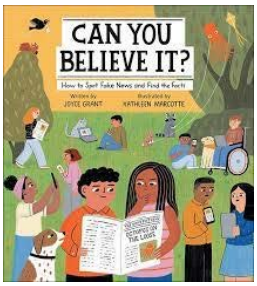
Can You Believe It?

Lesson Plan



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Illustrator: Kathleen Marcotte

Grade: 4-7

Don't Take the Risk, Stay Safe Online!

Teacher Reflections:

Book Summary:

A practical book about whether we should believe everything we read and see online, and why. This book explores the concepts and actions behind both good journalism and the creation of "fake news". The author offers advice and tangible examples about subjects young people care about, and are likely to encounter, ranging from influencers and clickbait to credible sources. The book asks the reader to consider the role that their thoughts and emotions play in filtering information they consume online, and the role that bias and perspectives play in telling a story. Learn to decide what you can trust and how skepticism can serve you.

Teacher's Notes:

Resources:

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Pre-Reading Questions:

What is "news"? What do you think the purpose of "news" is?

What different types of "news" can you think of?

Where do you read/see news these days?

What do you think fake news is?

Why would someone believe fake news?

Can you share examples of fake news that you've seen or heard about from others?

Activities:

Activity 1: News in My Life

In small groups, students will discuss some of the ways they spend time, digest news and look for information in the online world.

Activity 2: Spot It – News Edition

Students will watch a CBC Kids News video explaining the differences between real and fake news before looking at examples of online information that are either plausible or lead to skepticism. As a class, they will discuss green flags and red flags about each example to try to identify what helps suggest to students that something is in fact, "real news".

While Reading

Questions:

What is something new that you learned from this book? Will this change how you act online?
How can you find and verify real news? (Tips on pp. 45 and 48)
How does the idea of needing to be skeptical online make you feel?
How will you react if you suspect you've come across fake news?
What can you do about fake news?

Activities:

Activity 3: The Making of Real News
Students will imagine that they are an editor of a newspaper and plot out the process involved in the creation of real news stories for their writers (sources, fact-checking, corrections if needed). The teacher will lead a discussion about the safeguards that the process of developing real news has built in and how this can help students differentiate real news from fake news, even when it looks very similar.

Activity 4: Content Sorting
Students will complete a handout asking them to match descriptions and visual examples of various types of content they may come across online.

Post-Reading

Questions:

What is something new that you learned from this book? Will this change how you act online?

How can you find and verify real news? (Tips on pp. 45 and 48)

How does the idea of needing to be skeptical online make you feel?

How will you react if you suspect you've come across fake news?

What can you do about fake news?

Activities:

Activity 6: You're a Chameleon

In this multi-part activity, students will work in pairs as reporters/journalists to create a chameleon news story from start to finish.