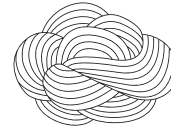


# Is this the best April Fools' ever?



## Exercise 1: Discuss the questions below.

1. Do you celebrate April Fools' Day? Why (not)?
2. What kind of pranks are popular on that day?
3. Have you ever pranked anyone? Have you ever been pranked by anyone?

## Exercise 2: Look at the examples of other April Fool's pranks created by media, and discuss the questions below.



1. What do you think April Fool's jokes above are about?
2. Do you like watching pranks on the news?
3. Do you remember any good ones from your country?
4. Do you think that it was easier to prank people in the past? Why (not)?

## Exercise 3: Watch the video [\*Is this the best April Fool's ever?\*](#) and answer the questions below.

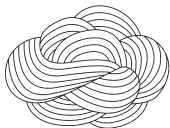
1. What was the prank about?
2. Who came up with the joke?
3. Did people believe it? Why (not)?

## Exercise 4: Match the vocabulary mentioned in the video with their definitions.

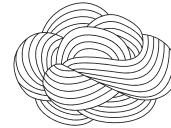
- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. an anchorman (n) | a. producing much more than usual  |
| 2. a sellotape (n)  | b. causing someone to believe something that is not true   |
| 3. a weevil (n)     | c. a man who is the main news reader on a television or radio programme                                  |
| 4. bumper (adj)     | d. a brand name for a long, thin strip of sticky and usually transparent material that is sold in a roll |
| 5. an endeavour (n) | e. an attempt to do something  |
| 6. misleading (adj) | f. a type of beetle that destroys crops  |

## Exercise 5: Watch the video [\*Is this the best April Fool's ever?\*](#) again and decide if the sentences below are true (T) or false (F).

1. Panorama was the main medium of information in 1957.
2. The budget for the Spaghetti Harvest video was £100.
3. The presenter of Panorama gained the respect of the viewers by fighting at war.
4. They used an adhesive to stick spaghetti to the trees.
5. The spaghetti harvest was successful that year due to the use of pesticides.
6. The uniform length of spaghetti was achieved by harvesting it at the right time.
7. The deception of the audience created mixed reactions.



# Is this the best April Fools' ever?



## Exercise 6: Discuss the questions below.

1. How easy is it to prank you?
2. Are you a gullible person?
3. Are you good at distinguishing between real and fake information?

## Exercise 7: Read the pairs of news stories and decide which one of them is real and which one is an April Fools' joke.

**Child-free flights:** Ryanair has announced plans to offer child-free flights for passengers who want a quieter and more peaceful flying experience. The airline will introduce these flights on selected routes. The move comes after years of complaints from travellers who find it difficult to get rest or work during flights when noisy or crying children around them.

**Michael Phelps's comeback:** Michael Phelps has announced his return to competitive swimming after retiring from the sport in 2016. He had previously retired after the 2012 London Olympics but made a comeback in 2014 before retiring again after Rio.

**A robot lizard:** A robot lizard has been built that can climb up walls just like the real thing. A team at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, created the robot to study lizards' movements and what makes them so efficient.

**Fitbit - 'Your Mum':** As a part of their latest software update, Fitbit has introduced a new feature called "Your Mum" mode, which is designed to help users stay motivated and accountable by reminding them to stay active and make healthy choices. The reminders are phrased in a supportive and lighthearted way, making users feel like they are receiving advice from their own mothers.

**A comic book about Jill Biden:** A comic book is being published about new US First Lady Jill Biden. She follows in the footsteps of others who have been given the treatment including Dolly Parton and Mother Theresa. A matching colouring book will also be launched alongside the book.

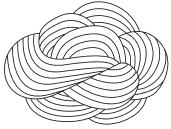
**Runway dining:** Plane food may not be everyone's idea of a fancy meal out, but a service offering just that on a parked airliner is selling like hotcakes. Japan's biggest carrier, All Nippon Airways, started selling tickets for dinner on the runway - at \$540 a meal.

**Will.i.am's diet:** Will.i.am has described his diet as "liquitarian", saying that he refuses to chew food on a Monday. He said since Christmas he only eats solid foods on certain days of the week. On the other days, his meals are all blended and he drinks juice every other hour.

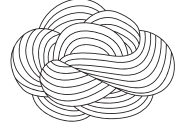
**Tinder height verification:** Tinder teased a new Height Verification Badge (HVB), which would force users to verify their age by taking a photo of themselves standing next to any commercial building.

**A mystery virus:** A mystery virus is affecting black bears in the US, making them friendlier than usual towards humans. It's been spreading in the states of Nevada and California. Unfortunately if untreated, the rare condition can be deadly.

**A cartoon featuring Obama:** Netflix has announced that it will be creating a new animated series about former Barack Obama. The show follows the adventures of Ada Twist, a young girl with a passion for science. In one episode, Obama will be depicted as a neighbour of Ada's, who helps her with a science project. The former president will also serve as an executive producer for the series.



# Is this the best April Fools' ever?



## **Exercise 8: Discuss the questions below.**

1. How has the rise of fake news affected the way people approach April Fool's Day jokes?
2. What steps can individuals and companies take to ensure their April Fool's Day jokes don't contribute to the spread of fake news?
3. How can individuals determine if an April Fool's Day joke is genuine or if it is actually fake news?

# Teacher's notes

## Exercise 1. Lead-in

5 mins

Do this either as a group or put students into pairs and ask them to discuss the answers to the questions about April Fools' Day celebrations. Think about some classic pranks and whether students enjoy pranking/being pranked on this day.

## Exercise 2. Pre-listening discussion

7 mins

Look at three pictures showing some classic TV pranks. Ask students to discuss what they think the pranks were about. Discuss the origin of the pranks and whether students think they were good ideas or not.

*Smell-o-vision (1965): The BBC interviewed a London University professor who claimed to have perfected the means of transferring smells produced in a TV studio into the nation's homes. The professor explained the science (his machine broke scents into molecules that were transmitted through the screen) before testing his technology with coffee beans. Viewers were convinced, calling up the BBC to confirm they had smelled food through their TVs - or maybe they were just in on the joke.*

*Lirpa Loof (1984): To the delight of schoolchildren and the confusion of adults, London Zoo introduced a new, highly rare creature to the UK in the Spring of 1984. Thankfully, naturalist David Bellamy was on hand to explain the little-known Lirpa Loof, who produced purple droppings and was an exceptional mimic on the BBC show That's Life. It was, however, quite obviously a man in a furry suit.*

*Flying Penguins (2008): The Corporation's Miracles of Evolution series claimed that it had footage of famously flightless Adelie penguins gliding over the water, and viewers didn't know what to do. Presenter Terry Jones backed up his claim with science, saying that the penguins not only flew but emigrated, like other birds, to the rainforests of South America where they "spend the winter basking in the tropical sun".*

Discuss if these types of TV pranks are common in their countries. If yes, do students remember any examples of April Fools' jokes on the news? Finish by asking if it used to be easier to prank the viewers than it is now.

## Exercise 3. Listening for gist

7 mins

Read three questions about the video. Watch the video one time and check the answers to the questions.

Answers:

1. A spaghetti harvest.
2. Charles Deyager (a cameraman) pitched the idea.
3. Yes, there was a huge reaction to the story, and many people believed it.

## Exercise 4. Teach vocabulary

5 mins

Look at six vocabulary items from the video. Match the words with their definitions.

Answers: 1C, 2D, 3F, 4A, 5E, 6B.

## Exercise 5. Listening for detail

8 mins

Read seven true or false sentences. Watch the video again and decide if the sentences are true or false. Check the answers and correct the false sentences.

Answers: 1T, 2T, 3F (He gained respect by being a war correspondent), 4T, 5F (the weevils disappeared, but it's not said why), 6F (This is the result of many years of patient endeavour by plant breeders who've succeeded in producing the perfect spaghetti), 7T.

# Teacher's notes

**Exercise 6. Post-listening discussion****5 mins**

As a group, discuss how easy it is to prank the students. Do they believe that they are gullible and if yes, why? Think if students know how to distinguish real news from fake news and if they are good at it,

**Exercise 7. Reading + discussion****10 mins**

Say that students are going to read five sets of two news stories, one of which is real and the other one is an April Fools' joke. Read the stories and discuss which of them are made up. If you want to make it more interesting, you could change this activity into a betting game, and at the end of the activity check who is the best at identifying fake news.

Answers:

*Child-free flights (FAKE) - Runway dining (REAL)*

*Michael Phelps's comeback (FAKE) - Will.i.am's diet (REAL)*

*A robot lizard (REAL) - Tinder height verification (FAKE)*

*Fitbit 'Your Mum' (FAKE) - A mystery virus (REAL)*

*A comic about Jill Biden (REAL) - A cartoon featuring Obama (FAKE)*

**Exercise 8. Group discussion****5 mins**

Talk about how fake news affected the perception of April Fools' jokes and how we can avoid the spread of misinformation.

**Error correction****3 mins**

Provide students with short speaking feedback.