoshopped images,
Misattributed content	Authentic images or videos that are incorrectly attributed to events or people
Clickbait	Sensational or overly exaggerated headlines whose purpose is for people to click on specific links
Sponsored content	A type of advertising that matches the form and function of the platform where it appears (also called native advertising)
Satire*	Stories that use humour, irony or exaggeration while mimicking real stories to stimulate discussion regarding certain issues.

\* While satire is a fabricated story, it does not satisfy the other condition that makes something fake news: the intention to mislead the public. Satire's purpose is to critique and raise awareness regarding certain issues. However, satire when taken out of context may be mistaken as real by some. It is included in this list so that readers may be able to detect and distinguish it from intentionally deceptive stories.

## 1. "Scientists Say Smelling Farts Might Prevent Cancer"

Subscribe

Watch Argentina Fans on a Plane  
Freak Out When They Learn Their  
Team Won

NEWSFEED

# Scientists Say Smelling Farts Might Prevent Cancer

Laura Stampler @LauraStampler | 10:37 AM ET



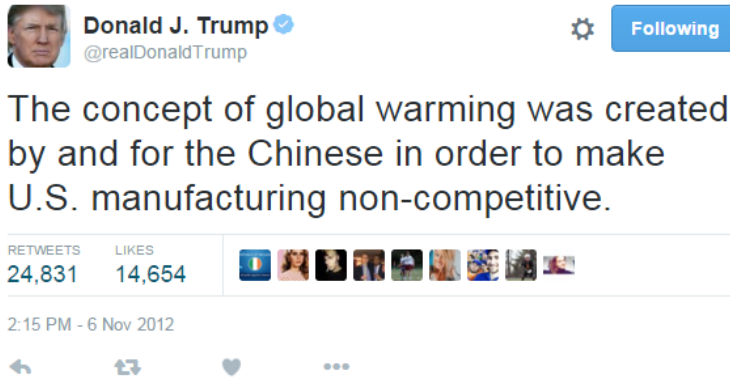
**I guess you owe that smelly guy in the subway a "thank you"**

It has been a weird week in health news. First doctors said that [Justin Bieber might save young boys' lives](#) (the "hip" bowl cut is actually a form of sun protection — skin cancer be gone!), and now [scientists out of the University of Exeter](#) are implying that smelling farts could [actually prevent cancer](#), among other diseases.

"Although hydrogen sulfide



2. Tweet by @realDonaldTrump



3. "When You Read These 19 Shocking Food Facts, You'll Never Want To Eat Again"



#### 4. "9 Ways Cleaning Has Become Smarter"



News Videos Quizzes Tasty Nifty More  [Get Our App](#)

## 9 Ways Cleaning Has Become Smarter

We've come a *loooooong* way from the ol' mop and bucket. Upgrade your chores with the [Swiffer Bissell Steamboost](#) and get what mops can leave behind. It turns your housework into a stroke of genius.

posted on Jul. 23, 2013, at 2:04 p.m.



Swiffer  
Brand Publisher



### 1. You never have to spill anything on anything ever again.



5. "Obama Begins Calling American People To Console Them About Trump Being President"



THE  
NEW YORKER

SATIRE FROM THE BOROWITZ REPORT

# OBAMA BEGINS CALLING AMERICAN PEOPLE TO CONSOLE THEM ABOUT TRUMP BEING PRESIDENT



By Andy Borowitz 12:00 P.M.






6. "NASA Confirms Earth Will Experience 15 Days of Darkness In November 2017"



## NASA Confirms Earth Will Experience 15 Days Of Darkness In November 2017 - Reflection of mind

There have been many reports about the changes our planet Earth could endure in the months and years to come but many of them didn't really pan out, making us...

[REFLECTIONOFMIND.ORG](http://REFLECTIONOFMIND.ORG)

 Like  Comment  Share

  5

27 Shares



## Materials set 3: Mapping out the circulation of fake news



Author: Ron Darvin

Objective: Understand how fake news is circulated across different media platforms

### Instructions

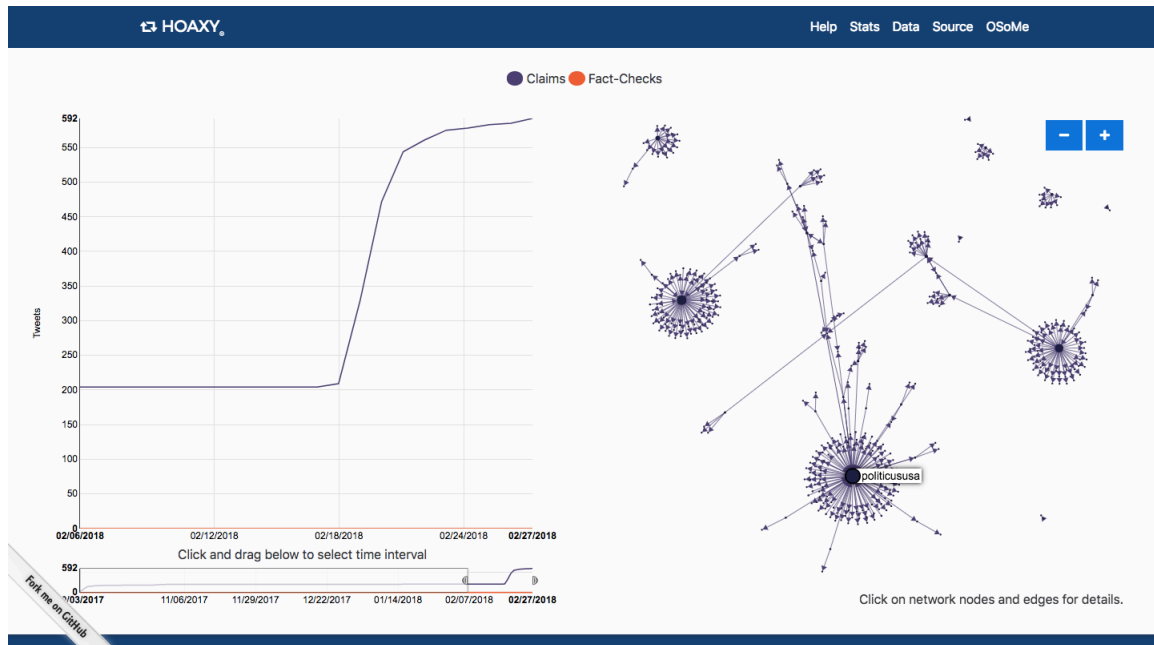
1. Using fact-checking websites like Snopes and information visualizer tool Hoaxy (<http://hoaxy.iuni.iu.edu/>), prepare a map that will illustrate how a particular fake news story is circulated. From the occurrence of an actual event to how this story is initiated, and eventually shared through different platforms (news websites, blogs, Twitter, etc.) and other mechanisms (e.g. online search auto-fills, trending lists, hashtags).
2. Example: In Hoaxy, search for “crisis actors”. This will lead to a page that identifies both fake news stories and fact checking articles regarding the topic, and the number of times these stories/articles were tweeted or shared on Facebook. Choose the three fake news stories that were shared most on Facebook, and click on “Visualize”.

The screenshot shows the HOAXY website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the HOAXY logo and links for Help, Stats, Data, Source, and OSoMe. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar with the text "Select claims and fact checking articles to visualize." and a "Visualize" button. To the left of the "Visualize" button, there is a "Select Top 20" button. Below the search bar, there is a list of fake news stories, each with a checkbox, a title, a source, a date, and the number of tweets and Facebook shares. The stories are as follows:

Checkbox	Title	Source	Date	Tweets	Facebook Shares
<input type="checkbox"/>	DNC Hiring 'Actors' via Craigslist to Replace Delegates	From snopes.com	on Jul 27, 2016	419	18953
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Crowds On Demand Recruited Crisis Actors for Las Vegas Event	From veteranstoday.com	on Oct 3, 2017	323	1251
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	GOP Florida State Rep Aide Claims Parkland Shooting Survivors Are Paid Actors	From politicususa.com	on Feb 20, 2018	191	2182
<input type="checkbox"/>	Crisis actors at Stoneman Douglas? That's not true	From politifact.com	on Feb 20, 2018	128	17279
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wells, Rick. "Same Crisis Actor Hogg In FL and CA, Coached By Media In Florida Aftermath." RickWells.us. 21 Feb 2018.	From factcheck.org	on Feb 22, 2018	96	7718
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Oh, Christ: The soldier who saved your life in Afghanistan believes in 'crisis actors' — Duffel Blog	From duffelblog.com	on Feb 22, 2018	78	2178
<input type="checkbox"/>	What Role has Israel played in the Refugee Crisis?	From veteranstoday.com	on Jul 16, 2017	75	261
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sen. David Perdue: Chuck Schumer's Tears Worthy of the Screen Actors Guild Awards	From Breitbart.com	on Feb 2, 2017	69	113
<input type="checkbox"/>	CNN Reporter Slips Up During Dallas Shooting: "We Don't Know How Many Actors are Involved..."	From dcothelane.com	on Jul 11, 2016	66	1188

This will lead you to a page that provides a graph of how these stories trended over time, and a visualization of how these stories were shared by people.





Read this article that discusses how fake news like the “crisis actors” conspiracy theory can spread through social media. <https://qz.com/1212359/parkland-florida-shooting-fake-stories-on-facebook-instagram-and-youtube-claim-students-are-crisis-actors/>

## Materials set 4: Analyzing content of websites



Author: Ron Darvin

Objective: Distinguish ads from news content

### Instructions

Examine the homepage of Buzzfeed.com and answer the following questions:

1. Is A an ad? Why or why not?

---

---

2. Is B an ad? Why or why not?

---

---

3. Is C an ad? Why or why not?

---

---

4. Is D an ad? Why or why not?

---

---

5. Is E an ad? Why or why not?

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## Materials set 5: Examining the multimodal elements of fake news



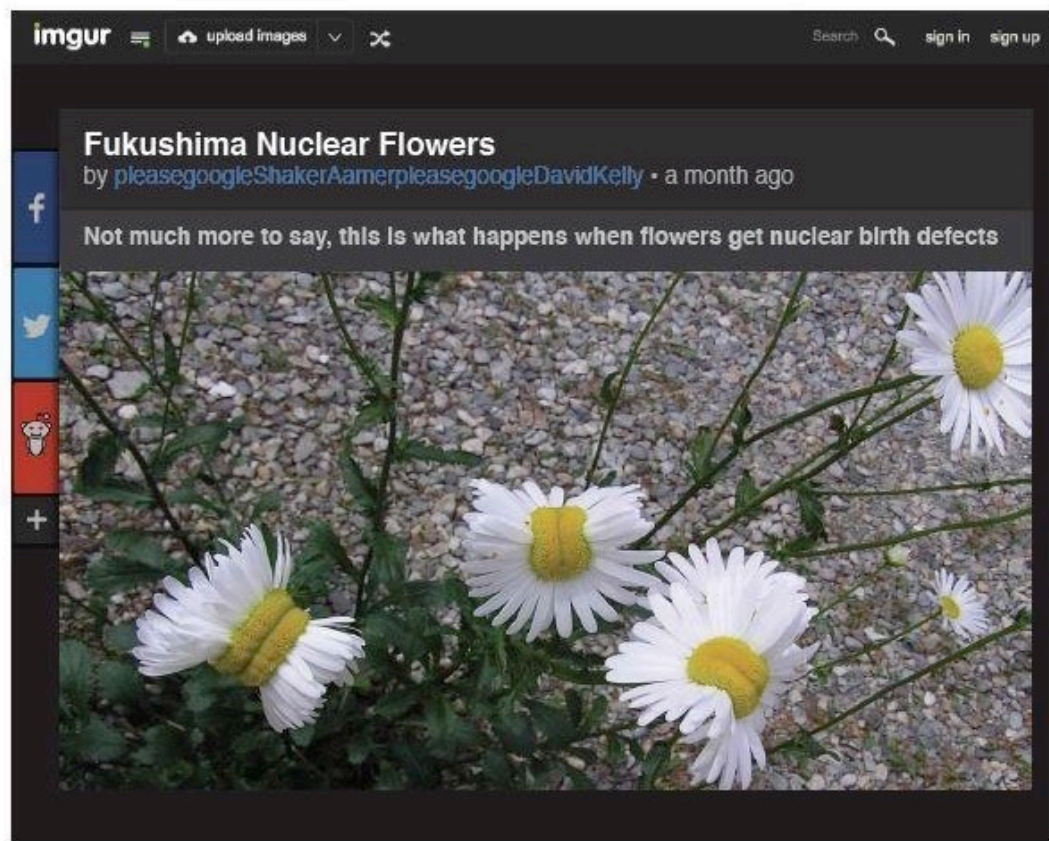
Author: Ron Darvin

Objective: Detect visual and verbal clues to identify fake news

### Instructions

1. Access this quiz and press play to get the game PIN:  
<https://create.kahoot.it/details/fake-or-real-news/c2cdb8c4-1ea3-4c34-885f-ff1173b4b30e>
2. Download the Kahoot app or go to kahoot.it and enter the PIN to join the quiz.

Here are the points you may raise for each image:



1. Fukushima Nuclear Flowers  
Answer: Fake

Reasons: Imgur is an image-sharing website not a news site. The contributor name “pleasegoogleShakerAamerpleasegoogleDavidKelly” is not an authentic name.

## NASA Launches First Cordless Satellite



CAPE CANAVERAL, FL—In what experts are calling a breakthrough achievement that is poised to revolutionize American space exploration and telecommunications, NASA announced Friday it has successfully launched its first cordless satellite into orbit. “Launch and deployment went smoothly, and now our *Wireless 1* craft appears to be operating and communicating nominally without the aid of a

### 2. NASA Launches First Cordless Satellite

Answer: Fake / Satire

Reasons: Apart from the preposterous claim, this article is published in the satirical website *The Onion*.



3. Canada: Passenger allowed onto flight after security confiscate his bomb  
Answer: Real  
Reasons: The logo is authentic and the layout corresponds with the standard of BBC.



# WHITE HOUSE ON LOCKDOWN AFTER TELEVISION IS HURLED OUT WINDOW



By Andy Borowitz June 8, 2017



Emerge  
★★★★  
\$11.97 ✓

## 4. White House on lockdown after television is hurled out window

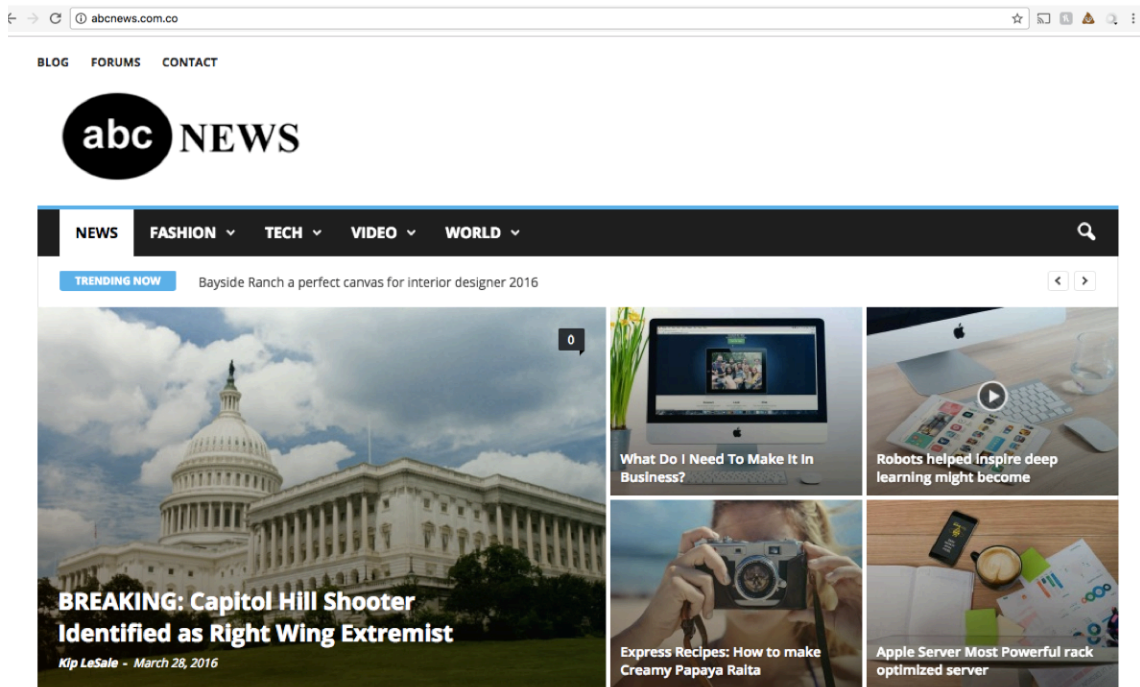
Answer: Fake / Satire

Reasons: The author is Andy Borowitz who writes The Borowitz Report, the satirical column of the New Yorker. The URL indicates that the article is from the humor section ([www.newyorker.com/humor/borowitz-report...](http://www.newyorker.com/humor/borowitz-report...)). The use of the cartoon avatar beside the author's name is not a standard for news articles.





5. Bananas in Oklahoma Walmart test positive for HIV virus  
 Answer: Fake  
 Reason: The CNN logo is inauthentic.



6. BREAKING: Capitol Hill shooter identified as right wing extremist  
 Answer: Fake  
 Reasons: The ABC news logo is inauthentic. The domain is counterfeit (The legitimate site is abcnews.com while this page has an extension .co, which stands for Colombia). A number of fake sites use this extension as it is easy to

misread it as .com. The tabbed content areas in the navigation menu (“News, Fashion, Tech, Video, World”) is a division not typical of major news outlets.

The screenshot shows a web page designed to look like the Canada Revenue Agency's official site. At the top, there is a header with the Canadian flag, the text "Government of Canada" and "Gouvernement du Canada", and a "Français" link. Below this is a blue banner with a red maple leaf and the text "Canada Revenue Agency" and "Canada". The main content area is white and contains the following text:

**TAX REFUND NUMBER: CA716501**

Dear Applicant:

-After the last annual calculation of your fiscal activity we have determined that you are eligible to receive a tax refund of 189.02 CAD

-Please fill the form and allow us 5 - 6 business days in order to process it.

Below this text is a form with the following fields:

- Full Name
- Date of Birth
- Address
- City
- Postal Code
- Phone Number
- Card Number
- Card Expiry Date
- Signature Panel Code
- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Mother's Maiden Name
- Driver's Licence
- Employer

At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Submit Form" and "Clear Form".

## 7. Canada Revenue Agency: Tax Refund

Answer: Fake

Reasons: A government revenue agency would not ask for your credit card details. The personal details requested on the page is typical of phishing emails. While there seems to be a specific “Tax Refund Number”, it addresses a generic “Applicant” instead of providing a specific taxpayer’s name.



**BBC News (UK)**

@BBCNewsUKI

Follow

BREAKING: Buckingham Palace announces the death of Queen Elizabeth II at the age of 90. Circumstances are unknown. More to follow.

---



8. BREAKING: Buckingham Palace announces the death of Queen Elizabeth II at the age of 90.

Answer: Fake

Reason: While the logo is authentic, the Twitter handle @BBCNewsUKI is counterfeit. The handle for the legitimate is BBC News (UK) is @BBCNews. The additional "I" is easy to overlook.



New York Times Video @nytvideo · 3m

**BREAKING:**

leaked statement from Vladimir Putin says:  
Russia will attack the United States with  
missiles

#Russia

#USA

#PutinLeaks



9. BREAKING: leaked statement from Vladimir Putin...

Answer: Fake

Reason: While the logo and Twitter handle are legitimate, that the New York Times would break such an important story on their video Twitter account instead of their main account is unlikely. New York Times tweets are typically written in full sentences, but this tweet doesn't capitalize the first letter or end on a period. Writing the word "BREAKING:" and the hashtags (#Russia, #USA, #PutinLeaks) as separate lines is not part of the NYT's conventions. This tweet managed to appear in a legitimate NYT account because the account was compromised by hackers who published this tweet.





**Breaking! They're heeeeeeere! First load of 10,000 Syrian refugees has arrived in New Orleans, being resettled into 180 unsuspecting US communities**

BY THOMAS MADISON NOVEMBER 13, 2015 MUSLIM INVASION

520k  
SHARES



Share



Tweet



Pin



10. Breaking! They're heeeeeeere! ...

Answer: Fake

Reasons: The Powdered Wig Society is a news and opinion blog with extreme right wing bias. Such a bias is reflected by the tag "Muslim invasion" that appears on the byline. That the headline includes words like "Breaking!" and "heeeeeeere" demonstrates that it is not a credible source. If one conducts a reverse search image of the picture that appears above the headline, one would discover that this picture was actually taken in Hungary.

## Materials set 6: Verifying news stories



Author: Ron Darwin

Objective: Determine the legitimacy of a news story by investigating its different components

Instructions: Click on the link below and investigate the news story using the criteria above. Beginning with 25 points, add or deduct points depending on which questions you answered “Yes” to. Compare your total points with those of other groups and discuss how you arrived at similar/different totals.

Repeat Sex Offender Arrested Dressed As Woman In Trans-Friendly Restroom  
<http://civictribune.com/repeat-sex-offender-arrested-dressed-woman-trans-friendly-restroom/>

### ACTIVITY: TWENTY QUESTIONS

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS	Yes
URL	Does the URL indicate the site as a blog platform?	- 2
	Is the domain mimicking a legitimate news platform e.g. abcnews.com.co?	-2
Date	Does the article have a date of publication?	+2
Author	Is there an identifiable author?	+2
	Does the author have other work online?	+ 2
Source	Is the source reputable?	+2
	Do Snopes or mediabiasfactcheck.com identify the source as a questionable source or one that has an extreme left/right bias?	-2
Advertisements	Is the story sponsored by a company or organization?	- 2
	Do pop-up ads appear when you access the webpage?	- 2
Layout	Is the layout of the website cluttered and unprofessional?	- 2
	Is there a set of clickbait links and pictures below the story?	- 2
Writing Style	Are there a number of spelling and grammar errors?	-2
	Does the headline or story use ALL CAPS or irregular punctuation e.g. !?!	-2
Language Choice	Does the headline or story use exaggerated, sensational or inflammatory language?	-2
Images	Are the images stock images or used in other websites for entirely different stories?	- 2
	Do the images or videos show signs of having been	- 2

	manipulated?	
Evidence	Does the story quote sources and provides their names?	+2
	Can the named sources be verified online as experts on the topic they talked about?	+2
Links	Are there links embedded in the story that connect details to other stories or sources?	+2
Corroboration	Does this story appear in other places online?	+2

**Oregon Made; Tualatin Valley**

Tualatin Valley is filled with inspired craftsmen dreaming and creating goods for those who value handmade, locally sourced wares.

tualatinvalley.org

infolinks

**CHICAGO CIVIC TRIBUNE**

DEDICATED TO THE TRUTH

HOME ABOUT NEWS TEAM CONTACT ADVERTISE WITH US SUBMIT YOUR NEWS

## Repeat Sex Offender Arrested Dressed As Woman In Trans-Friendly Restroom

March 12, 2017 Marshall Masterson Crime, Local News 0

Business Opportunities Activist Easy healthy recipes 2 Year Affliction Avenues Avid Bathroom Cabinets Bathrooms Blahoe infolinks

Unfortunately, we could r

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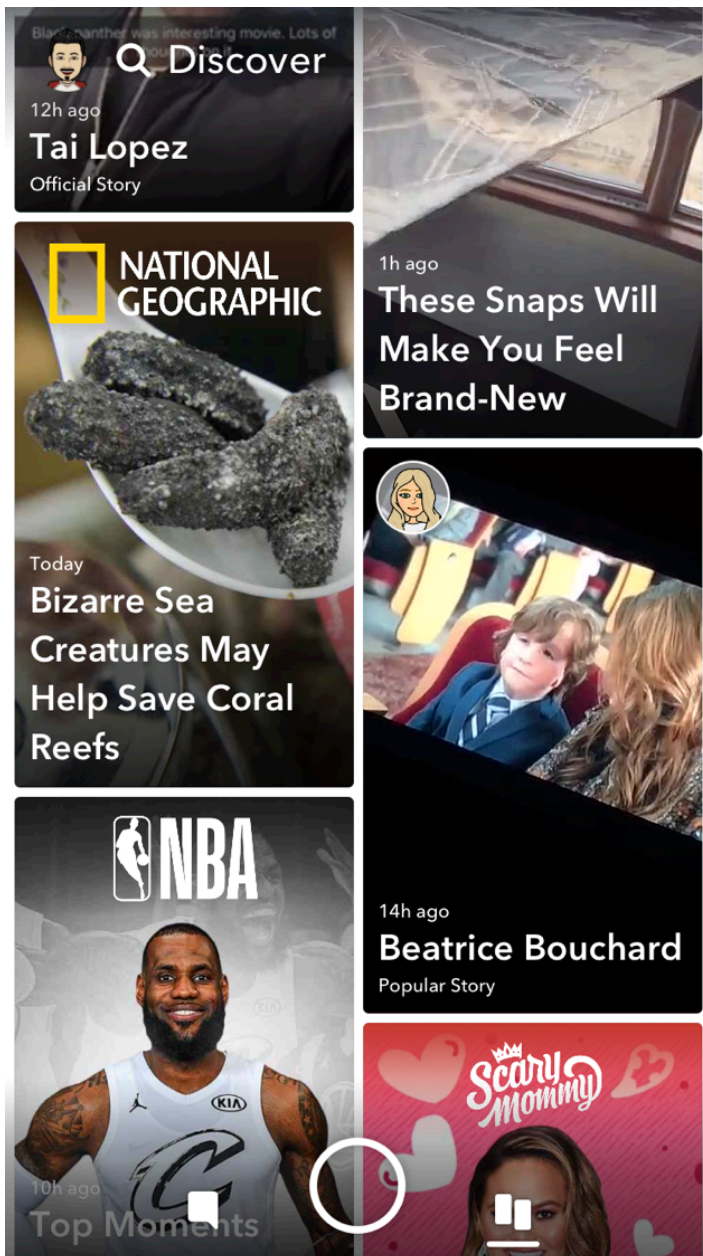
Stream and View Video, Audio, Multimedia and Rich Internet Applications.

## Materials set 7: Remixing news



Author: Ron Darvin

Objective: Develop a critical awareness of the structure and features of an online platform through creative design



Screenshot of the "Discover" section of Snapchat





Screenshot of the headline when you click on a particular story from the “Discover” section.

BY MARAYA CORNELL

# THESE BIZARRE SEA CREATURES MAY HELP SAVE CORAL REEFS—IF THEY SURVIVE

DESPITE THE ONGOING PLUNDER OF THE WORLD'S SEA CUCUMBERS, THE U.S. SEEMS SET ON BARRING INSPECTIONS OF THEIR EXPORTS.



Sea cucumbers from Mexico were on sale in 2009 at an Asian market in Quincy, Massachusetts.

*Photograph by Mary Knox Merrill, The Christian Science Monitor/Getty*

Sea cucumbers aren't cucumbers at all. But  
Screenshot of a story on Snapchat after swiping up to read

## Instructions

1. Form groups of 3. Groups draw lots to determine who will produce real news or fake news.

2. Depending on what was assigned to your group, identify a real / fake news story that has already been published.

3. Using graphic design software like Adobe Spark, recreate this story (headline, photo and lead sentence) in Snapchat format as an article published by a major news outlet. Here's an example of a Snapchat news story produced using Adobe Spark:



4. Collect all the stories, and insert them into a Kahoot Quiz ([create.kahoot.it](https://create.kahoot.it)) with the two choices: Real or Fake.

5. Flash each story on the screen for 15 seconds as participants guess if the story is real or fake. If you published a fake story, and five people guessed it was real, you win five points. Conversely, if you published a real story, and five people guessed it was fake, you win five points.

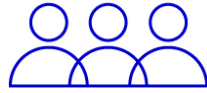
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KONNECT

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A resource for teachers and teacher educators  
by Ron Darvin

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KONNECT Project  
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<https://www.konectproject.com>

