



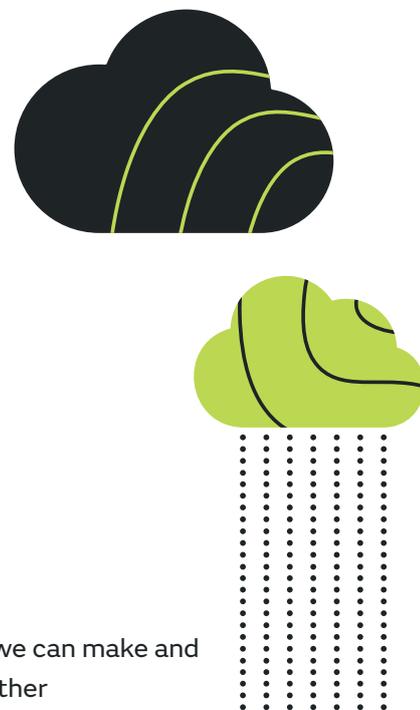
Forecasting fact-busters



Introduction

Overview

This lesson addresses the different ways we can make and communicate predictions about the weather and tell ‘weather stories’, while drawing attention to the authoritative voices that make the distinction between fact and fiction. It also draws on how prediction and risk analysis is a key part of meteorologists’ work.



Time required

75 minutes for all activities (or less if individual tasks are selected, excluding the summer DIY activity)



Materials required

- Forecasting fact-busters film
- Forecasting fact-busters slides
- Forecast cards (pages 7 –8)
- Pens and paper
- YouTube or other media examples of reporting news and weather

Learning objectives

This lesson will enable students to:

- Understand the different ways in which we can make and communicate predictions about the weather
- Explore and develop the skills needed to tell weather stories
- Identify real and fake weather stories to understand the importance of trustworthy sources

Curriculum links

- **English literacy and language** – written and verbal communication, comprehension and analysis
- **Science/sciences and technology** – prediction, methodology and evidence
- **Geography/social studies/the world around us** – observation, data collection and communicating data
- **Mathematics and numeracy** – probability and percentages
- **Art and design/expressive arts** – storytelling, creative thinking

Activity steps



01

To begin the lesson, introduce the topic of fake news to your class and ask them what that means to them. Write some definitions down on a whiteboard/flipchart for the class to refer to throughout the lesson. You can also play the supporting film for further inspiration.

Ask the students to use examples they have come across when they are offering definitions, pointing out that different people have different definitions of what the term stands for.

Prompt a discussion around the consequences of fake news for individuals, society and policy makers.

Once a general understanding has been established and students are more aware of the ability to present facts in different ways, begin a 'fact or fiction' style activity.

Show students the case study on the slide and read it out. Tell students they'll have to listen carefully as next they'll be quizzed on a few key details.

Give students a minute or so to digest the information then click onto the following slide – ask them questions about the case study with first hand up getting to answer.

Conclude by explaining and discussing the factors that can lead to forecasts being misrepresented in the news.

Reveal answers on the following slide.



15 minutes



Groupwork



Slides 2 – 5



Forecasting fact-busters film

Activity steps

02

Divide the class into groups of three. Give each group a 'Forecast card' (found on pages 7 – 8) containing a piece of weather information that they must tell as a story.

Explain to each team that they need to wear the 'hat' of a different outlet, to think about how the story might be told differently from a variety of sources:

- Examples include: Met Office forecasts, tabloid newspapers, social media, CBBC Newsround, regional and national TV broadcasters
- You may like to allocate these outlets to specific groups, or you can ask a student from each group to select one via a 'lucky dip'

Encourage the class to familiarise themselves with examples of the outlet they have been given to understand the tone and language used. If your class has access to computers or tablets and the internet, ask students to explore. If not, you can print and prepare example articles for the class in advance of the lesson.

Ask the groups to identify and write down key features of each news source so that they can reflect this in their own weather stories, for example the tone and language used and the type of graphic or picture illustration.



20 minutes



Groupwork



Slide 6



Forecasting fact-busters forecast cards

Activity steps

03 Tell the class that each group will make a weather report of their own to present to the class in the style of one of the media outlets introduced in Step 1.

To help them do this, they can report on the weather that day, using the Met Office website to find the forecast for the rest of the day. Alternatively, they can build on the forecast card they were given in the previous step.

They can choose to create their report in a variety of formats depending on the facilities available e.g. video, presentation, written report or creative writing. Ask them to consider:

- The audience they are presenting to (as a media outlet)
- The tone and language used in these reports (what are the key points that need to be covered?)
- How are they going to display their information (what types of image are used by their selected media outlet?)

04 Invite each group to tell their weather story to the class. Observing teams must identify which information is factually true, which elements are open to interpretation and which language devices have been used to tell the story. Ask them to consider the following:

- Have they made an exaggerated term or are they using a colloquialism? E.g. “the weather today is set to be a scorcher!”, (colloquialism) “this is the hottest day ever!”
- What implications does that have for the readers?
- Where is this information being broadcast from? (there are fewer regulations on the types of information broadcast on the internet and social media platforms)



15 minutes



Groupwork



Slide 7



20 minutes



Groupwork

Activity steps

Ask students to record their views on paper and explain their rationale for deciding which weather forecasts are true and which are not.

Encourage students to explore the potential impacts as a result of people receiving misleading, inaccurate or fake news content relating to the weather.

Tip: To extend this activity, each group can film their presentation and use computers to edit their footage into news style videos.

05

Bring the lesson to a close by asking the class to reflect on what they have learnt, returning to the questions at the start of the lesson to see how their learning has progressed.

Ask the class to reflect on what they will take away and how they will consider news they see, hear and read in the future.

Summarise that it is important to rely on trusted sources, especially when preparing people in the best possible way for what the weather is predicted to be like. Although we may trust people who share stories with us, we need to find out the source of the information to identify what we can trust.



5 minutes



Individual task

Forecast cards

Location: Edinburgh

Heavy rain and strong winds

Highest daily temperature:
12 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
9 °C

Chance of precipitation: 95%

Average wind speed: 29 mph

Gust speed: 61 mph

Location: Cardiff

Snow showers and risk of ice
overnight

Highest daily temperature:
2 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
-8 °C

Chance of precipitation:
40%

Average wind speed: 6 mph

Gust speed: 12 mph

Location: London

Sunny and very warm

Highest daily temperature:
36 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
23 °C

Chance of precipitation: 10%

Average wind speed: 4 mph

Gust speed: 8 mph

Location: Belfast

Heavy rain turning into hail in
the afternoon

Highest daily temperature:
10 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
3 °C

Chance of precipitation:
90%

Average wind speed: 21 mph

Gust speed: 38 mph

Forecast cards

Location: Manchester

Blustery showers

Highest daily temperature:
15 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
9 °C

Chance of precipitation: 70%

Average wind speed: 18 mph

Gust speed: 29 mph

Location: Plymouth

Sunny intervals with gusty
showers in the afternoon

Highest daily temperature:
15 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
10 °C

Chance of precipitation:
60%

Average wind speed: 13 mph

Gust speed: 32 mph

Location: Glasgow

Rain showers turning into
sleet in the afternoon

Highest daily temperature:
5 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
2 °C

Chance of precipitation:
80%

Average wind speed: 9 mph

Gust speed: 18 mph

Location: Norwich

Strong sun, turning cloudy in
the evening

Highest daily temperature:
26 °C

Lowest daily temperature:
18 °C

Chance of precipitation: 20%

Average wind speed: 10 mph

Gust speed: 16 mph