

**WICKED**  
**ACTIVE LEARNING**



**PSHE Primary: Fake News + Propaganda**

**“Discovering The Truth”**  
**Lesson Plan**

## Objective

To identify fake news, propaganda,  
rumour and speculation,  
and to explore their consequences

## Key vocabulary

fake news      false      rumour  
evidence      enabler      disseminate  
victim      bias      inspect      report  
facts      evaluate      source      context

# Starter activity

# Appearances and personalities.



**Teacher note:** In pairs or small groups, ask your students to write words or phrases to describe these characters' personalities and appearances.

What can you say about these characters before meeting them?

**Teacher note:** Ask students why they wrote what they wrote. How do they know this information about the characters?

***What evidence do you have to support your statements?***

# Understanding fake news

**Teacher note:** Prompt a discussion with your students about what they already know about fake news.

***Fake news is...***

Fake news definition:

**false or misleading information with the aim of damaging the reputation of a person or organisation. Often, it is for financial gain.**

# Fake news in Wicked

***“Citizens of Oz! There is an enemy who must be found and captured. Believe nothing she says. She’s evil.....”***

Madame Morrible, Press Secretary to The Wizard

Who might this quote be about?

What evidence is there that this is true?

Why might people believe this?

Why is this fake news?

***“People will believe anything if they  
hear it often enough.”***

Elphaba

What does Elphaba mean by this?

**Teacher note:** Encourage students to consider songs, scenes or quotes from the musical. An example from the story could be the treatment of Doctor Dillamond “Animals are no longer permitted to teach”.

# What other examples of fake news are there in Wicked?

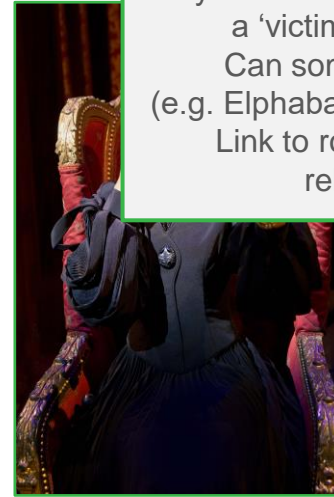
**Teacher note:** In pairs or small groups, ask your students to explore why they think Elphaba may be the focus of fake news.

**Elphaba's differences enabled rumours  
to be spread about her.**

**Do you agree or disagree with this statement?  
Discuss.**

# Why do people spread fake news?

# How do people contribute to fake news?



**Teacher note:** First explore what may be meant by an 'enabler' and a 'victim' in fake news. Can someone be both? (e.g. Elphaba's sister Nessarose). Link to roles in a bullying relationship.

Are these characters 'enablers' or 'victims'?

Is there anything that might happen in school that involves enablers and victims?

# Fake News versus Freedom of Speech

***“Where I'm from, we believe  
all sorts of things that aren't true.  
We call it ‘history’.”***  
The Wizard

Discuss this statement in pairs.

**Extend your thinking:**

**Fake news is simply freedom of speech  
and freedom of speech is a human right.**

To what extent do you agree with this?

Give reasons for and against this statement.

# Consequences of fake news

**Teacher note:** Explore emotional and societal consequences of fake news.

# How might fake news affect the victim?

***“GO AND HUNT HER  
AND FIND HER  
AND KILL HER.”***

Witch Hunters

**Teacher note:** Remind your class that fake news can lead to extreme consequences. It isn't just her reputation that's damaged; Elphaba's life is at stake. She's become a fugitive because false information is being spread. Explore the notion that damage can be irreversible.

What are the dangerous implications of fake news?

# Responding to fake news

***“You’re not being told the whole story.  
Remember that class!”***

Doctor Dillamond

What does Doctor Dillamond mean by this?

Is he being paranoid or are his thoughts and feelings valid?

How can you be sure that you are being told the whole story?

**Teacher note:** This is a mnemonic to help students fully understand how to identify and respond to fake news. Explore each individual letter in detail, using examples from the musical. Option: use actions to help consolidate learning.

# Fake news is WICKED

# W

## What's the story

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# Inspect the source

# C

## Check the facts

# K

## Know the context

# E

## Evaluate bias

# D

## Decide what to do next

## Credits

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