

UNDERSTAND CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND HOAXES

INTRODUCTION



Today, we see many stories on the internet: videos, messages, and articles. Some stories are true, but some are false or exaggerated.

- A **conspiracy theory** is a story that says a group of people is secretly doing something wrong or hiding the truth.
- A **hoax** is a false story or fake news that people create to trick others or as a joke.

In this lesson, you will:

- Read simple texts about strange stories and hoaxes.
- Learn words to talk about what is true, false, real, fake.
- Practice expressions like “I think..., I don’t think..., maybe..., I’m not sure...”
- Write your own opinion about a story that may or may not be true.

For this lesson, please choose harmless examples (for example, stories about celebrities, funny rumors, “miracle” products), not serious topics like politics or health.

Think about a strange or crazy story you saw on the internet or heard from a friend.

It can be about:

- A famous person.
- A strange animal.
- A “miracle” product.
- A joke or funny rumor.

Write in your notebook 3-4 sentences:

- What was the story about?
- Did you believe it at first?
- Do you think it was true or false?

Example:

I saw a story about a drink that can make you speak five languages in one week. At first, I thought it was interesting, but then I didn’t believe it. I think it was a hoax.

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VOCABULARY

1 Types of stories and basic concepts

Word / phrase	Example
Conspiracy theory	Some people believe a strange conspiracy theory.
Hoax	The story was a hoax. It wasn't true.
Rumor	There is a rumor about a famous singer.
Fake news	Fake news can spread very fast online.
Joke	It was just a joke, not serious.
Story	She told me a strange story.
Article	I read an article about it.
Video	I watched a video on social media.
Message	He sent me a message with the link.
Meme	Many people shared that meme.

2 True, false, and credibility

Word / phrase	Example
True	Is this story true?
False	The information was false.
Real	The photo is not real.
Fake	The picture is fake.
Evidence	There is no evidence for this theory.
Proof	They don't have proof.
Fact	We need facts, not rumors.
Opinion	This is only your opinion.
Trust	Do you trust this website?
Source	What is the source of this information?

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3 Reactions, beliefs, and doubt

Word / expression	Example
I believe / I don't believe	I don't believe this story.
I think / I don't think	I think it's a hoax. I don't think it's real.
maybe / perhaps	Maybe it's just a joke.
I'm sure / I'm not sure	I'm not sure this is true.
It could be...	It could be a marketing trick.

GRAMMAR

1 Expressing opinions: I think... / I don't think... / In my opinion...

Use: to say whether you think something is true or false.

Structure:

- I think + sentence.
- I don't think + sentence.
- In my opinion, + sentence.

Examples:

- I think this story is fake.
- I think it's just a joke.
- I don't think this conspiracy theory is true.
- I don't think we should trust this website.
- In my opinion, it's only a rumor.
- In my opinion, we need more evidence.
- I think some people believe everything they see online.

2 Expressing doubt and possibility: maybe, might, could, I'm not sure...

Use: to show that you are not sure.

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Structure:

- *Maybe / Perhaps + oración*
- *It might be + noun / adjective*
- *It could be + noun / adjective*
- *I'm not sure if...*

Examples:

- *Maybe it's true, but I'm not sure.*
- *Maybe the picture is real, maybe it's fake.*
- *It might be a hoax to get more views.*
- *It could be a joke between friends.*
- *I'm not sure if this story is true.*
- *It might be part of a marketing campaign.*
- *It could be old news, not something new.*

3 Reporting what others say: people say that... / the article says that...

Use: to report what a group, an article, a video, or another source says.

Structure:

- *People say that...*
- *Some people think that...*
- *The article says that...*
- *The video says that...*
- *According to this website...*

Examples:

- *People say that the photo is real.*
- *Some people think that the government is hiding something.*
- *The article says that this product can change your life.*
- *The video says that the singer has a secret double.*
- *Some people think that this is part of a big conspiracy.*
- *According to this website, the story is 100% true.*
- *People say that it started as a joke but became a hoax.*

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CONVERSATION - TALKING ABOUT A HOAX

Alex: Hey, Maria, did you see that video about a phone app that can make you invisible?

Maria: Yes, I saw it. I think it's a hoax. It looks so fake.

Alex: I'm not sure. Some people in the comments say it's real.

Maria: People say many things online. There is no evidence. It could be just a joke.

Alex: Maybe you're right. The website doesn't look very serious.

Maria: In my opinion, we shouldn't trust every video. We need to check the source.

Alex: Yes, that's true. I don't think an app can make you invisible.

Maria: Exactly. It might be a funny idea, but it's not real.

References:

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