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TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

An Introduction for **CHILDREN AGED 9-12**



Catherine Delamain
and Jill Spring

A **Speechmark** Book

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

This practical teaching resource has been designed to give children aged 9–12 the basic tools required to challenge some of the conflicting information which they may encounter in everyday life. With increasing exposure to modern information technology and social media, amongst other things, children are increasingly exposed to misleading information that can seriously influence their worldview and self-esteem. The sooner they are helped to approach some of this material with a critical eye, the better they will be able to make independent judgements and resist undue persuasion.

Key features of this book include:

- Short texts designed to give opportunities for critical examination, created to be points of discussion with individuals, groups or whole classes
- Topics covering seven areas of critical thought, ordered in level of difficulty, including finding contradictions, and detecting bias and fake news
- Supporting teacher prompts and questions, as well as photocopiable resources without prompts

The ability to question and evaluate information is an essential life skill, as well as a key skill for academic learning, yet it remains one of the most challenging aspects of comprehension to teach. This is a vital text for teachers, teaching assistants and other professionals looking to develop critical thinking skills in their students.

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An Introduction for
Children Aged 9-12

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PREFACE

This book sets out to develop the beginnings of a critical approach to information, increasingly important in our world of technological and social media. Both experienced speech and language therapists, the authors' previous books aimed to develop inferential skills, and the ability to draw inference is one of the skills underlying critical thinking. The book offers a collection of examples of real-life situations and written texts which can be subjected to critical analysis. Each example is accompanied by questions designed to guide the child towards comparing and contrasting statements and challenging assertions. The activities are graded in difficulty and are aimed at children from Key Stages 2 and 3, aged from 9 to 12 years. The activities take little time, no equipment is needed, and they can be used with individual children, small or larger groups or whole classes. They can also be modified for use with individual children where the child has limited language or literacy skills. We hope the book will prove a useful tool in laying the foundations of critical thinking for the adults of the future.

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills offers activities using:

- A range of descriptions of everyday situations, and examples of written texts
- Suggested questions to prompt comparing, contrasting and challenging statements

INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking is the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to make a judgment about it. The degree to which an individual can make such judgments depends on world knowledge and life experience, and involves the skills of comparing and contrasting. It also involves memory and the ability to draw inference, while a valid judgment requires an unbiased approach. Critical thinking is a high level skill, but children as young as six or seven have been shown to be capable of it within the limits of their experience and linguistic abilities.

From an early age children are exposed to a world full of questionable information and inconsistencies. By the time children can read competently, they are bombarded with pressurized advertising, unsupported or misleading reporting, and social media which can play on their emotions and self-esteem. The sooner they are helped to approach some of this material with a critical eye the better they will be able to make independent judgments and resist undue persuasion as they grow up. The critical approach once established will remain with them for life, and will develop as their knowledge and horizons widen. This book attempts to give children the basic tools to challenge some of the conflicting information which they may encounter in everyday life.

How to use this book

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills is a collection of short texts designed to give opportunities for critical examination. Teacher and children take turns to read a text, or read it together. Following a list of prompts and questions, the teacher then guides the children through the process of probing and discussing the text.

Seven areas of critical thought are included. Part 1 contains sections on Finding contradictions, Using life experience, and Choosing alternatives. Part 2 has sections on Analysing advertisements, Challenging claims and Detecting bias. The sections appear in what is likely to be the order of difficulty.

Part 3 offers a small light-hearted selection of April Fools, Scams, Scare stories and Fake or False news.

The texts in Parts 1 and 2 are roughly graded into four levels. Younger children may not progress beyond Part 1.

All the children should start at the beginning of Part 1. If the older students can cope competently with the first one or two texts in a section, you can skip on to the harder ones. If they reach the top of the Part 1 sections without difficulty, they are ready to embark on Part 2.

You may choose to work through one section at a time, or to tackle two or three different sections concurrently.

Children should have the opportunity to reach their ceiling in as many sections as possible. **The target is for them to have gained some competence in all sections before they move on to secondary education.**

Children with poor literacy skills may need to go through texts two or three times.

Children with poor short-term auditory memory may need you to read the longer texts to them in short 'chunks' of two or three sentences. Memories will be supported by having the text in front of them.

How to start

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills is best used with two or more children at a time, as discussion is a key factor in coming to conclusions about a text.

Choose a group of students. Start with groups of up to four to begin with, until you are comfortable with the programme. As far as possible the group members should be of similar age and ability. At the more advanced levels some of the texts can form the basis for whole-class debate.

Select two or three of the first texts from one or more sections in Part 1.

Give the children their own copies of your chosen texts. (A list of texts *without the teaching prompts and questions* is provided in the Student texts.)

Read the first text to the children. If you wish, they can then read it aloud themselves, either with you or on their own. Check that they have understood it, explaining any unfamiliar words.

Using the list of questions and prompts, guide the children through the critical thinking procedure. At the first levels in Part 1 this is very straightforward. At the more advanced levels, it requires considerable skill and flexibility on the part of the teacher. The aim is for the children to produce, as far as possible, their own questions and ideas, and to discuss different views. The role of the teacher is to facilitate this process and move it forward as necessary. This will often involve supplying a question from your list when the children run short of ideas.

Leave each text when the children have arrived at an agreed and sensible position.

The teacher's input will vary from section to section. There is guidance on 'How to proceed' at the beginning of each section.

Part 1

Finding Contradictions

From time to time you read something, and find that there are statements in it which contradict each other. You need to learn how to spot which statement to believe in, and work out why. Here are some texts to practise on.

How to proceed

*Provide the children with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)*

Explain that in these texts they have to find statements or events which contradict each other – things which cannot both, or all, be right.

Read the first text aloud. You may want to get the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words.

Now ask the children the questions. Note that there is not always an undeniably right or wrong answer to a question. Leave each text when the contradictions have been identified and discussed.

Level 1

- 1. The recipe said, 'Divide the dough into ten balls, about the size of golf balls. Bake in the oven at 180C for about 15 minutes or until the tops are beginning to brown. Makes 12 rolls.'**

Can you spot the contradictory numbers?

Do you think whoever wrote the recipe just made a mistake? Does it matter?

If you were following this recipe, how many rolls would you decide to make? Why?

- 2. Connie's packet of sunflower seeds said: 'Fill six small pots with compost. Make a hole in each one with your finger and drop a seed into it. Cover the seeds lightly with compost and water them. Put them in a warm place, and in about a month you will be ready to plant out your eight sunflowers.'**

Can you spot the contradictory numbers?

Do you think there was a mistake on the packet?

How many plants do you think you are going to get?

Why do you think so?

- 3. The new six-metre-high sea wall had taken two whole years to build. Sadly, the very next storm brought huge waves, which broke over the wall in several places. The newspaper reported: 'Three-metre waves were last night seen breaking over the new sea wall at Resthaven, soaking cars and pedestrians alike.'**

Can you spot the contradictory numbers?

Which number must be the right one?

Why do you think so?

- 4. The hall could only take 100 people, but the band was so popular that a queue formed right down the road. Stewards counted as they let people in, and there were a lot of disappointed faces when at last the doors were closed. The paper's headline next day read: 'Sell out for local group. The Groovers play to packed hall of 200 enthusiastic fans.'**

Which number do you think is probably wrong? Explain!

Has the paper just made a typing error?

Or were they given wrong information?

- 5. Last night the bedding factory in Dilford caught fire. Three fire engines, each carrying four firemen, took several hours to bring the fire under control. The firemen were grateful to Mrs. Green and her volunteer helpers, who worked through the night making ten cups of tea at a time for the tired men.**

Can you spot a contradiction?

How many cups of tea at a time were the helpers really making each time?

Do you think the reporter didn't count properly?

Or might it be a mistake by the newspaper?

- 6. The lorry was almost full. The forklift truck hoisted the last of the 40 sacks into the air and dumped it into the trailer. The lorry driver went into the office and signed his name against the number 50 on the dispatch note. 'Job done,' he said, before climbing into his cab and setting off for Manchester.**

Can you spot the contradiction?

Why might the lorry driver have signed for the wrong number of sacks?

Was he just careless?

Can you think of any other explanation?

Might he have been cheating in some way?

Level 2

- 7. Miss Taylor looked happily round her new class. She thought how lucky she was to have such a small class: only 20 children. She would really be able to get to know them all. A nice mix of boys and girls, too – she counted quickly – nine boys, and ten girls.**

Can you spot the contradictory numbers?

Can both numbers be right? Can you think how?

Might the missing boy be off sick, at the dentist, or in another classroom for the day?

- 8. The tower seemed to reach almost to the sky. ‘330 steps,’ said a man standing next to Tom. ‘You win a badge if you get to the top.’ That was enough for Tom, and he set off straight away. The view from the balcony was worth his aching legs. He punched the time into a machine, and out came a badge saying ‘Member of the 320 Steps Club ‘.**

Can you spot a contradiction somewhere?

Which number must be the right one?

Why do you think so?

- 9. A blackbird had laid five beautiful, blue speckled eggs in its nest in Jamie’s garden, and the chicks were just due to fledge. Jamie was looking out of the kitchen window when suddenly a tiny chick scrambled up on to the edge of the nest. It wobbled a bit, flapped its wings, and flew unsteadily down to the ground. A second one followed – then a third, until four little balls of fluff had all landed safely.**

Can you spot the contradictory numbers?

How many chicks was Jamie expecting? Do you think he has counted the fledglings right?

Why might only four chicks be hatching?

- 10. The head teacher was carrying out a survey to see how many children came to school by bus or car, and how many walked. The survey showed that 70 per cent came by bus or car, and only 20 per cent walked. The head was keen to encourage more children to walk, as it would be better for their health, and better for the environment.**

Can you spot anything wrong with the numbers?

Do you think they have just made a mistake in the counting?

Might there be some children who get to school some other way? How, for example?

- 11. Mr. and Mrs. Brown were looking round the boatyard for a boat they could sail up the river to Littlecreek. There were several bridges on the way, the lowest one only six metres high. Mrs. Brown had fallen in love with a pretty little boat called Sandpiper, and the owner was very keen to sell it. 'Suit you perfectly,' he said. 'Two comfy bunks, mast only seven metres high, lovely stove and cold box.' 'No good to us,' said Mr. Brown, leading his wife away.**

Why do you think Mr. Brown turned this boat down straight away?

Do you think the owner of the boat knew that Sandpiper would not be suitable for Mr. and Mrs Brown?

If so, why do you think he was he not telling them so?

- 12. Jack had been off school with a bad cold when the class visited Rosmore Castle in the winter term. Now he was looking forward to the summer trip, because they sometimes went to the castle again. 'Right,' Miss Taylor was saying, 'you've all been to the castle, so this term we are going to Pebble Beach.' Jack's hand went up straight away. 'But Miss Taylor, . . .' he started.**

Can you explain why Jack has put his hand up?

What has Miss Taylor forgotten?

Level 3

- 13. Bristol had never known a flu epidemic like it. Many victims had ended up in hospital, putting a tremendous strain on the medical staff. Overall, 90 per cent made a full recovery, but five per cent were left with permanent damage to their eyes or ears.**

Can you spot some confusion in these statistics?

What might account for the contradictory numbers?

Might these numbers just be wrong? Or might the missing five per cent have something

different wrong with them?

- 14. Grandma was trying to buy a toy for Mia's second birthday. After looking round the toy shop for ages, she decided on a gorgeous doll. The doll wore a complete outfit, hat, shirt with shiny buttons, skirt, shoes and gloves. Grandma's face fell when the assistant turned the doll upside down, and showed her the label which said, 'Not suitable for children under four years'.**

Why won't Grandma buy this doll for Mia?

Can you think of a reason why the doll might not be suitable for a two-year-old?

- 15. 'Another hot, dry day,' said the head gardener, as he went to open the park gates to the public. He counted nearly two weeks now without rain. The flower borders were holding up well, and of course it meant record crowds coming to visit and picnic by the lake. He trod across the lush, green grass on his way back to the ticket office.**

Can you spot the contradiction?

Would the grass be lush and green after a long, dry, hot spell?

- 16. The Pearsons were looking for a new house. Johnny and Tim were sick of sharing a bedroom, and Poppy's room was so tiny most of her things had to live on the floor. Mum had found a lovely house with a big garden, near the school. 'Big living room, kitchen/diner, TWO bathrooms,' she said delightedly, 'three big bedrooms, and in our price bracket.' 'Aren't you forgetting something?' asked Dad.**

What do you think Dad has spotted that means this house won't do?

What was one of their main reasons for moving house?

How many bedrooms do they need? Why?

- 17. Aunt Jess was getting much better after a long illness, and now she was out of hospital. The doctor said she needed a stay somewhere quiet and peaceful, where she could sleep well and be able to snooze in the daytime. 'This sounds just up her street,' Dad said, looking up from a brochure. 'Small, cosy hotel. Three-star chef and caring staff. Beautiful garden. Convenient for Gatwick Airport.'**

Why might this not be a good choice of hotel for Aunt Jess?

What is wrong with its position?

Do you think being near Gatwick might mean rather a lot of noise with planes taking off and landing?

- 18. Mr. Bush was happiest when he was working in his garden. Sometimes he got so involved in what he was doing that he forgot to have anything to eat. The Thursday of the burglary, when he finally put away his tools in the shed, he realised it was already starting to get dark. 'That was a long day even by my standards,' he said to himself as he went indoors. The clock in the hall said 12.**

Can you spot a problem with the time on the hall clock? Why can't it really be either twelve in the morning or twelve at night?

If this is a crime story about a burglary, might the time on the clock have something to do with the mystery?

Level 4

19. Lewis's underwater watch had gone wrong just when he needed it, when he was diving off the rocks in Cornwall. 'Lucky', he thought, 'it's still under guarantee.' He had bought it with some Christmas money with a six-month guarantee, and now it was only July. He would take it back to the shop tomorrow.

Can you see a problem?

Do you think Lewis's watch is still under guarantee?

20. Will had a new Lego set. It was a model village, with six different buildings, each one packed in a separate bag. Will started building straight after breakfast, and tackled the fire station first as it was the biggest. He looked at his watch as he finished it – 20 minutes. By the time lunch was ready, a triumphant Will had a complete Lego village to show off. 'Three hours only,' he said with pride.

Do Will's figures make sense?

If he took 20 minutes over the hardest building, how long should he have taken to finish six?

21. Toby the Alsatian was well known in the neighbourhood. He was so huge he looked quite frightening, but in fact he was as soft as butter. Even a tiny dachshund barking at him would make him back away and try to hide. It was a surprise to everyone that when a man tried to snatch Mrs. Gibb's handbag Toby grabbed his sleeve, growling fiercely, and sank his teeth into his arm.

What is the contradiction in this story?

Is Toby behaving out of character?

Do you think this is a mistake on the part of the author, or is it the whole point of the story that

Toby can be brave when it really matters?

22. Isabella was looking for photos of her favourite model. She had copies of *Society Magazine*, *Blitz*, and *Photoscreen*. 'Found one!' she said triumphantly to her friend. 'Look, Mariella was in that London fashion show on 8th April.' 'Fabulous dress,' said Jess, 'though I can't think how it stays up!' Isabella was now looking through *Blitz*. 'Found another picture of her!' she shouted. 'Same date, taken on the beach. Where is it? Oh, in the Bahamas – look at this bikini!'

Can you spot a contradiction? '

Do you think Mariella could have been in a show in London, and on the beach in the Bahamas on the same day?

What might account for this contradiction?

Might one of the photos be an old one being re-used to give Mariella a bit more publicity?

- 23. Grandpa settled himself in his chair, adjusted his hearing aid, and put his feet up. 'Now,' said Grandpa, 'about that birthday present I owe you. What did you say the game costs?' 'It's called Minecraft, and it costs about 30 pounds,' said Jason. 'I hope that's not too much.' 'Seems very reasonable,' said Grandpa, fumbling in his wallet, and placing a ten-pound note and three one-pound coins on the table beside him. 'That's 13 I think.' Jason eyed the money, and didn't know what to say. How embarrassing!**

Can you spot the contradiction?

If this is in a story, do you think the author has made a mistake?

Or is it a misprint?

Or is Grandpa's mistake an important part of the story? Can you see why this might be the case?

- 24. Emily's father was a vet, and was very thrilled when he was asked to spend a year in Africa helping with a conservation project. Emily was even more thrilled. As she was an only child, it was fairly easy for her parents to take her with them to the Ambasi Reserve. Emily quickly fell in love with her new home, and adopted a rescued lion cub to be her own responsibility. Her first letter to her brother was full of the news.**

Is there a contradiction here somewhere?

In the story, wasn't Emily said to be an only child?

If so, how is it that she is writing to her brother? Has the author made a mistake?

Using life experience to think critically

Level 1

- 1. Harry was walking the dog in the park when he saw something blowing about. When it hit the ground he realised that it was a £20 note. He picked it up and put it in his pocket, wondering what he should do next. He was very tempted to take it home and put it in his money box. However, he decided not to.**

Why do you think Harry decided not to keep the money?

What do you think he did with it?

If this happened to you what would you do?

Do you think Harry made the right decision?

Can you think of anything else he could have done?

- 2. Megan and Elsa were playing in the wood behind Megan's house. There was an old oak tree just inside the gate and Megan decided to climb it. Suddenly there was a cracking noise and the branch she was holding onto snapped. Megan fell to the ground with a sickening thud. Elsa rushed over. 'Keep still, Megan! Don't move! I'm going to get help,' said Elsa.**

Who do you think Elsa will ask for help?

Why did she tell Megan not to move?

What else could she do to help Megan?

What do you think will happen next?

How could the girls have avoided the accident?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

- 3. Jamila had not learnt her spellings for homework. When she got to school she told her teacher that Nan's puppy had got hold of the sheet of paper with the spellings on it and chewed it up before she had the chance to learn them. Her teacher didn't look convinced.**

Why didn't Jamila's teacher look convinced?

Why do you think Jamila hadn't learnt the spellings?

What could she have done instead of lying about the puppy?

What do you think the teacher will say to Jamila?

- 4. The rules were different when you moved up to Year 5. You had homework on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and you had to hand it in on Thursdays. If you didn't you got a detention. This Wednesday's homework was English – write a poem about autumn. The trouble was it was now Thursday morning and Ethan still hadn't written the poem. He didn't want to go to school.**

Why didn't Ethan want to go to school?

Why do you think he hasn't done the homework?

Do you think Ethan likes poems?

How could he have got some help with the homework?

What is probably going to happen when he gets to school?

How could he have avoided this happening?

How can he make sure it doesn't happen again?

- 5. Meena's Dad had just finished painting the front porch. 'Careful you don't touch it till it's dry,' he warned Meena before he went to the supermarket. Meena's phone rang just as she was going out into the garden. She leant against the door frame and talked to her friend. Just then Mum came in. 'What's all that on the back of your hoodie?' she said.**

What has happened?

What should Meena have done when her phone rang?

Do you think she remembered what Dad had said before he went out?

Is Meena going to get into trouble?

Can the problem be fixed?

- 6. Isla planted three sunflower seeds. Her class was having a competition to see who could grow the tallest sunflower. Isla put the flowerpot on the kitchen window where it was warm and sunny. For the first few days she watered it and was excited to see green shoots appearing. Then the family went on holiday for a week. When they got back Isla was disappointed to see the plants had died.**

Why did the plants die?

What should Isla have done?

What do plants need to make sure they grow?

Level 2

7. Carlo's uncle gave him a kite for his birthday. Carlo and his friend Anton went to the park to fly it. It was a warm, still day. Carlo held the wooden spool that the string was wound round. Anton ran across the field and launched the kite. It flopped to the ground. They tried again and again but each time the kite failed to fly.

What does a kite need in order to fly?

Why can't the boys make the kite fly?

What do you think they should do?

Do you think it will ever fly?

8. It was bonfire night. There was a huge bonfire on the school playing field. It had been raining all the week and today it was still drizzling. At six o'clock the head teacher arrived to light the fire before the firework display. There was a lot of crackling, hissing and steam but the fire just wouldn't light.

Why do you think the fire won't light?

What can the head teacher do to solve the problem?

How could he have avoided the problem?

What does a fire need in order to burn?

9. Year Five were making boats. Half the class were making them by folding sheets of paper and the other half had some thin plywood and glue. The idea was to see which kind of boat would float the longest.

Which boats do you think are most likely to float for the longest?

Why do you think this?

Why do some of the boats sink more quickly?

Have you ever made a boat?

10. Lucy and Emma were each given £5 to spend at the school fair. Emma had ten tries to win a DVD about ponies. Each try cost 50p. Then she wanted a burger which cost 75p. Lucy wouldn't lend her the money so she had to go without.

Why won't Lucy lend her the money?

How could Emma have made sure she had enough money for a burger?

What do you think she will do next?

Will she and Lucy still be friends?

- 11. Mum put the oil in the chip pan and lit the gas. She was just about to put the chips into the pan when she noticed it was starting to rain. She rushed outside to get the washing off the line. When she came back in there were flames rising from the chip pan.**

Why did the chip pan catch fire?

What should Mum have done to avoid this?

What should she do next?

How can she safely put the fire out?

Should she try to put the fire out herself?

If she can't put it out what should she do?

- 12. Ben was late for work. He grabbed his coat and rushed out of the door, letting it slam behind him. When he got home later he couldn't find his key anywhere. He peered in the kitchen window and there it was, lying on the table.**

What mistake did Ben make when he rushed out of the house?

What could he do to avoid this happening again?

How is he going to get into the house?

Is there anything else he could try?

Level 3

- 13. It was a freezing cold, icy morning. When Gemma got to school her teacher said the children were not allowed to play on the playground. Gemma and her friends were disappointed because they had been looking forward to sliding down the slope.**

Why did Gemma's teacher say the children couldn't play outside?

Is there a different possible solution?

What might happen if they did play outside?

- 14. Jess carried the bucket into the garden. She put it on the step with the flea shampoo and fetched the hosepipe. As soon as Dexter, the spaniel, saw the bucket and the hosepipe he scooted off across the garden at top speed.**

What is Jess planning to do?

Why did Dexter run away?

What do you think will happen next?

Do you think Jess will be able to catch Dexter?

- 15. Tim was running late. He knew he wouldn't get to The Stag's Head to meet Sam by eight o'clock and he needed to message Sam to let him know. While he was waiting for the lights to turn green he started to send Sam a text message. The next thing he knew someone was tapping on his car window.**

What mistake has Tim made?

Who do you think is tapping on the window?

What could Tim have done instead?

What do you think will happen next?

Will Tim make this mistake again do you think?

- 16. It was low tide so Jack and Ollie walked across the sand to the rock pools at the far end of the beach. They spent some time exploring the rock pools and collecting shells. Suddenly Ollie became aware of a rushing noise. He looked up and saw that the flat beach they had walked across was now under water.**

Why is the beach under water?

What should Jack and Ollie have done?

How are they going to get back to the main beach?

Where can they go to keep safe?

- 17. Sophie turned the bath tap on. Just then the phone rang. It was Sophie's friend, Grace. Sophie talked to Grace for about ten minutes. When she went back upstairs she noticed there was water coming from under the bathroom door.**

What is happening?

What should Sophie have done before she answered the phone?

What do you think she should do next?

Do you think she is going to get into trouble?

- 18. 'Please can you put the washing on,' said Mum as she left for work. Ally picked up the pile and shoved it in the machine. Then she stuffed her bright red tee shirt in as well. When Mum got home she sighed and said, 'Why has the washing gone all pink?'**

What mistake did Ally make?

What should she have checked?

How could she have avoided the problem?

Do you think Ally knows why the washing is all pink?

Do you think she will tell Mum what she did wrong?

Level 4

19. She was halfway to school when Georgie realised she hadn't locked the back door. She looked at her watch – 8.45. No, she didn't have time to go back – she'd get a detention if she was late. When she got home that afternoon the door was wide open and her iPad, which she'd left on the kitchen table, was no longer there.

What has happened to the iPad?

Why did this happen?

What should Georgie do now?

Is she likely to get the iPad back?

What could Georgie have done differently?

20. Amber and her cousin Joe were in the supermarket with Joe's mum. She said they could choose a packet of sweets each. They each chose a packet of Haribos. Then Amber noticed Joe slipping a bar of chocolate into his pocket. Amber didn't know what to do. Joe could be quite nasty if things didn't go his way.

What has Joe done?

What should Amber do?

Why doesn't she know what to do?

Could Amber have sorted it out differently?

Do you think Amber gets on well with her cousin Joe?

21. It was lunch playtime. Robbie was making his way up to the climbing frame when he noticed two Year Six boys pushing a younger girl up against the fence. Then they took her glasses off and started calling her names. The boys were in the same class as Robbie and he was quite frightened of them. He hesitated, knowing what he should do but fearing the possible consequences.

How would you describe the Year Six boys' behaviour?

Robbie knows what he should do – what do you think that is?

What consequences might there be for Robbie?

What would you do if you were Robbie?

- 22. Charlie and Jordan were desperate to see *The Ogre Returns* at the local cinema. 'But Charlie, we can't – it's an 18,' moaned Jordan. 'It'll be fine,' replied Charlie. 'Just let me go in front and you say the same as me.' When they reached the front of the queue Jordan was asked for his date of birth.**

How old do you think the boys are?

Do you think Charlie gave the correct date of birth?

What do you think Jordan will say?

Are they going to be allowed to see the film?

- 23. Matt and Jonno were waiting for the football coach to arrive. Matt said, 'Jonno, can I trust you with a secret?' 'Course, mate,' replied Jonno. Matt reached into his pocket and pulled out a small box. He opened it and inside was a ring, sparkling with a single large diamond. Jonno gasped. 'Where'd you get it?' he asked Matt. 'Found it at me Gran's,' replied Matt, beaming with satisfaction. 'What you going to do with it?' asked Jonno. 'Flog it of course – should get enough to buy a PS4 Pro. Like I said, it's a secret.' Jonno said nothing.**

How did Matt get hold of the diamond ring?

Why didn't Jonno say anything?

Why is it a secret?

What do you think Jonno should do?

Do you think he will?

- 24. Jay, who was 15, was supposed to be keeping an eye on her little cousins round the pool. She watched them for about 15 minutes then lay back on the lounge, soaking up the sun. Inside her parents were enjoying a long lazy lunch. Jay must have dozed off because she was suddenly woken by Ava, shaking her arm and saying, 'Jay, come quick! It's Felix – he's gone under!'**

What's happened to Felix?

What is the first thing Jay should do?

Why didn't Jay notice?

What should she have done?

How can she help Felix now?

What has Jay learned from this experience?

Asking questions

How to proceed

Provide the children with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)

Read the text aloud. You may want to get the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words

Further notes on procedure are given for each level.

Level 1 Identifying facts

Explain that these texts are about identifying facts in the stories and scenarios. Facts are things which are known to have happened, to have existed, or to be true.

Challenge the children to ask as many questions about the text as they can think of. Offer the first one as an example. When they run out of ideas, supply another question from your list. Prompt as necessary.

1. You are told that this term for history you are going to study the life of Queen Melissa. You have never heard of her.

What questions might you ask before the lessons begin? Here's one to start you off.

What country was she queen of?

When did she live?

What was important about her?

Who was she married to?

Did she have any children?

When did she die?

Any other questions?

2. The school's music group has been promised a special day out later in the term.

What questions might the members of the group want to ask about the expedition?

Where are we going?

What is special about it?

When are we going?

How will we get there?

How long is the journey?

What will we do about lunch?

Can you think of any others?

3. A group of scientists is mounting an expedition to study an endangered creature.

What questions could you ask to find out more about this?

What creature are the scientists studying?

What country or countries does it live in?

What is its habitat?

Why is it in danger of going extinct?

Where is the funding for this expedition coming from?

Can you think of any more questions?

4. Tom's dad is planning to take the family to visit a castle. Tom is not sure he can face yet another castle! What questions might he ask to find out if this expedition is going to be more fun and interesting than Dad's last castle visit was?

What is the name of the castle?

Where is it?

Who used to live in it?

Does anyone live in it now?

Is much of the castle left, or is it a ruin?

Were any battles fought over it?

Are there any outdoor activities?

Does it have a dungeon?

Does it have a café?

Any others?

5. A small group of indigenous people has been discovered living in a remote area of jungle. What questions will the world be asking about this?

What country have these people been found in?

Who found them?

What were the explorers looking for?

How many of these people do the explorers think there are?

Do they think there are other groups still to be found?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

What sort of dwellings do these people have?

What is their diet?

Do they kill animals for food?

If so, what weapons do they have?

Any others?

6. A ship has become stuck in ice during a voyage to study climate change. The story has gone viral on social media. You missed the first mention of it, so you want to catch up on it from the beginning.

What questions would you ask?

Where were they going?

Why did they get stuck?

Where are they stuck?

How long have they been stuck?

Is anybody hurt or ill?

How much food have they got and how long can they survive on their provisions?

What plans are there for getting more supplies to them?

What plans are there for rescuing them?

Did you think of any other questions?

Level 2 Getting details

Explain that these texts are all about getting details. Details are small items of information that tell you more about a thing, a person, or an event. For example, you know your friend has a dog. You might ask what kind it is, how big it is, what colour it is, how fast it can run, whether it is long haired or short haired.

Challenge the children to ask as many questions about the subject of the text as they can think of. When they run out of ideas, supply another question from your list. Prompt to get as many questions as possible.

7. A serious crash has taken place between two trains on a busy railway line. An enquiry has been set up to investigate the causes.

What questions might you ask to find out more about this accident? How many can you think of?

What caused the crash?

Where exactly did it happen?

When did it happen?

Were the trains very full?

Was anyone hurt?

If so, how badly, and how many people?

Did you think of any other questions?

8. A well-known businessman has set up a generous grant for schools in Wayshire. The grants are designed to help young athletes get the best possible training.

What questions might you want to ask about this grant?

Are both primary and secondary schools included?

Are all the schools in Wayshire included in the scheme? So, would your school be included?

How young can children qualify for a grant?

What sports are included?

What do you have to do to qualify?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

How much is each grant worth?

Where would you go for your training?

Did you think of any other questions?

- 9. An adventure holiday offers the chance to be ‘cast away’ on a small island for a day and a night without adults. Children taking part are given two days’ training in bush craft before being ‘cast away’.**

What questions would you want to ask about this adventure before deciding whether you would like to try it?

Whereabouts does this adventure holiday take place?

Do you get cast away alone, or with one or more friends?

What is the island like?

Does it have fresh water?

What equipment and provisions are you given to use on the island?

Do you have a tent?

What happens if you run into trouble, or get really frightened or unhappy?

Are you allowed to take your mobiles?

How many of these questions did you think of? Did you think of any others?

- 10. Your school announces plans for students to do ‘exchanges’ with children from another country.**

What questions would you want to ask about this?

*Do you **have** to take part in this scheme, or is it voluntary?*

What age do you have to be to take part?

Do boys have to exchange with boys, and girls with girls, or can you choose?

Which holidays would the exchanges take place in?

Which country/countries will the exchange students come from?

How long does an exchange visit last?

Do the exchange visits take place in the same year?

How many of these questions did you think of asking? Any others?

11. The head teacher tells you that after half term, Years 5 and 6 will be joining each other once a week for certain subjects.

What details would you want before deciding whether you think this is a good idea?

What is the reason for this plan?

Is it to enhance learning or is it something to do with not having enough teachers?

Which subjects will they be studying?

Who will teach these groups?

Where will these classes take place? Most classrooms wouldn't be big enough.

How many of these questions did you think of? Any others?

12. The violent gales at the weekend blew down several ancient trees. Some of the trees in one of Suffolk's best loved beauty-spots are no more. Meetings will be held to discuss what should be done.

What questions might you ask to get further details about this disaster?

What kind of trees were they?

Which beauty spot is the one where the trees were blown down?

How many trees were blown down?

How many are left?

Who owns the land and the trees?

Who will decide what is to happen next?

If the decision is to plant new trees, where will the money come from?

What sort of trees will be planted, and who will make that choice?

What will happen to the fallen trees?

Any other questions?

Level 3 Making choices

Explain that these texts are about problems that have to be solved. Several different solutions are suggested. The children's job is to see what advantages and disadvantages there might be in each solution, and decide which one they would recommend.

Go through the possible courses of action, one at a time. Challenge the students to think of questions that might arise about each one. Aim to achieve some discussion. Finally ask the students which solution they think would be best. Do they agree with each other?

13. A village in Africa is regularly invaded by wild elephants, who come to drink at the village pond. On the way to the pond they eat crops, trample down vegetable plots, and damage fences. They can also be a danger to humans.

Three possible plans have been suggested:

- a. Erect a fence round the village with beehives hung from it. When the elephants touch the wire and make the hives swing, the bees fly out in angry swarms. Elephants are afraid of bees.**

What problems might arise with Plan a?

Might the children in the village get stung?

What additional benefits might this plan bring to the village?

Could the villagers use the honey that the bees produce?

- b. Put up poles round the village with loudspeakers on them playing the sound of tigers roaring. Elephants are afraid of tigers.**

What problems might arise with Plan b?

Might the roaring attract other tigers which could be even more dangerous?

What benefits might this plan bring to the village?

The roaring might scare away other animals which may also be causing damage.

- c. Make a pond for the elephants some way away from the village.**

What problems might arise with Plan c?

There might be a lot of work and expense keeping the pond full and in working order.

What additional benefits might this plan bring?

In dry weather, the pond would be useful for other animals to drink, including domestic animals belonging to the village.

Which plan would you recommend the villagers to adopt?

14. The sports club your family belongs to has got to have extensive repairs to its roof. It's a big building, so it may not be necessary to close all of it during the repairs. The committee discuss various options.

What would you want to know about the various plans? What would be the advantages and disadvantages?

a. Close the whole building. This would probably be the quickest way to get the job done.

Would it be cheaper than doing it any other way?

Could the building firm guarantee how long it would take?

How much money would the club lose if they had to compensate all the members for lack of use of the club?

Wouldn't quite a few members move to a different club?

b. Close one facility (judo/dance/swimming etc.) at a time

How much more would this plan cost?

How would they decide which ones to close?

Would all of them have to close at some point?

Would the most popular ones be able to stay open?

How long would it be before the whole club was open again?

c. Close all but the most popular facilities

Which sports do they think are the most popular?

Do they include any of your favourite sports?

Would even these ones have to close at some point?

15. Susie is planning her birthday party. Among her friends there are two who hate each other. They are always quarrelling. Susie is wondering what to do. These are the possibilities she is considering.

a. Invite them both, but ask them privately to be polite to each other at the party so they don't spoil things.

Do you think this plan would work?

Do you think the girls would still quarrel at the party and spoil it for everybody else?

b. Ask one of them, and invite the other one to tea another day on her own.

What do you think of this plan?

Won't the one who doesn't go to the party still be jealous, and blame the other?

c. Don't ask either of them, and explain to them what your reason is. Maybe this will make them try harder to get on with each other.

Might this make matters worse between the quarrelling girls?

Might they just blame each other for not being asked to the party?

Which plan would you recommend Susie to carry out?

16. One of the London underground lines has become dangerously overcrowded at rush hour. The management is faced with choices as to what to do. Here are some of the possibilities they discussed. Consider the benefits and drawbacks of the three schemes.

a. Put on more trains at rush hour for this particular line.

Might this mean fewer trains on some other lines, as some would have to be switched?

Are there equally huge crowds on other lines at rush hour too?

b. Build more carriages so that the trains can be longer.

This is a long-term solution.

It would take months or years to deliver.

It would be expensive and fares would have to go up to pay for it.

c. Have railway staff policing the platforms at rush hour, able to ration the numbers getting on the trains.

This might mean recruiting and paying for more staff, mightn't it? That would have an effect on fares.

Do you think it might cause angry outbursts among frustrated passengers who are stopped from getting on a train?

It would possibly be putting the railway staff in danger.

Which one of these plans would you adopt if you were managing the underground?

- 17. Mr. Brown, a very grumpy man, has moved from Birmingham to a small village. The house he has bought is right by the church. The church clock chimes the hours and the quarter hours, night and day. Mr. Brown complains that the chimes keep him and Mrs. Brown awake at night, and he wants them stopped. Nobody else in the village has ever complained.**

The village committee discussed various possibilities. What do you think of them?

- a. Switch the chimes off altogether**

Is it fair to do something just for one person's benefit, out of a whole village?

- b. Switch them off at night**

Again, is this fair? Other villagers may find the chimes useful.

On the other hand, some of the other villagers may find the chimes disturb their sleep.

- c. Switch just the quarter hour chimes off at night**

Is this a good compromise?

Would that really make much difference? Wouldn't the chimes on the hour still be disturbing?

- d. Do nothing**

Mightn't the committee just tell Mr. Brown to put up with the noise? After all, he knew about the chimes when he bought the house, didn't he?

Which plan would you recommend the committee to adopt?

- 18. Mr. Brown has another complaint. Farmer Mason takes his cows along the village road twice a day to his dairy for milking. They do leave some mess on the road, and traffic can be held up for a few minutes morning and evening. Mr. Brown says the mess on the road makes his car dirty, and traffic hold-ups make him late for work. There is a longer way round that the cows could go, but it is a lot further, and only possible if they are in certain fields.**

What options might the village committee consider?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

- a. Tell Mr. Brown that he is living in the country now, and this is just something he will have to put up with.**

This would leave Mr. Brown very angry, wouldn't it, and less likely to try to make friends and play a useful part in village life.

- b. Tell Farmer Mason to take his cows by the longer route**

Do you think changing the cows' route would benefit anyone else besides Mr. Brown?

Everyone else suffers from splashed cars and delays in getting to work, don't they?

Couldn't Mr. Brown leave for work a few minutes earlier to avoid being held up?

The cows go through the village at exactly the same time every day.

What if Farmer Mason moved the cows a little bit earlier or a little bit later?

Would this be fair? This is Farmer Mason's livelihood, after all. The cows have to be milked punctually, so that the milk can be collected from the dairy on time.

- c. A compromise solution: Ask Farmer Mason to use the longer route when the cows are in the right fields. It would be for about eight weeks in the year.**

Do you think this is a fair compromise? Or would you still be on the side of either Mr. Brown or Farmer Mason?

What do you think the committee should decide to do?

Level 4 Forming judgements

Explain that these texts are about judging the merits of a decision, plan, or action.

When you have read a text and asked the children for their questions, you may have to offer a first question from your list as an example. Prompt and help as necessary. Spend some time on the final question you put to the students.

- 19. Dad was wondering where to take the family for lunch for Milly's birthday. He remembered noticing a sign outside the village of Little Ridding which said, 'The Peach Tree. Voted the best place to eat in the village'. 'That could be worth a try,' he thought.**

Think of some questions that would help Dad make up his mind.

Who organized this vote. How was it done?

How long ago was this vote taken?

How many people were asked to vote about the restaurant?

How many people live in the village? So, what percentage of people voted?

What ages were the people questioned?

Are there other restaurants in the village, or is The Peach Tree the only one?!

Would your questions show Dad whether or not the Peach Tree is a special place?

- 20. He had had a long day at the local dog show, but Jack said it was worth it. His cocker spaniel puppy had won a rosette, and Jack boasted to his sister that Monty would one day win Best in Show at Crufts. Sally is a bit doubtful about Monty's win, as nobody is sure that Monty is actually a pedigree dog, or exactly how old he is.**

Can you think of some questions she might have wanted to ask Jack about Monty's win?

What was the name of the class Monty was in?

Were they all sorts of breeds or just cocker spaniels?

Were they all puppies or a mixture of ages?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

Was his rosette for a first or a place? Or for something like the Cheekiest Dog?

How many dogs were there in the class that Monty won?

Would your questions show whether Monty has won a really significant rosette?

21. At the end of the holidays, Betsy claimed to be the winner of the Holiday Reading Competition. The challenge had been to read eight books, six fiction and two nonfiction, including one travel book and one by a foreign author. Betsy knew she hadn't met all the conditions, but she was pretty sure nobody else had either.

Can you think of some questions the judges might have wanted to ask Betsy, to be sure that she deserved to be the winner?

How many books did she actually read?

How many were fiction, and how many non-fiction?

Who was the foreign author, and what nationality was he/she?

What country was the travel book about?

Would your questions show whether Betsy deserved the prize?

22. A notice went up on the board outside the Scout Hut, and everyone concerned was messaged about it. The committee had decided that for one evening a week, Tuesday, the Scout Hut would be made available for use by different local groups. The Scouts would continue to have the use of the hut for the other six days.

What questions might people want to ask about this plan?

Who will benefit from this decision? (might be Keep Fit, Yoga, Mothers and Toddlers, Film Club, Youth Band, Ramblers Club, Art Group, etc.)

Where else in the village can these other groups meet? Is there anywhere?

Who will be disadvantaged? (The Scouts will lose one night, but they have the other six nights of the week. Were they actually using the hut on Tuesdays?)

Who might be upset? If the band night is noisy, might it upset near neighbours?

Who would be responsible on the nights when the different groups use the hut?

Who would see that it is left clean, the lights are turned off, the doors locked?

Who would pay for the electricity on the club nights?

Would your questions help you decide whether this is a good scheme?

23. A group of parents, who all have plots on the same allotment, have come up with an idea. They are going to give any child who is interested a small patch of ground for themselves where they can grow flowers or vegetables.

What questions might people want to ask about this scheme?

What could be good about this scheme?

What problems could it cause? What could go wrong?

What would parents need to do to see that the scheme runs smoothly?

What arrangements would parents need to make to be sure there are always responsible adults available?

What age could children join the scheme?

What about families who find it hard to pay for extra seeds, plants and tools?

What about children whose parents don't have an allotment but who really want to join this scheme?

Would your questions help to show whether this is a good scheme or not?

24. Your school has been given a generous gift. The donor will pay for Year 5 to have a whole weekend away, with all activities included.

What questions would teachers and parents want to ask about this plan?

Does the weekend have to be educational?

Can it be based around sport?

Could they go abroad?

If a sporting venue is chosen, what would be best – a campsite or a hostel?

Could it be a hotel?

Where would offer the most choice of activities?

Where has the class made visits before?

Where was most popular?

Is there anywhere where people would love to go again?

What is the top limit of funding?

How will the decision be made?

Would your questions help parents and teachers to decide whether to take advantage of this offer?

Part 2

Analysing advertisements

Advertisements sell you something – an object, an action, an idea. They do everything they can to persuade you to go for it!

How to proceed

*Provide the children with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)*

Explain that these texts are about thinking of different ways in which things could happen, or different answers to problems could be found.

Read the first text aloud. You may want to get the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words.

Now ask the children the questions. Encourage discussion and debate as you go along. Leave each text when an agreed and sensible position has been reached.

Level 1

1. THE BRAND NEW JUMBOBURGER! A three-course feast in a bite for only £2!

Would this advertisement make you want to try the new burger? What questions would you want to think about before you decide?

Could you get your mouth round a burger this size?

Would mince and cheese and tomato be a nice mixture of tastes?

The advertisement says, 'Only £2'. What does the average burger cost? Is the Jumboburger equally cheap? Cheaper? More expensive?

*If the **jumboburger** is more expensive than others, is it worth the extra money?*

2. BOYS AND GIRLS! YOU NEED A NEW FLEECE! Be up to the minute, and get our brand-new style while stocks last! You have three weeks! Worldwide Fleeces.

Would this advertisement make you want to buy a new fleece? What questions might you want to think about before you decide?

Do you actually need a new fleece? What's the matter with your old one?

Do you like the new style?

Are stocks really likely to run out if this is a brand-new fleece just produced? You could probably get one later on if you decide to wait, and the price might come down.

Why do the manufacturers want you to believe that stocks will run out in three weeks?

3. SUPREMA QUARTZ WATCH BARGAIN! The Fairy Watch House has this popular watch at a lower price than any other retailer. Outshine your friends when you wear this little beauty. Comes with its own velvet-lined box. Only £55.

Would this advertisement make you want a Suprema Watch? Questions to think about before you decide:

What does 'only' mean? Does it mean that the watch is cheaper than other similar watches?

Is the Fairy Watch House price really lower than prices elsewhere? (You can quickly make some comparisons online.)

*Do you **need** a box for it? (You might find a Suprema watch cheaper where they sell it without a box.)*

Would you want to pay to have velvet lining in a box?

Is your watch going to live in its box?

4. NEW SMARTPHONE FROM PLUM! RETAILING FOR UNDER £500 – THE MOMENT EVERYONE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR! Don't be left at the starting gate!

Your older brother has been saving up for a new phone, but he wasn't planning to spend this much. What questions do you think he should consider?

This phone does have some new facilities that might be fun or useful.

It also has some that he can't imagine ever wanting.

His present smartphone does everything he really needs.

The advertisement is designed to make you think you will be the only person on the planet who is not buying this new phone. Do you think most of your brother's friends will be buying one?

5. THE GREAT GAMES COMPENDIUM! All of your favourite family games in one beautiful handy box. The Christmas Present of the Year!

Might this advertisement be tempting? Questions for people to think about before buying:

What are the games in the box?

Have you already got any of them at home and if so would you want a second one?

Are some of them games you and your family would never play?

Would it be cheaper to buy the ones you want individually?

6. FABULOUS FLOWERS. THE EAST OF ENGLAND'S LEADING FLORIST. Same day free deliveries make us the outstanding place to go for exquisite hand-tied bouquets. Prices from £25.

If you were planning to send flowers to someone, would this advertisement make you inclined to choose Fabulous Flowers? Questions to think about:

Are there other florists who will deliver on the same day that you place your order?

Maybe they all do?

Are there other florists who offer free delivery?

How do Fabulous Flowers' prices compare with other florists?

They say 'prices from'. That means £25 is the cheapest bouquet there is. What do you get for £25? Would you have to pay far more to get what you really want?

Level 2

- 7. GARDENERS! OUR NEW PELLETS CAN KILL UP TO 90% OF THE SLUGS THAT ARE CAUSING HAVOC IN YOUR FLOWERBEDS. Biodegradable, safe for pets, each packet contains enough pellets to treat 50 square metres of soil.**

What does 'up to 90%' really mean? It might mean anything from 1% up to 90%, with any number in between.

How can the manufacturers justify their claim?

*Have they been out at night counting slugs in **your** garden?*

- 8. THE TOTE BAG THAT WILL SWEEP THE BOARD! Twelve separate compartments, each with a different coloured lining to make them easy to identify. Outer pocket for mobile. Two different strap lengths. Anti-thief fastening. Includes wallet and make-up bag. £55.**

Do you think this advertisement would be persuasive? Questions to think about:

*Do people really need **12** compartments? What would they put in all of them?*

What is the anti-thief fastening? Do you think it would work?

What is the bag made of and what colours are available?

Is the price reasonable? Would a bag with fewer compartments cost less?

- 9. SLEEPOVER PARTIES! COME CAMPING IN THE GLORIOUS YORKSHIRE DALES. We will arrange a 24-hour party for you and up to ten friends. Activities, tents, evening barbeque and next day's breakfast all included. £30 per person.**

Do you think this sounds fun? Questions to think about:

How much would it cost for you to get there and back, on top of the camp cost?

What are the activities included, and are they activities you would enjoy?

Is all the equipment for the activities provided?

Do you need to bring your own sleeping bag and pillows?

Do you need any special kind of clothing?

10. TRIED EVERYTHING FOR YOUR SPOTS? BET YOU HAVEN'T TRIED OUR WONDERCREAM! Apply it at night for a week, and you will have the beautiful clear skin of top models!

If you had spots, would you be tempted to try this cream? Questions to think about:

Have you seen hundreds of other advertisements like this for ways to cure spots?

Does anything about this advertisement make you think Wondercream would do any better than all the others?

Do you know anyone who has used it? Anyone in your family tried it? Did it do any good?

11. NINE TO TWELVE YEARS OLD AND DON'T OWN A SWINGLER SKATEBOARD? Don't be the odd one out! Get up to date with our high-performance board.

If you like skateboarding, would this advertisement make you feel you must have a Swingler? Why? Questions to think about:

There must be lots of young people aged nine to 12 who don't even like skateboarding.

Have you already got a board, and is it still in reasonable condition?

*At the skate park, does it seem to you that most of your age group have a Swingler? Do **any** of them?*

If so, do people with a Swingler perform better than others? Is this because of the board, or are they just better boarders anyway?

What does a Swingler cost? How does this compare with most of the other brands?

If it is more expensive, do you think it is likely to be worth the price? Would it be likely to make you a better skateboarder?

12. THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING! A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO JUNIOR BUTTERFLY WATCHER for your birthday. Get all our special bargains. Introductory offer of free trip to Alton Towers.

Would this advertisement make someone want to subscribe to the magazine? Questions to think about:

Are you interested enough in butterfly watching to want a magazine about it every month?

If you are not interested in butterfly watching but only in the offers, does the advertisement say what the special bargains are? Do they sound any good?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

What about the free trip to Alton Towers? Have you already been there? Would you want to go again?

If the magazine can make a free offer of a trip to Alton Towers, surely it must be very expensive to cover the cost?

How does the cost of the magazine compare with others?

Level 3

13. BE THE MOST POPULAR GIRL IN TOWN! Let your friends come and chill in your room with our SUPERCOMFY bean bags. Affordable prices to tempt you! One-day delivery.

Would this advertisement make someone want to get beanbags for their room? Why? Questions they should think about:

What do they and their friends sit on in their room at present? The bed? The floor? Chairs? Tatty old beanbags? Are they all comfortable and happy as things are, or would they love new beanbags?

Is there enough space in their room for them?

Could they go and try one out? Does the advertisement mention anywhere they could do this?

Do these prices really beat any others they can find? What does 'affordable' mean? Some people might be able to afford them, some might not.

Does the advertisement say anything about what the bags are filled with, or covered with? The fillings and covering material might be poor quality, and that might explain why they are cheap.

14. PHONES! TABLETS! LAPTOPS! END OF SALE CLEARANCE. Whopping 20% off everything! Hurry, the offer only lasts till the end of this week.

This sounds too good to be true, doesn't it, and maybe it is! Questions to think about:

If there is something on offer that you really want, can you find out what it costs elsewhere without discounts?

Is the 20% being taken off the original price?

Is the 20% being taken off the sale price, in other words will the device have had two lots of discount taken off by the time you buy it? That really might be a bargain.

If you can't make the purchase this week, would you think it is worth having a try next week? Do you think they would really refuse to sell you the sale item of your choice?

15. WEIGHTAWAY! Eat what you like and still lose weight! See your weight plummet! An end to dreary useless diets! Contact Weightaway on 9500 . . .

Would this advertisement appeal to someone wanting to lose weight? Questions they should think about:

Do they know anyone who has been on a diet? How careful did those people have to be about what they ate?

Did they lose much weight?

*What does the advertisement mean by 'eat what you like'? Do they mean the **kinds** of food you like? Or do they mean **as much as** you like? Or maybe both!*

Do you think this is possible?

So, what do they claim is special about this diet that makes it different from any others?

16. TREASURE HUNTERS! BE A TREASURE HUNTER FOR A DAY! The Treasure Hunters' Club provides a day out for young enthusiasts. Small groups with a dedicated guide. You will be introduced to all the fun and excitement of finding buried treasure. You will be lent a divining rod, and shown how to use it. Old coins, jewellery, broken pots and jars – you can be guaranteed to find something! Club members have already had their finds displayed in museums all over the country.

Do you think this idea might interest you? Questions to think about:

What would the day cost? The advertisement doesn't say.

Where would you have to get to for your day's divining?

Have any ancient coins or other items ever been found there? You could Google it and see.

*Do you think it is possible for the organisers to **guarantee** that you will find something of interest?*

17. MIRACLE SYRUP! Feeling tired and listless, sleeping badly, lost your appetite? Try our Miracle Syrup, a pick-me-up that will make you feel on top of the world again in just two weeks. Contains fargulate. Over eighteens only.

If you were over eighteen and felt like this, do you think you would want to try Miracle Syrup? Questions to think about:

Might there be lots of different reasons for the way you were feeling? Can you think of any? Would a medicine do anything to sort them out?

Is a single medicine likely to deal with all your symptoms?

Do you think it would be a good idea to look at what the medicine is made of? Can you Google 'fargulate' and see what it is?

Do you think there is something you should do before trying Miracle Syrup, such as go and see your doctor? You might ask him or her about Miracle Syrup.

18. SILK PERFECTION SHAMPOO. At last something completely new in shampoos. Contains orchid oil. Leaves your hair shinier and easier to manage than ever before.

If you were looking for a different shampoo, would this advertisement persuade you to try Silk Perfection?

*Do you think it is likely that anyone has come up with something **completely** new?*

Do you know what orchid oil is, and whether it is good for hair? Might it be interesting to Google 'orchid oil' and see what it is?

Can you find any other shampoos claiming to use it?

How do the manufacturers know how shiny and easy to manage your hair is already?

If you were thinking of trying this shampoo, would you ask around to see if you can find anyone who has used it?

Level 4

These stories show some ways in which advertisements can mislead you.

19. Here is the advertisement that persuaded the Richards family to book this flat for their seaside holiday:

Lovely holiday flat in Longhaven. Five minutes from the beach with sea view. Suit family of four. Fully-fitted kitchen with American style fridge/freezer, excellent shower room.

By the time the Richards family had found the right block of flats they had crossed three busy roads, and were getting further and further from the beach. 'Well,' Dad said, 'I suppose you could make it to the flat in five minutes if you were a fast runner, and lucky enough not to be knocked down by a bus.' The flat was on the top floor. By standing on a chair, Ben said he could just about catch a glimpse, over the rooftops, of a strip of shining sea.

What do you think the advertisers want people to believe about the whereabouts of the flat?

Does the advertisement actually lie?

Can you think of questions Mr. Richards could have asked about the flat before booking it?

What other checks could he have made?

20. Here is the advertisement that persuaded Jinny and Mark to go and look at Rose Cottage:

Beautiful 17th-century cottage in glorious countryside. Fully modernised. Pretty garden and patio. Five miles from the bustling town of Sandchester with its booming businesses, factories, and hotels.

Jinny and Mark were house hunting, deep in the Devon countryside. The little lane grew narrower and more winding, and the hedges closed in until they were almost touching the car. 'Hope we don't meet a tractor,' said Jinny. 'I haven't seen a passing place in ages.' 'This would be fun and games in the winter with a few inches of snow,' said Mark. 'Any time of year we'd be lucky if we ever got to work on time. Five miles might as well be 50.'

Why do you think the advertisers stress how much business and holiday trade there is in Sandchester?

Why do you think Jinny and Mark were looking at properties near Sandchester?

Which bit of the advertisement is misleading? Does the advertisement actually lie?

What questions do you think they should have asked about Rose Cottage before going to look at it?

What checks could they have made?

21. Here is the advertisement that made Jim consider buying the old barn and sheds:

Walled yard, spacious barn and two sheds. Ideal for farmer or small holder as extra space. Could be used for livestock, or housing tractors and other machinery. In need of some repairs.

‘Good lord!’ said the builder, gazing in disbelief at the ramshackle farm buildings. The roof of the barn had a huge hole in it, the door hung off its hinges, and the window was missing most of its glass. The sheds leant drunkenly towards each other, loose planks clattering in the wind. ‘You said some work needed doing,’ continued the builder, ‘but you didn’t say it needed a complete rebuild. It’s more of a job than I can take on at the moment.’

Does the advertisement actually lie? If the buildings were repaired, this could in fact be quite a useful bit of extra accommodation, couldn’t it?

Which bit of the advertisement is misleading?

What should Mark have done before taking a builder to see the place?

22. Here is the advertisement that made Great Aunt Jessie decide to go on the South Coast coach tour:

Tour the south coast of England! Air-conditioned coach, with spacious seating and on-board toilet. Three overnight stops in four-star hotels. Tour takes in Dover, Folkestone, Hythe, Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton, and Hove.

Aunt Jessie had been on a coach tour of the south coast, and Dad went to meet her on her return. He had been worried that his 90-year-old aunt would find the holiday stressful. However, as he helped her down the steps of the coach it was clear she was not only in robust good health, but also in a rage. ‘John, I was **so** looking forward to Brighton. Do you know what we saw of it? Just a cup of tea in a Brighton petrol station!’

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

Does the advertisement actually lie?

Which bit is misleading?

Would anyone expect a trip for elderly people to include detailed tours of more than two towns in a day? So, a three-night trip couldn't practically offer tours of seven towns, could it?

What should Aunt Jessie (or Dad) have done before booking this holiday?

23. This is the poster Ethan saw:

'CRUISE AROUND GORGEOUS LAKE BROADMERE. STOP OFF AT LAKESIDE CAFE. TRIP TAKES FOUR HOURS. ICE CREAMS AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS ON BOARD. KIDS GO FREE. (up to three kids)

It was the last day of the holiday in the Lake District, and Dad said any more treats had better be cheap – you needed to be a millionaire to feed and entertain a family of six. Then Ethan spotted the poster. 'OK,' said Dad. 'We can just about afford it. Let's queue for the next boat.' The man in the ticket office looked at Dad and Mum, and then his gaze travelled slowly over Ethan, Bess, Teddy and little Josie. 'Sorry Sir,' he said. 'You'll have to pay the full adult whack for the little one.'

Is the poster lying?

Do you think there is something a bit unfair about it?

*How could you change the poster so that it would still make a good offer, but be clear about **how many** children could travel free?*

*Do you think it would be reasonable to expect the boat company to take as many as **four** children free?*

24. This is the notice Dad had spotted in the brochure of West Country Holidays:

Stay in our boutique hotel on magical Angel Rock Island! Perched high above the sea, with the castle looming over you and the fishing boats bobbing below, this is truly a hotel out of a fairy story. Take the ferry (or the causeway when passable) to cross to Torbridge. Torbridge boasts waterskiing, scuba diving, windsurfing, sand and rock pools for the little ones. Two Michelin-starred restaurants.

The boat trip across to the tiny rocky island had been an amazing start to the holiday. From their bedroom window in the hotel Maia and Sasha looked across to the busy town on the mainland, with its sandy beach, pier, shops and cafes. 'That's where we'll go tomorrow,' Maia said. It was only after breakfast next day, when the family went down to catch the ferry that the awful truth dawned. A notice by the jetty read 'FERRY SAILINGS 8.30 a.m. AND 6.30 p.m. CAUSEWAY PASSABLE TWO HOURS A DAY,

VARIABLE HOURS. 'We're going to have to plan our activities rather carefully,' said Dad grimly. 'Wait till I get hold of that travel agent.'

Is the advertisement in the brochure actually lying?

Even if you don't consider it is lying, what does it lead you to believe mistakenly?

All the activities such as waterskiing and rock pooling happen in Torbridge. You can only get over to Torbridge first thing in the morning by ferry, and for two hours a day at varying times over the causeway. On Angel Rock Island itself there are none of the listed activities.

Are there any restaurants on Angel Rock Island? The advertisement doesn't say so, so maybe there aren't any!

Suggesting alternatives

How to proceed

*Provide the children with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)*

Explain that these texts are about thinking of different ways in which things could happen, or different answers to problems could be found.

Read the first text aloud. You may want to get the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words.

Now ask the children the questions. Encourage discussion and debate as you go along. Leave each text when an agreed and sensible position has been reached.

Level 1

- 1. Mr Harris, the new head teacher, announced to the school council that from next Monday students may only use backpacks that have been bought in the school shop. The backpacks are £15.99 each. He asked the members of the school council for their views on this plan.**

Do you think the school council will agree with the plan?

Which students will this affect the worst?

Why do you think Mr Harris thinks this is a good idea?

What are the advantages of each student having the same kind of backpack?

What are the disadvantages?

Can you think of any suitable alternatives to the plan?

Explain how your alternatives would be better for the students.

- 2. When the Jones family arrived at Amsterdam airport on Thursday they were horrified to find that their flight home had been cancelled. The lady at the enquiries desk said there wouldn't be another available flight until the following Tuesday.**

What questions should the family ask the enquiries desk?

What do you think the answers might be?

Can you think of any alternative solutions to the Jones' problem?

Which of these would work best?

- 3. It was Ava's birthday and her grandparents were taking her out to lunch. When they arrived at the restaurant they were told they would have to wait about 30 minutes for a table. Ava looked disappointed – she had been looking forward to a pizza at Bella Mondo.**

What kind of restaurant is Bella Mondo?

How could Ava's grandparents have avoided the long wait?

Can you think of any alternatives?

Which one of these will be the best solution?

Why do you think this?

- 4. When Billy got home from school he realised he'd left his house key in the house. Mum was at work and Billy's sister had band practice and wouldn't be home until half past six. It was starting to rain.**

What should Billy check first of all?

Does he know the next-door neighbours?

Has he got a phone?

Who could he contact?

Can you think of how he can solve the problem?

Which way would be best?

Why do you think that?

- 5. Luca's grandad gave him £20 for his birthday. There was a new game he really wanted which cost £15.99 but he also wanted some football shin pads which were £5.60. He had a look in his money box and only found 20p.**

How much money does Luca need?

How much is he short of?

Which item do you think he wants the most?

Can you think of ways he could make up the extra money?

Which way do you think would be best?

Why do you think that?

- 6. Katie and her friend Tilly decided to cycle to the beach. The shortest way was about two miles up a long, steep hill. The other way was about four miles but was flat most of the way. As they packed up a picnic the girls tried to decide what to do.**

What time of day do you think it is?

If they take the shortest way what will they probably have to do?

How much longer will the flat route take?

If they choose the steep route what will they need to take with them?

Can you think of any different solutions?

Which of these would work best?

Why do you think that?

Level 2

- 7. Joey and Ellie were staying with their grandparents. Grandad got a couple of games out of the cupboard. 'I want to play Snakes and Ladders,' said Ellie. 'No, I want to play Jenga,' grumbled Joey, tipping the wooden pieces onto the table.**

Do you know how to play Snakes and Ladders?

Have you ever played Jenga?

If you don't know these games where can you find more information?

How is Grandad going to make sure the children don't argue and sulk?

Can you think of any solutions to the problem?

Which one would work best and why?

- 8. Greenhill Junior School is running a competition to see which class can come up with the best recycling ideas. Year 5 want everyone to bring in an item from home that can be repaired in school. The head teacher is not keen on this idea.**

Why is the head teacher against this idea?

What does he see as the main problem?

What sort of items might be brought in?

Will extra expertise be needed?

Will any cost be involved?

What can you suggest to make this idea more achievable?

What will be needed for this to work?

- 9. The council have put up a sign saying that children may no longer ride scooters in the local playground. The playground has swings, slides, a zip wire and a roundabout. There is also a skate park. The local children are furious not to be able to ride their scooters in the park.**

Why do you think the council has made this decision?

Who is going to be affected?

Will it discourage children from visiting the park?

Can you think of any ways round this problem?

Which solution would work best?

Why do you think that?

How can this solution be presented to the council?

- 10. Evie's mum said she could take two friends to the cinema on her birthday. The trouble was, Evie had three best friends and she didn't want to leave one of them out.**

Should Evie tell her friends what Mum's plan is?

If she upsets one of them will they still be friends?

Do they have to go to the cinema?

If they did something different would Mum allow all three friends?

Can you think of different things they could do?

Which one of these would work best?

Why do you think that?

- 11. Bella and Grace's parents said they could have a pet as long as they agreed to look after it. Bella wanted a rabbit but Grace was desperate for a guinea pig. They had both pets in the pet shop.**

Do you think guinea pigs and rabbits get on?

Could they share a cage?

What other equipment would they need?

How can they persuade Mum to change her mind?

Do you think this would work and why?

Can you think of any other solutions?

- 12. The dentist told Emma that she should use dental floss to clean the spaces between her teeth. She looked in the chemist's and discovered that all the floss available was made of plastic. Emma did not like this idea.**

Why didn't Emma like this idea?

What happens to the plastic floss when it is disposed of?

What harm could this cause?

Is it important to use dental floss?

What else could Emma do?

Where could she find further information?

Is there an acceptable alternative to the problem?

Level 3

- 13. Tom left his bicycle on the pavement outside his friend Ricky's house while they went to football practice. When he got back he was horrified to find that it was no longer there.**

What do you think could have happened to the bicycle?

What should Tom do now?

What else could he do to get his bicycle back?

Which plan would be the best?

Why do you think this is the best plan?

How will he get home?

Can you think of any other ways he could get home?

Which way would be the best?

- 14. Mrs. Fletcher couldn't decide whether to make a strawberry meringue or a raspberry mousse. She had picked two huge bowls of both kinds of fruit and they needed eating up.**

Why did they need eating up?

What would happen if she didn't use them quickly?

Could she make something different that would use both kinds of fruit?

If she doesn't use all the fruit what could she do with what is left over?

- 15. You are going to work with a partner to make your own board game. You will need a list of any equipment and a set of rules for the game.**

What equipment might you need for your game?

How many players can play?

What are you going to call the game?

What else could you call it?

Which name would be the best?

Why do you think that?

How are you going to test whether it works?

If it doesn't what could you change?

- 16. Fred Jones got out his toolbox. The latch on the front gate was broken and it wouldn't stay closed. He found the right-sized screwdriver and tried to undo the hinges but it was a bit rusty and wouldn't budge.**

Is there another way Fred could undo the hinge?

How else could he get the gate to stay shut?

Do you think this would work?

What other alternatives does Fred have?

Which of these would work best and why?

How could he avoid rusty hinges in future?

- 17. There is a new girl in Year 5. Her name is Sophia and she is Italian. At the moment she doesn't speak very much English and she seems very shy. Amy and Daisy want to make friends with her.**

How do you think the new girl feels finding herself in a new school in a foreign country?

What can Amy and Daisy do to make Sophia feel welcome?

If this doesn't work can you think of something different?

Why do you think this would work better?

- 18. Dan has seen a pair of very cool trainers that he really wants. The trouble is his mum says they are far too expensive. 'But Mum, all my friends have got that sort!' he said.**

How will Dan feel if he has to opt for the cheaper pair?

Do think it's true that all Dan's friends have these particular trainers?

Do you think Dan will manage to persuade his mum to buy them?

How will he do this?

What could Dan do to be able to afford them himself?

What other options are there?

Which option do you think is best?

Level 4

- 19. Katie was staying with her nana and grandad. She was out in their garden shed when she noticed a very old-looking wooden box. When she rattled it she could hear something inside. However, the box seemed to be locked.**

What do you think might be inside the box?

Where do you think Katie might find the key?

Why do you think the box is locked?

How else could Katie get into the box?

If that doesn't work what else could she do?

- 20. The students in Year 6 were asked to design a ramp for toy cars to race down. The idea was to see which cars would travel the furthest.**

What materials would they need to build the ramp?

What if the cars fell off the ramp before reaching the floor?

How could the students prevent this happening?

Can you think of more effective ways of building the ramp?

Which method do you think would work best?

Why do you think that?

- 21. Mrs. May was knitting a sweater for her granddaughter. She had finished the back and front but it looked as if she was going to run out of wool before the sleeves were completed.**

Did Mrs. May buy the amount of wool stated in the pattern?

What options does she have if the wool does run out?

Which of your ideas would work best?

Why do you think that is the best option?

- 22. When Sam and Josh reached the cinema the queue stretched right down the road. 'We'll never get in at this rate,' muttered Sam.**

Why do you think there is such a long queue?

Do you think Sam and Josh will join the queue?

If they decide not to join the queue what do you think they will do?

- 23. Anna and her friend Zak decided to go to Macdonald's for a burger. They had just ordered a quarter pounder each when Anna realised she had left her purse at home.**

How is Anna going to pay for her burger?

Do you think Zak can help her out?

What can she do if Zak doesn't have enough money?

Which option do you think will be best for Anna?

How can Anna make sure this doesn't happen again?

- 24. Freddie's kitten climbed right to the top of the cherry tree in the garden. Now it was mewling pathetically from the highest branch and didn't seem to be able to get down.**

What do you think made the kitten climb the tree?

How long should Freddie wait to see if it comes down on its own?

How many solutions can you think of to the problem?

Which one will work best?

Why do you think that?

Challenging claims

How to proceed

*Provide the students with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)*

Explain that the 'claims' referred to are such as often appear in traditional or social media. They may be worrying or frightening. Some make sweeping judgements, or recommendations for changes to the law.

Read the first text aloud. You may want the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words. Ask the children for their views and queries about the claim. Prompt with a question from your list when they are stuck. Discuss each point raised.

Leave each text when you have canvassed the children's final opinion on the claim.

Level 1

1. Doing voluntary work, such as gardening for elderly people, makes children happier.

Do you think this is true? What questions might be asked about this claim?

Who do you think is making this claim?

Can they have asked enough children to be able to make such a statement?

Have you ever done any work of this kind? How did you feel about it?

Do you know anyone who has done this sort of work? What did they feel about it?

What sort of voluntary jobs do you think children can do?

What do you think now about this idea?

2. Fireworks should be banned, as they cause serious air pollution, and may frighten dogs.

Do you agree with this idea? What questions might you ask about it?

Fireworks aren't being let off all that often, are they? Mostly on Guy Fawkes Day and New Year's Day.

Don't they give a lot of pleasure and excitement and fun?

Don't they make special occasions even more special?

Is there anything you can do to keep your dog calm during a firework display?

Don't some people's jobs depend on making fireworks?

Now do you agree or disagree with the idea?

3. Cat owners should be made to fit their cats with a collar and a bell to prevent them from killing birds.

Do you agree with this idea? What questions might you ask about it?

Don't cats kill a lot of birds, and wouldn't the bell stop this happening so much?

Might wearing a bell interfere with the cat's normal behaviour and upset it?

Could wearing a collar be dangerous for a cat, as it could catch on twigs and bushes and cause it to choke?

Do you think that people should be allowed to make up their own minds about this, and not be forced by law to fit their cat with a bell?

What do you think now about this idea?

4. All children should belong to a social group outside school, such as Brownies, Cub Scouts, Guides, Scouts, drama groups, music groups, or sports groups.

Do you agree with this idea? What questions might you ask about it?

What groups do you know about in your area?

Do you belong to any group outside school?

What sort of group might you like to join if it were available?

Would going to a group usually mean being taken by an adult?

Would it make a difference whether it were summer or winter?

Have you changed your mind about this idea, or do you still think as you did before?

5. A foreign language should be taught in primary school from Key Stage 1, Year 1.

What do you think of this idea? What questions could you ask about it?

At that age, haven't children got too much else to learn?

Isn't it true that children learn languages more easily the younger they are?

What language would be the most useful? Why do you think so?

Are there enough good language teachers to meet this extra demand?

Do you still think the same about this idea as you did before?

6. Doctors and scientists say that films, TV, other outlets such as YouTube and Netflix, and particularly video games, are too loud, and can damage your hearing.

Do you agree that some of these things are too loud?

Is it proved that very loud noise can damage hearing?

What about the music at discos and parties? Is that loud enough to damage hearing?

Could the noise of media, video games, TV and headphones damage your hearing?

Should something be done about it? And what could be done?

What do you think about this now?

Level 2

7. We should all start eating fish instead of meat as often as possible.

Do you agree with this? It's widely agreed we should be cutting down on the amount of meat we eat.

How does the price of fish compare with meat, particularly fresh fish?

Are there other ways in which we could reduce the amount of meat in our diet?

Wouldn't it be better if we switched from meat to vegetables, instead of fish?

What about the stocks of fish in the ocean? Fish numbers are shrinking, so don't the fish populations need protecting?

Isn't it often quite hard to find fresh fish?

So, it would mean using frozen fish much of the time.

How do you feel now about this claim?

8. No part of any rainforest should be cut down for farmers to grow crops.

Do you agree with this?

Rainforests are vital in protecting the planet and slowing climate change.

Aren't some farmers so poor they must have a little more land to grow crops for their families, even if that means cutting down some of the rainforest?

The rainforests are huge – can't we afford to use some parts of them?

Might it depend on whereabouts the felling is done?

What if there were big programmes of replanting in other areas?

Wouldn't it take hundreds of years to replace any rainforest?

How do you feel about this idea now?

9. All adults should be required by law to make regular donations to charities.

Do you think this would be a good law?

Can you think of some charities that you know about?

Have some people got too little money to be able to give regularly to charities?

Should the government pay for all the things that charities do now?

How much would everybody have to give?

Would the amount you have to give depend on your income? What charity is it?

Do you think such a law would work? Wouldn't it be fairer to use the tax system to raise money for good causes?

How do you feel about this idea now?

10. Bicycle lanes should take priority over motor vehicles.

Do you think this idea is practical?

Does this idea include motor bikes and mopeds?

Do enough people get about on pushbikes to justify this idea?

Aren't there millions of people who are not able to use a bike?

What about buses? Would a bus full of a hundred or more people have to give way to one or two cyclists?

What would happen to the traffic if all the motor vehicles had to stop for bikes?

Would anything move at all?

Do you still feel the same about this idea as you did at the beginning? Have you changed your mind?

11. Komodo Island will close to tourists except for those who can pay high prices to visit. The sum of £800 has been mentioned. This is to protect the habitat of the Komodo dragons, which is being damaged by so many visitors, and to stop people stealing the animals.

Do you approve of this way of protecting the Komodo dragons?

Is it fair that only rich people will be able to visit the island?

The ticket money will help to look after the dragons, won't it?

Limiting the number of visitors will preserve the island's habitat.

Smaller visitor numbers will mean the island's officials can more easily stop people stealing dragons.

What about scientists and naturalists? Will they still be able to visit to study the lizards?

Might there be a better way of regulating visitor numbers?

How do you feel now about this plan for the island?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

12. Visiting museums, historic sites, and buildings is a more effective way of learning than classroom teaching.

Do you agree about this?

How often do you go to museums and historic sites?

Are these visits always memorable and useful for your learning?

Would such visits on their own be enough, without the classroom teaching?

Don't such visits cost a lot?

How would you rate the value of such visits now, and what place should they have in the curriculum?

Level 3

13. The sale of chocolate Easter eggs contributes to overweight and unhealthy eating habits, and should be restricted or banned.

What do you think about this?

It's only once a year, after all.

Eating lots of chocolate over two or three days can't make you obese.

Does all the advertising make children very demanding about Easter eggs?

Perhaps eating the eggs gives children a permanent taste for chocolate?

It might give them a taste for sweet things in general, which could affect their diet choices.

Children's diet is the responsibility of parents and schools. Isn't it down to them to restrict the children's intake of Easter eggs?

What do you think now about this proposal?

14. Face-to-face games and competitions are more fun than playing online.

What do you think?

It's fun to be together when you're playing, but it's fun online too.

It's not always possible or easy to arrange to visit each other's houses, especially after school and in the winter.

It's easy to go online any time.

You can get more people involved online

Of course it's easier to arrange to play online, but the question was: Is it more FUN to play face-to-face than online? What do you think?

15. Schools should include regular outdoor learning opportunities, such as those at Forest Schools.

What do you think of this idea?

Do you know anything about outdoor learning? Does it sound a good idea?

How much time would it take? Would it crowd out other important things in the curriculum?

Can all sorts of different subjects be taught during these outdoor experiences?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

How would schools in the middle of towns or cities arrange for outdoor learning?

They would have to take pupils out into parks or the countryside, wouldn't they?

Wouldn't this cost money? Who would pay for it?

Now you've thought about it a bit, what do you think of the idea?

16. Petrol and diesel vehicles should be taken off the road immediately to reduce pollution.

Do you think this is a good idea?

Most of the vehicles on the road today run on either petrol or diesel.

Being forced to scrap these vehicles and buy electric ones would be too expensive for many people, and might mean they could not replace their vehicles.

Many people might be unable to get to work, or get to the shops.

Millions of people would be forced to use public transport. Replacing buses and trains will be hugely expensive and will take years.

If this idea were carried out, it seems likely there would be an immediate dramatic drop in pollution.

In the short term, if this idea was carried out would there be chaos?

On balance, what do you think of this idea now?

17. Money spent on animal charities would be better spent on underprivileged children.

Does this seem a good idea?

There is never enough money for underprivileged children.

There are children all over the world who are caught up in wars, droughts, floods and famines. No amount of money would meet all these needs.

There are huge numbers of animals which also need help, including stray, sick, or injured animals.

Pet animals may need treatment that their owners cannot afford.

What if all the money that is donated to the care of animals were instead given to children's charities?

Would that be enough to meet all the needs of the child populations?

What would become of the sick, injured or starving animals if there was no money to help them?

Don't many people give to both child and animal charities?

What if people were forbidden to give to animal charities? Do you think some people would just stop giving altogether?

What would be the result if people were not allowed to donate to animal charities?

What do you think now about this claim?

18. Vaccination against measles should be a legal requirement.

Do you agree?

Measles can be a really dangerous disease, and cause all sorts of side effects.

As long as most children are vaccinated, measles can be stamped out.

Some children have a bad reaction to vaccination, and parents do not want to risk it.

Some parents have religious or other objections to vaccination.

Do you think people who object should have the right to refuse vaccination for their children?

What can happen if a lot of people refuse to have their child vaccinated? Measles could make a comeback.

What do you think of this proposal now?

Level 4

19. Space explorations, such as missions to Mars and the Moon, are a waste of money.

What do you think of this view?

Everything to do with space exploration is hugely expensive. Wouldn't most or some of the money be better spent on medical services, or children's charities?

Space exploration gives opportunities for adventure for brave people. Space exploration leads to discoveries in physics, engineering, chemistry, medicine, psychology and many other areas.

Is there any point in knowing what the Moon, Mars and the other planets are like? They are of no immediate use to us, are they?

We know so little about our universe that we don't even know what discoveries might be important to us in the future. Don't we need to find out, just as we have found out about remote parts of our own planet?

What do you think now about this idea?

20. Families should be limited to two children each, to stop over-populating the planet.

Do you think this would be a good idea?

What if quite a few couples had no children at all, as happens now? With the remaining couples only having one or two children, would the population shrink too much?

Might we end up with an unbalanced population, far more boys than girls, or far more girls than boys?

If a family went on to have a third child, what would the authorities do about it?

Didn't a law get passed in China allowing only one child per family? Does anyone know what happened there?

Could a law of this kind ever be enforced in this country? Would everyone obey it?

What do you think now about this idea?

21. Wildlife reserves in the UK should be joined up, to enable wildlife to move about freely. Extra land needed for this should take priority over house-building.

What do you think of this proposal?

Our wildlife is in decline. Animals are at risk from road traffic, house-building, and intensive farming.

Simple things like leaving gaps in hedges or fences between gardens have already made a difference to our wildlife. This scheme might make an even bigger difference.

Some of the land needed would have to come from farms. Would the farmers still be able to work the land?

Some schemes would involve private homeowners giving up some land. Would they be compensated?

Land is desperately needed for more houses, particularly affordable ones. Many families are without a decent house to live in. Should their needs be given less weight than those of the wildlife?

Why should houses be built on these particular parcels of land? Aren't there other places where houses could go?

Does it matter that our wildlife is under threat?

22. Schools should give children four hours of sport or physical activity every week.

Do you think this plan would benefit the children? Is it practical?

How practical would it be, as the weather would often prevent outdoor sport?

Would indoor physical activity be equally beneficial, when outdoor sport is impossible?

Would it be realistic to think of taking four hours out of the curriculum? Schools already have to provide two and a half hours energetic activity a week.

Do you think perhaps physical activity is as important as academic work? More important?

Do you think children get enough physical activity in out-of-school hours?

What do you think now about this proposal?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

23. Children should be banned from online gaming under the age of 15.

Do you think there are dangers involved in online gaming?

Can you name some?

Would you support a ban like this if you were a voter?

Do you think seven- or eight-year-olds should be stopped from playing games except ones designed for their age group?

How can anyone be stopped from playing inappropriate games, except by their parents?

Are parents able to explain the dangers to their children?

Are parents able to monitor or control their children's online gaming time?

Would you be any better able to judge the dangers and cope with them after the age of 15?

Could any sort of law work?

What do you think about this suggestion now?

24. Protest marches and sit-ins should be banned.

What do you think?

Some of the things the marchers are campaigning about are very important, such as climate change. Protests can really have an influence on government and on public opinion.

Aren't there lots of other ways in which people can protest, and campaign about things that matter to them?

Aren't many of the other means of protest less effective than marches and sit-ins?

Big protest marches disrupt the traffic for everybody. They can mean people are late to work, and miss buses and trains.

The traffic disruption can lead to accidents.

Isn't it a case of a few people interfering with the lives of far more people?

The protesters may be missing time at their own jobs, which could affect their firms, or shops, or employers.

The greater the disruption, the more notice gets taken of the cause the protesters are marching for.

How do you feel about this dilemma now?

Detecting bias

How to proceed

*Provide the children with copies of the texts you have chosen. They will need them to refer to. (Texts **without the teacher's questions and prompts** are available in the Student texts.)*

Define the word 'bias' for the children. Bias is prejudice against one person or group in favour of another. Give as many examples as you can, to be sure that the children understand the concept.

Read the first text aloud. You may want the children to read their copy aloud also. Check that they have understood it, and clarify any unfamiliar words.

Ask the children the questions, encouraging discussion as you go. Leave each text when the indications of bias have been identified.

Level 1

In the first two paragraphs, the same event is being reported by two different newspapers.

Two local newspapers, the Cove Express and the Bay Daily, reported on the Under-12s' football match between the Cove Rovers and the Bay Battlers:

- 1. 'The sad result of this disappointing match was a win to the Cove Rovers. The Bay Battlers fought valiantly against an opposing team which seemed to include at least two over-12s, judging by their height. A doubtful decision by the umpire gave the last goal to the visitors.'**

Can you guess which of the teams this reporter supported? Is he showing bias? Which of his comments makes you think so? Which paper do you think he works for?

Here is another report on the same match:

- 2. 'An exciting away match yesterday thrilled the spectators. Both sides played with courage and determination, but happily the outcome of a win to the Rovers was never in doubt. They showed the results of their training by fantastic teamwork, and Bailey scored a brilliant goal in the final two minutes. On this form we can hope they will make it to the final round.'**

Which of the two teams do you think this reporter supported? Which paper does he work for? Is he showing bias? Which of his comments makes you think so?

- 3. A long and bitter feud between neighbours finally came to court yesterday. Mr. Saunders, wealthy owner of a chain of Birmingham shops, is suing Mr. Yeats, well known and popular locally as the generous sponsor of the Mayfield Cricket team. Mr. Yeats was charged with using a footpath which runs past their properties. Both men claim ownership of the path.**

Who do you think the reporter would prefer to win the case? Why do you think so?

Does the report show bias? In what way?

- 4. Tenants of the Swallowfield flats have taken sides in a heated dispute. The case concerns the unauthorised use of the grassy area in the centre of the development. Complaints refer to children playing football or cricket there, resulting in broken windows. There are reports of smoking, drinking, and drug use among groups of teenagers. Reasonable requests for the groups to move**

on are met with abuse. Longsuffering tenants point out that there is a large play area available nearby, and a youth centre opened recently.

Do you think the reporter who wrote this piece sympathises with the tenants who complain, or those whose children play on the grass?

Why do you think so?

- 5. The owners of Priors Heath have finally had enough of irresponsible dog owners. Notices have been put up on footpaths to say that dogs must be kept on the lead. It is to be hoped that the herd of fallow deer will now return to the area. Fences have been repaired, and extra containers for dog waste installed.**

Do you think the writer of this piece is in favour of dogs being kept on leads on the heath?

What makes you think so?

- 6. Popular author Susan Manners has published yet another far-fetched fantasy romp, to the delight, it must be said, of her many fans. The hero and heroine of her series appear again, still battling unsuccessfully against an unlikely array of monsters and villains. Alas, by the end of the book they have still survived everything the powers of evil can throw at them, and will no doubt live to feature in still further volumes.**

Do you think the person who wrote this review enjoyed the book?

Do you think he is biased against this kind of children's literature, and this author?

Level 2

- 7. Wellprice Stores have received complaints about the joyful seasonal music being played in their shops to mark this Christmas month. Complaints are that it is too loud, prevents conversation, and (improbably) that it can damage hearing. A further charge is that it trivialises religion by the constant playing of carols. Wellprice maintains stoutly that the music adds to the warmth, good cheer and excitement of the Festive Season, and with truth that the carols are being given a wider audience than that of churchgoers only.**

Do you think that the writer of this piece is biased in favour of Wellprice's position?

Or are they in favour of people who want the music banned or turned down?

What makes you think so?

- 8. Mr. Bill Wainwright, of The Old Manor, Markham, will appear in court on Friday on a charge of shoplifting. He is accused of stealing two packets of cigarettes and a pack of batteries from Messrs. Tidmarsh and Co. Mr. Wainwright, 65, a non-smoker, is a faithful and helpful member of several committees in the town, a stalwart supporter of the amateur dramatic society, and a generous donor to the youth club. He will be represented by Mr. Allison.**

Do you think the writer of this report thinks Mr. Wainwright is innocent? Is he biased in Mr. Wainwright's favour? What statements make you think so?

- 9. Mrs. Norris is a passionate lover of birds, and her garden is filled with feeders to attract the tits, finches and robins. Some rarer visitors also come – beautiful goldfinches, long-tailed tits, even the occasional shy woodpecker. Next-door neighbour Mrs. Fairbrother has recently acquired a second cat, a lean, rangy, hungry-eyed hunter. Since the arrival of this animal, Mrs. Norris keeps coming across tiny tragic, feathered corpses, bearing the marks of teeth and claws. Mrs. Norris and Mrs. Fairbrother are at daggers drawn.**

Can you spot whether the writer is on the side of Mrs. Norris or Mrs. Fairbrother?

What words do you think show bias?

- 10. After the river burst its banks and flooded the town, 50 householders found themselves with several inches of water in their living rooms and kitchens. In nearby Braidmouth residents were rescued by boat from upstairs windows by heroic emergency services. Somehow council workers managed to deliver sandbags to every flooded house, though in some cases they came too late to keep the worst of the water out. Householders unable to stay in their homes remained cheerful, and made the most of the basic comforts in the sports hall, hastily turned into a dormitory by a team of council volunteers.**

Do you get the feeling that the person who posted this thought the council had done its best, in very difficult conditions?

Would you say he is biased in favour of the council? Or perhaps he is just reporting even-handedly on what happened?

- 11. After police raided the Goto Club last week on a charge of rowdy behaviour, the club has been closed down indefinitely. The only social venue for teenagers in the town, Goto has been a cheerful sight with its brightly painted facade and welcoming signs. Older residents speak affectionately of their membership of the club in their youth, and the long-term friendships formed there.**

Will this writer of this piece of news be in favour of the Goto Club getting its licence back, do you think?

Is he biased in the club's favour?

- 12. 'Thank you for your e-mail applying for the position of junior chef in our school's kitchen. I would be grateful for further information on various points. Could you supply details of the surprising number of places you seem to have worked at in such a short career? You make no mention of GCSE or A-levels: at what age did you leave school? I would also appreciate details of your date of birth, and any qualifications, if any, you have acquired since then.**

Do you think this employer is biased against this applicant?

If so, what do you think is putting the head teacher off?

Level 3

- 13. Sir, Your paper reports a so-called 'riot' taking place in the town square on Saturday. It suggested that up to 50 young people were involved, and described the square the following morning as being 'totally trashed'. I have walked through the square myself, and apart from a few overturned chairs outside the cafe it appeared very much as usual for a Sunday morning. I trust the police will take a more balanced view of the incident than highly-strung passers-by evidently did.**

Does the writer of this letter show bias in favour of the young people involved in the incident?

What tells you so?

- 14. Hi Mum, went for interview in the building society like you suggested. Made myself up extra carefully, new bright-red lipstick, hair up on top, new cropped jeans. I put on that shirt you thought was a bit on the low-cut side, but I thought it looked good. Very short interview, and no luck. Oh well. Text me back. Lou Xx**

It looks as if the manager of the Building Society was a bit biased against Lou even before her interview really began.

Why do you think this might be?

- 15. Have to go to Lizzie Fairburn's new play on Saturday, as they want me to write a review of it. Hope this time I'll be able to get out of the theatre before the last trains run. After sitting through her last effort I had to stay over in a hotel! Hope she's learnt to say what she wants in fewer words. I'll text you.**

Is this reviewer looking forward to seeing the new play, or is he already biased against the author? What did he mainly have against her previous play?

- 16. The town centre was this morning inundated with over-zealous volunteers collecting for the charity Save the Grey Squirrel. I tried to explain to the misguided collectors that the wretched tree rats are not in any need of help, but I had no success!**

Is the writer of this piece likely to give any money to the collectors?

What particular words indicate bias against a Grey Squirrel charity?

- 17. Parts of London were brought to a standstill this morning as vast lines of placard-waving protesters marched through the streets. Scuffles broke out between commuters trying vainly to get to their workplace, and the single-minded activists, some of whom were prepared to resort to violence. A protester had to be dragged off the roof of an underground train for his own safety, while frustrated passengers watched in horror.**

Do you think this writer has any sympathy with the protesters?

Is he biased against them? What words tell you so?

- 18. On Thursday the Garden Club welcomed the famous garden designer Amanda Keeble, who gave us a most challenging talk. Her theme was 'Planting for a hotter, drier climate', and we were startled by the pictures of her own garden. The beautiful green lawns and dazzling borders were gone, and in their place were huge clumps of bamboo and reeds, conifers, ornamental thistles, and cacti. Those of us who have visited Amanda's garden in the past could not help but feel sad.**

Do you think this writer is looking forward to the challenge of planting for climate change?

Is he biased against the prospect? What tells you so?

Level 4

- 19. David Blake's new exhibition opened at the Swan Gallery this week. My hopes for a new direction in his art were dashed. The same angular shapes, sheets of plain colour, and distorted figures covered every wall.**

Do you think this reviewer went to the exhibition expecting to like the paintings?

Was he already biased against David Blake's style of art? How can you tell?

- 20. Withit Builders are seeking planning permission for 60 houses on the outskirts of Dunton. Since the rapid growth of the industrial estate, demand for houses has trebled and waiting lists are very long. Regret at the loss of some beautiful woodland is understandable, but skilled workers bringing their families to Dunton will also bring much-needed prosperity.**

Is this writer for or against planning permission being granted? What makes you think so?

- 21. The recent gales brought down some of the lovely old plane trees lining Southern Alley. The town council immediately promised to replace them, but residents with long memories will remember the tragic loss of oaks in the park in the 2010 storms. Arguments are still raging about what should take their place.**

Are people doubtful about the council's promise to replace the plane trees? Do they question the council's track record? What makes you think so?

- 22. The security camera on the corner of East Street and Gully Lane showed an indistinct stout figure which could have been man or woman, wearing a hood. Mrs. Edna Billings admitted to having been in the area at the time but stoutly denied having anything to do with the break-in. Mrs. Billings has lived in Stratton all her life, and holds a record for having given temporary foster care to more than 40 children. Mrs. Billings denies ever having owned a 'hoodie'.**

If Mrs. Billings faces trial, do you think there will be bias in her favour? Why would this be?

- 23. A new couple had moved in next door to the Jones's. 'I hear the bloke votes for our useless member of parliament,' Mr Jones said disgustedly to his wife. 'Probably supports all his daft do-gooding ideas. Shan't support him if he applies to join the Friday club.'**

Do you think Mr. Jones votes for a different political party from his new neighbour? Is he assuming that the neighbour agrees with all the local MP's policies? Does he think that he will therefore necessarily dislike him?

- 24. Readers, you should prepare yourselves for yet another strike. Despite recent pay rises, improvement in work patterns and longer holidays, these so-called workers are now pressing for four-day working weeks and time off on bank holidays. Their consideration for the public they 'serve' has been proved over and over to be nil. If only my profession could enjoy their advantages!**

Do you think the writer could ever be persuaded that these workers were justified in their demands? Even if the safety of the public was concerned in some way? Is he completely biased?

Part 3

Lucky dip

April Fools (Jokes made up to trick people on April 1st, April Fool's Day)

1. **A new law will require bars and cafes to supply take-away mugs made of newspaper. These mugs are environmentally friendly, as the paper has already been used once, and is recycled.**

Would you spot that this was an April Fool? How? Explain!

What would happen to a newspaper cup if you put a hot drink in it?

2. **The *Daily Rag* reports that an uninhabited island in the Pacific Ocean is drifting towards the coast of Chile at a rate of one kilometre a day. It is likely to collide with the mainland within the next year. Conservationists are working on a plan to halt the island before it hits land.**

Do you think this might be an April Fool? Why? Explain!

Have you ever heard of an island moving like this? Is it possible?

How could the conservationists stop it if it really was moving?

3. **Villagers in Little Ditchling report sightings of a blue whale in the river. Crowds of sightseers line the riverbanks twice a day as the whale visits at about nine in the morning and eight at night. The local paper offers a large cash prize for the best photo of the creature.**

Would you believe this story? Why not? Explain!

What do you know about whales?

Don't they need salt water?

Would there be enough depth of water for a whale to swim upstream so far?

Would a whale be likely to visit at the same times every day?

4. **Farmers are reporting a disastrous spaghetti harvest this autumn. As the wet weather continues, fields of flattened spaghetti lie waste. There are pictures of desperate farmers hanging the limp spaghetti strands out to dry.**

Would you believe this news item? If not, why not? Explain!

What do you know about spaghetti?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

Do you know anyone who makes their own spaghetti?

What is spaghetti made of? Could it grow in the ground?

- 5. The Great Pizza Race.** This year, instead of rolling giant cheeses, villagers will roll giant pizzas from top to bottom of Bagbury Hill. The winner gets a crate of beer, and onlookers can have a slice of the pizza.

Would you believe in the idea of a pizza race? Why not? Explain!

Do you think the pizzas would keep their shape as they rolled?

What would happen to them if they got wet?

Would you want to eat a pizza that had rolled through mud and stones and maybe a cowpat or two?

- 6. Training sessions have been taking place to teach dogs to drive. The dogs will accompany people with limited vision, and will also act as support to newly qualified drivers. The first dog graduates will drive in convoy up the Mall to Buckingham Palace on 1st April.**

Would you fall for this April Fool? What might make you doubtful? Explain!

Could dogs grip a steering wheel or turn a key with mouth or paws?

Could they learn the Rules of the Road?

Did you spot the date of the drive up the Mall?

Scams (Illegal plans for making money, especially ones that involve tricking people)

- 7. Bella was reading her weekly magazine, *Cool Girl*. On the back page it said, 'Call this number with your credit card details and you will receive a professional NailArt kit.' When Mum came home from work, Bella tried hard to persuade her to call the number.**

Do you think Bella's mum should make the call? Why might she think this would not be a good idea?

If Mum made the call, do you think Bella would receive a NailArt kit?

What do you think might happen to Mum's bank account?

What could Mum have done to make sure this was a genuine offer?

- 8. Ben listened to his nan talking on the phone. She looked very excited. ‘So, if I give you my bank details, you will send me a £1,000 voucher for that Mediterranean cruise?’ she asked, reaching for her handbag. ‘I’m the first to phone in? How lucky is that!’**

Why did Nan think she had won the draw?

Do you think that Nan should give out her bank details? If she does, do you think she will receive the voucher?

Do you think other people are also being told they are the first to phone in?

Do you think quite a few of them will fall for it, and give out their bank details?

Does this cruise actually exist? Is there really a voucher for £1,000?

What happens to people who give their bank details to scammers?

- 9. Supaparcels Express offers fast delivery of the things you need from stores you love. With our new delivery app., packages will arrive within hours of ordering, and reach you wherever you are – on the beach, in the woods, on a run. Download the app. today for only £9.99 and try it for yourself.**

Would you be tempted to download this app.?

Do you think an app. like this would work?

Does it seem likely that a parcel could reach you in the woods or on the beach so quickly? Someone would have to make the final part of the delivery on foot, or at least on a motorbike, wouldn't they?

If it was a really big parcel, could it be carried by someone on foot or on a motorbike?

If you felt suspicious, what steps could you take to check up on Supaparcels?

Do you think an app like this would work?

- 10. PERLICE NOTICE put out your old TV's, computers and raji's on pavement on thursday will be kerlected for recycling.**

This poster was stuck up on the wall beside the local shop. What do you make of it?

Do you think it looks like an official notice from the police or the council?

Who might have put up this notice? Why might they have done it?

If your mum and dad had an old telly, radio or computer to get rid of, do you think they should put it out on Thursday?

11. ROVING ROOFERS! Has your roof been damaged in the storms? Don't wait months for a builder. Put down a small cash deposit, and the Roving Roofers will make your house weatherproof again within days!

If your house had just lost tiles off the roof, and the ceiling was leaking, your parents might be tempted to call in the Roving Roofers, mightn't they? What questions should they ask before hiring the firm?

How could the Roofers do the job so much more quickly than the local builders?

Do they do a good job? Has anyone else in the neighbourhood used them?

How much is the 'small deposit'? Why do the Roofers ask for cash?

When the deposit has been handed over, do you think there is a chance the Roofers might just disappear?

12. THE FIXIT FIRM. Caught out by a dodgy deal? Can't get your money back? Call us on 793590021 and our skilled negotiators will sort it out for you.

Your older sister sent money to a shelter for sick donkeys, and then found out that the shelter didn't exist. She is tempted to contact The Fixit Firm for help to get her money back. What questions should she ask before trusting them?

Is Fixit's service free? They don't mention a charge, but they aren't likely to do the work for nothing, are they?

Do you think your sister should check how much they charge before taking them on?

She only has a mobile number for The Fixit Firm. Should she try to check whether they have an address, a landline number, or a website?

Do you think there is a chance that the Fixit Firm might be a scam itself?

Scare stories (Untrue or misleading reports which spread alarm or fear, sometimes on purpose)

13. BOUQUET DANGER! Beware those lovely bunches of flowers sent to brighten your birthday. The chemicals used to kill pests on the blossoms might also kill you!

What would make you doubt this story?

Have you ever heard of anyone being made ill by a bunch of flowers?

Wouldn't people who work in florists' shops all become seriously ill if this story were true?

- 14. MAXIPEP DRINKS ARE DANGEROUS! An ingredient in the drinks can dissolve metal nails and clean the grime off car engines. What might Maxipeps be doing to your stomach?**

Would this story frighten you off drinking Maxipeps?

How many people do you know who drink Maxipeps? Do they seem to be OK?

Do you think you would have to drink gallons of Maxipeps to upset your stomach?

If this story were true, wouldn't scientists have tested the drinks by now? If the drinks are dangerous, wouldn't they have been banned?

- 15. MIGRANT INVASION! At the present rate of immigration, the extra weight will cause the British Isles to sink under the sea within a hundred years.**

Would this report alarm you? It's trending on social media.

Is the country sinking now? There have been a lot of immigrants already.

Have you seen anything about this scare on TV, or heard about it on the radio?

Have your parents said anything about it?

Is there any way these numbers could be worked out?

Who might be behind this scare?

Do you think this scare is a load of rubbish?

- 16. DECAY caused by eating spinach! Fifty people were given large helpings of spinach every day for a six-month trial period. At the end of the trial, ten per cent of the subjects were found to have tooth decay.**

Can you spot problems with this trial?

What if you tested any fifty people after six months, wouldn't at least ten of them have some tooth decay, whether or not they ate loads of spinach?

Did some of the subjects have tooth decay before the trial started?

Don't lots of other things cause tooth decay – such as not cleaning your teeth, not visiting the dentist, eating too much sugary food?

How likely is it that ordinary people would eat large helpings of spinach every day?

- 17. HEARING LOSS caused by living near railway lines. 20% were found to have slight or significant degrees of deafness.**

What questions should you ask before accepting this report as fact?

What ages were the subjects of the trial?

How near the railway lines were their houses?

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

How often did the trains run, how fast were they, how noisy were they?

If any 100 people were tested, don't you think it's possible that 20 of them might have some hearing loss?

Aren't there lots of other things that can cause hearing loss – old age, illness, noisy workplaces, too much use of loud headphones?

So, do you think this experiment proves a connection between deafness and living near a railway line? What do you think of the headline in the paper?

18. TRAVEL STRESS cancels out the benefit of overseas holidays.

Do you think this is true? What questions would you want to ask before getting worried?

Do you think they mean the outward journey or the homecoming one? Would that make a difference?

What kind of stress do they mean, and how bad does it have to be to affect you seriously?

Have you ever had a bad journey travelling by train or plane on holiday? If so, did the effects last a long time? Or did everyone get over it quite quickly?

Did you all enjoy the holiday anyway, and feel better for it?

Does it all depend on the level of stress, and perhaps the success of the holiday?

So, do you think a very stressful journey might rather spoil the effects of your holiday, but a little bit of stress wouldn't?

Do you think that headline is fair, and would you let it stop you going on holiday?

Fake or false news (Stories presented as news, containing deliberately false information, spread by traditional news media or online social media)

19. JAVELINS FOOTBALL TEAM LIKELY TO LOSE FULL-BACK! Danny Summers visits clinic over old injury.

If Danny is unfit, his team's chances in the big match would be damaged.

What questions might you think about when you see this post?

Where did this news item appear? Was it in a football magazine, on TV or the radio, or only on social media?

Why might anyone want to suggest the Javelins team will be less likely to win the big match?

Who might have posted this story?

Could it be a supporter of the opposing team?

20. HOST OF TV RELIGIOUS PROGRAMME CAUGHT SHOPLIFTING

This story would damage the TV host's reputation.

What would you want to know about this story on social media?

If it's true, wouldn't it be covered on TV, on the radio, in newspapers or magazines?

If it's not true, who might be behind it? Who might want to damage this TV host?

Could it be a jealous rival? Someone who wants his job?

21. MAJOR SHOP CHAIN 'ALLRIGHT' PAYS WAGES BELOW NATIONAL MINIMUM

This rumour could damage Allright's reputation and harm its profits.

What questions might you ask about it?

Couldn't it very easily be proved true or untrue?

Wouldn't some member of Allright's staff have complained about this long ago?

Why would someone want to harm Allright's reputation? Can you think of anyone?

Might it be a member of a competing chain of shops?

22. FABULOUS SINGER MAISIEBELLE SENDS 'DOUBLE' TO CHARITY EVENTS.

Sensation Magazine will follow up this story. See next week's issue for more hair-raising revelations!

This story would be damaging to Maisiebelle. It suggests she can't be bothered to attend events held by charities she supports.

What questions might you want to ask about the story?

Do you know whether it has appeared in any other magazine?

Is Sensation Magazine well known?

Has it got a good reputation?

Do you think Sensation Magazine might have its own reasons for running this story?

Are they just trying to attract more readers with a sensational story?

23. HUGE CROWD OF PROTESTERS GATHERS OUTSIDE CHEMICALS FACTORY

This factory makes a chemical used in military missiles.

What questions might be asked about this story?

Where else has this crowd been reported? Anywhere?

Why would anyone want to make up this bit of false news?

Might it be anti-war activists wanting to stir up feelings against the factory?

24. VET CALLED TO SEE FLYING FINISH, HOT FAVOURITE FOR THE DERBY

After reading this tweet, people might think Flying Finish had less chance of winning the Derby.

Who might have tweeted this story?

Might it be bookmakers (betting firms) wanting to affect the odds of bets made on the Derby?

If someone in your family had been planning to put a bet on Flying Finish, do you think this would make them change their mind?

Student texts



Finding contradictions

1. The recipe said, 'Divide the dough into ten balls, about the size of golf balls. Bake in the oven at 180C for about 15 minutes or until the tops are beginning to brown. Makes 12 rolls.'
2. Connie's packet of sunflower seeds said: 'Fill six small pots with compost. Make a hole in each one with your finger and drop a seed into it. Cover the seeds lightly with compost and water them. Put them in a warm place, and in about a month you will be ready to plant out your eight sunflowers.'
3. The new six-metre-high sea wall had taken two whole years to build. Sadly, the very next storm brought huge waves, which broke over the wall in several places. The newspaper reported: 'Three-metre waves were last night seen breaking over the new sea wall at Resthaven, soaking cars and pedestrians alike.'
4. The hall could only take 100 people, but the band was so popular that a queue formed right down the road. Stewards counted as they let people in, and there were a lot of disappointed faces when at last the doors were closed. The paper's headline next day read 'Sell out for local group. The Groovers play to packed hall of 200 enthusiastic fans.'
5. Last night the bedding factory in Dillford caught fire. Three fire engines, each carrying four firemen, took to several hours to bring the fire under control. The firemen were grateful to Mrs. Green and her volunteer helpers, who worked through the night making ten cups of tea at a time for the tired men.
6. The lorry was almost full. The forklift truck hoisted the last of the 40 sacks into the air and dumped it into the trailer. The lorry driver went into the office and signed his name against the number 50 on the dispatch note. 'Job done,' he said, before climbing into his cab and setting off for Manchester.
7. Miss Taylor looked happily round her new class. She thought how lucky she was to have such a small class: only 20 children. She would really be able to get to know them all. A nice mix of boys and girls, too – she counted quickly – nine boys, and ten girls.
8. The tower seemed to reach almost to the sky. '330 steps,' said a man standing next to Tom. 'You win a badge if you get to the top.' That was enough for Tom, and he set off straight away. The view from the balcony was worth his aching legs. He punched the time into a machine, and out came a badge saying 'Member of the 320 Steps Club'.



9. A blackbird had laid five beautiful, blue speckled eggs in its nest in Jamie's garden, and the chicks were just due to fledge. Jamie was looking out of the kitchen window when suddenly a tiny chick scrambled up on to the edge of the nest. It wobbled a bit, flapped its wings, and flew unsteadily down to the ground. A second one followed – then a third, until four little balls of fluff had all landed safely.
10. The head teacher was carrying out a survey to see how many children came to school by bus or car, and how many walked. The survey showed that 70 per cent came by bus or car, and only 20 per cent walked. The head was keen to encourage more children to walk, as it would be better for their health, and better for the environment.
11. Mr. and Mrs. Brown were looking round the boatyard for a boat they could sail up the river to Littlecreek. There were several bridges on the way, the lowest one only six metres high. Mrs. Brown had fallen in love with a pretty little boat called Sandpiper, and the owner was very keen to sell it. 'Suit you perfectly,' he said. 'Two comfy bunks, mast only seven metres high, lovely stove and coldbox.' 'No good to us,' said Mr. Brown, leading his wife away.
12. Jack had been off school with a bad cold when the class visited Rosmore Castle in the winter term. Now he was looking forward to the summer trip, because they sometimes went to the castle again. 'Right,' Miss Taylor was saying, 'you've all been to the Castle, so this term we are going to Pebble Beach.' Jack's hand went up straight away. 'But Miss Taylor, . . .' he started.
13. Bristol had never known a flu epidemic like it. Many victims had ended up in hospital, putting a tremendous strain on the medical staff. Overall, 90 per cent made a full recovery, but five per cent were left with permanent damage to their eyes or ears.
14. Grandma was trying to buy a toy for Mia's second birthday. After looking round the toy shop for ages, she decided on a gorgeous doll. The doll wore a complete outfit, hat, shirt with shiny buttons, skirt, shoes and gloves. Grandma's face fell when the assistant turned the doll upside down, and showed her the label which said, 'Not suitable for children under four years'.
15. 'Another hot, dry day,' said the head gardener, as he went to open the park gates to the public. He counted nearly two weeks now without rain. The flower borders were holding up well, and of course it meant record crowds coming to visit and picnic by the lake. He trod across the lush, green grass on his way back to the ticket office.



16. The Pearsons were looking for a new house. Johnny and Tim were sick of sharing a bedroom, and Poppy's room was so tiny most of her things had to live on the floor. Mum had found a lovely house with a big garden, near the school. 'Big living room, kitchen/diner, TWO bathrooms,' she said delightedly, 'three big bedrooms, and in our price bracket.' 'Aren't you forgetting something?' asked Dad.
17. Aunt Jess was getting much better after a long illness, and now she was out of hospital. The doctor said she needed a stay somewhere quiet and peaceful, where she could sleep well and be able to snooze in the daytime. 'This sounds just up her street,' Dad said, looking up from a brochure. 'Small, cosy hotel. Three-star chef and caring staff. Beautiful garden. Convenient for Gatwick Airport.'
18. Mr. Bush was happiest when he was working in his garden. Sometimes he got so involved in what he was doing that he forgot to have anything to eat. The Thursday of the burglary, when he finally put away his tools in the shed, he realised it was already starting to get dark. 'That was a long day even by my standards,' he said to himself as he went indoors. The clock in the hall said 12.
19. Lewis's underwater watch had gone wrong just when he needed it, when he was diving off the rocks in Cornwall. 'Lucky,' he thought, 'it's still under guarantee.' He had bought it with some Christmas money with a six-month guarantee, and now it was only July. He would take it back to the shop tomorrow.
20. Will had a new Lego set. It was a model village, with six different buildings, each one packed in a separate bag. Will started building straight after breakfast, and tackled the fire station first as it was the biggest. He looked at his watch as he finished it – 20 minutes. By the time lunch was ready, a triumphant Will had a complete Lego village to show off. 'Three hours only,' he said with pride.
21. Toby the Alsatian was well known in the neighbourhood. He was so huge he looked quite frightening, but in fact he was as soft as butter. Even a tiny dachshund barking at him would make him back away and try to hide. It was a surprise to everyone that when a man tried to snatch Mrs. Gibb's handbag Toby grabbed his sleeve, growling fiercely, and sank his teeth into his arm.
22. Isabella was looking for photos of her favourite model. She had copies of *Society Magazine*, *Blitz*, and *Photoscreen*. 'Found one!' she said triumphantly to her friend. 'Look, Mariella was in that London fashion show on 8th April. 'Fabulous dress,' said Jess, 'though I can't think how it stays up!' Isabella was now looking through *Blitz*. 'Found another picture of her!' she shouted. 'Same date, taken on the beach. Where is it? Oh, in the Bahamas – Look at this bikini!'



- 23. Grandpa settled himself in his chair, adjusted his hearing aid, and put his feet up. 'Now,' said Grandpa, 'about that birthday present I owe you. What did you say the game costs?' 'It's called Minecraft, and it costs about 30 pounds,' said Jason. 'I hope that's not too much.' 'Seems very reasonable,' said Grandpa, fumbling in his wallet, and placing a ten-pound note and three one-pound coins on the table beside him. 'That's 13 I think.' Jason eyed the money, and didn't know what to say. How embarrassing!**
- 24. Emily's father was a vet, and was very thrilled when he was asked to spend a year in Africa helping with a conservation project. Emily was even more thrilled. As she was an only child, it was fairly easy for her parents to take her with them to the Ambasi Reserve. Emily quickly fell in love with her new home, and adopted a rescued lion cub to be her own responsibility. Her first letter to her brother was full of the news.**



Using life experience to think critically

1. Harry was walking the dog in the park when he saw something blowing about. When it hit the ground he realised that it was a £20 note. He picked it up and put it in his pocket, wondering what he should do next. He was very tempted to take it home and put it in his money box. However, he decided not to.
2. Megan and Elsa were playing in the wood behind Megan's house. There was an old oak tree just inside the gate and Megan decided to climb it. Suddenly there was a cracking noise and the branch she was holding onto snapped. Megan fell to the ground with a sickening thud. Elsa rushed over. 'Keep still, Megan! Don't move! I'm going to get help,' said Elsa.
3. Jamila had not learnt her spellings for homework. When she got to school she told her teacher that Nan's puppy had got hold of the sheet of paper with the spellings on it and chewed it up before she had the chance to learn them. Her teacher didn't look convinced.
4. The rules were different when you moved up to Year 5. You had homework on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and you had to hand it in on Thursdays. If you didn't you got a detention. This Wednesday's homework was English – write a poem about autumn. The trouble was it was now Thursday morning and Ethan still hadn't written the poem. He didn't want to go to school.
5. Meena's Dad had just finished painting the front porch. 'Careful you don't touch it till it's dry,' he warned Meena before he went to the supermarket. Meena's phone rang just as she was going out into the garden. She leant against the door frame and talked to her friend. Just then Mum came in. 'What's all that on the back of your hoodie?' she said.
6. Isla planted three sunflower seeds. Her class was having a competition to see who could grow the tallest sunflower. Isla put the flowerpot on the kitchen window where it was warm and sunny. For the first few days she watered it and was excited to see green shoots appearing. Then the family went on holiday for a week. When they got back Isla was disappointed to see the plants had died.



- 7. Carlo's uncle gave him a kite for his birthday. Carlo and his friend Anton went to the park to fly it. It was a warm, still day. Carlo held the wooden spool that the string was wound round. Anton ran across the field and launched the kite. It flopped to the ground. They tried again and again but each time the kite failed to fly.**
- 8. It was bonfire night. There was a huge bonfire on the school playing field. It had been raining all the week and today it was still drizzling. At six o'clock the head teacher arrived to light the fire before the firework display. There was a lot of crackling, hissing and steam but the fire just wouldn't light.**
- 9. Year Five were making boats. Half the class were making them by folding sheets of paper and the other half had some thin plywood and glue. The idea was to see which kind of boat would float the longest.**
- 10. Lucy and Emma were each given £5 to spend at the school fair. Emma had ten tries to win a DVD about ponies. Each try cost 50p. Then she wanted a burger which cost 75p. Lucy wouldn't lend her the money so she had to go without.**
- 11. Mum put the oil in the chip pan and lit the gas. She was just about to put the chips into the pan when she noticed it was starting to rain. She rushed outside to get the washing off the line. When she came back in there were flames rising from the chip pan.**
- 12. Ben was late for work. He grabbed his coat and rushed out of the door, letting it slam behind him. When he got home later he couldn't find his key anywhere. He peered in the kitchen window and there it was, lying on the table.**
- 13. It was a freezing cold icy morning. When Gemma got to school her teacher said the children were not allowed to play on the playground. Gemma and her friends were disappointed because they had been looking forward to sliding down the slope.**
- 14. Jess carried the bucket into the garden. She put it on the step with the flea shampoo and fetched the hosepipe. As soon as Dexter, the spaniel, saw the bucket and the hosepipe he scooted off across the garden at top speed.**
- 15. Tim was running late. He knew he wouldn't get to The Stag's Head to meet Sam by eight o'clock and he needed to message Sam to let him know. While he was waiting for the lights to turn green he started to send Sam a text message. The next thing he knew someone was tapping on his car window.**
- 16. It was low tide so Jack and Ollie walked across the sand to the rock pools at the far end of the beach. They spent some time exploring the rock pools and**



- collecting shells. Suddenly Ollie became aware of a rushing noise. He looked up and saw that the flat beach they had walked across was now under water.
17. Sophie turned the bath tap on. Just then the phone rang. It was Sophie's friend Grace. She talked to Grace for about ten minutes. When she went back upstairs she noticed there was water coming from under the bathroom door.
 18. 'Please can you put the washing on,' said Mum as she left for work. Ally picked up the pile and shoved it in the machine. Then she stuffed her bright red tee shirt in as well. When Mum got home she sighed and said, 'Why has the washing gone all pink?'
 19. She was halfway to school when Georgie realised she hadn't locked the back door. She looked at her watch – 8.45. No, she didn't have time to go back – she'd get a detention if she was late. When she got home that afternoon the door was wide open and her iPad, which she'd left on the kitchen table, was no longer there.
 20. Amber and her cousin Joe were in the supermarket with Jo's mum. She said they could choose a packet of sweets each. They each chose a packet of Haribos. Then Amber noticed Joe slipping a bar of chocolate into his pocket. Amber didn't know what to do. Joe could be quite nasty if things didn't go his way.
 21. It was lunch playtime. Robbie was making his way up to the climbing frame when he noticed two Year Six boys pushing a younger girl up against the fence. Then they took her glasses off and started calling her names. The boys were in the same class as Robbie and he was quite frightened of them. He hesitated, knowing what he *should* do but fearing the possible consequences.
 22. Charlie and Jordan were desperate to see *The Ogre Returns* at the local cinema. 'But Charlie, we can't – it's an 18,' moaned Jordan. 'It'll be fine,' replied Charlie. 'Just let me go in front and you say the same as me.' When they reached the front of the queue Jordan was asked for his date of birth.
 23. Matt and Jonno were waiting for the football coach to arrive. Matt said, 'Jonno can I trust you with a secret?' 'Course, mate,' replied Jonno. Matt reached into his pocket and pulled out a small box. He opened it and inside was a ring, sparkling with a single large diamond. Jonno gasped. 'Where'd you get it?' he asked Matt. 'Found it at me Gran's,' replied Matt, beaming with satisfaction. 'What you going to do with it?' asked Jonno. 'Flog it of course – should get enough to buy a PS4 Pro. Like I said, it's a secret.' Jonno said nothing.



- 24. Jay, who was 15, was supposed to be keeping an eye on her little cousins round the pool. She watched them for about 15 minutes then lay back on the lounger, soaking up the sun. Inside her parents were enjoying a long lazy lunch. Jay must have dozed off because she was suddenly woken by Ava, shaking her arm and saying, 'Jay, come quick! It's Felix – he's gone under!'**



Asking questions

1. You are told that this term for history you are going to study the life of Queen Melissa. You have never heard of her.
2. The school's music group has been promised a special day out later in the term.
3. A group of scientists is mounting an expedition to study an endangered creature.
4. Tom's dad is planning to take the family to visit a castle. Tom is not sure he can face yet another castle!
5. A small group of indigenous people has been discovered living in a remote area of jungle.
6. A ship has become stuck in ice during a voyage to study climate change. The story has gone viral on social media. You missed the first mention of it, so you want to catch up on it from the beginning.
7. A serious crash has taken place between two trains on a busy railway line. An enquiry has been set up to investigate the causes.
8. A well-known businessman has set up a generous grant for schools in Wayshire. The grants are designed to help young athletes get the best possible training.
9. An adventure holiday offers the chance to be 'cast away' on a small island for a day and a night without adults. Children taking part are given two days' training in bushcraft before being 'cast away'.
10. Your school announces plans for students to do 'exchanges' with children from another country.
11. The head teacher tells you that after half term, Yrs. 5 and 6 will be joining each other once a week for certain subjects.
12. The violent gales at the weekend blew down several ancient trees. Some of the trees in one of Suffolk's best loved beauty-spots are no more. Meetings will be held to discuss what should be done.



- 13. A village in Africa is regularly invaded by wild elephants, who come to drink at the village pond. On the way to the pond they eat crops, trample down vegetable plots, and damage fences. They can also be a danger to humans.**

Three possible ways to tackle this problem have been suggested:

- a. **Make a pond for the elephants well away from the village.**
- b. **Erect a fence round the village with beehives hung from it. When the elephants touch the wire and make the hives swing, the bees fly out in angry swarms. Elephants are afraid of bees.**
- c. **Put up poles round the village with loudspeakers on them playing the sound of tigers roaring. Elephants are afraid of tigers.**

- 14. The Sports Club your family belongs to has got to have extensive repairs to its roof. It's a big building, so it may not be necessary to close all of it during the repairs.**

The Committee discuss various options:

- a. **Close the whole building. This would probably be the quickest way to get the job done.**
- b. **Close one facility (judo/dance/swimming etc.) at a time.**
- c. **Close all but the most popular facilities.**

- 15. Susie is planning her birthday party. Among her friends there are two who hate each other. They are always quarrelling. Susie is wondering what to do.**

These are the possibilities she is considering:

- a. **Invite them both, but ask them privately to be polite to each other at the party so they don't spoil things.**
- b. **Ask one of them, and invite the other one to tea another day on her own. .**
- c. **Don't ask either of them, and explain to them what your reason is. Maybe this will make them try harder to get on with each other!**

- 16. One of the London underground lines has become dangerously overcrowded at rush hour. The management is faced with various choices as to what to do.**

Here are some of the possibilities they discussed:



- a. Put on more trains at rush hour for this particular line. This would mean fewer trains on the other lines.
- b. Build more carriages so that the trains can be longer. This would be expensive, and fares would have to go up for everyone throughout the service.
- c. Have railway staff policing the platforms at rush hour, able to ration the numbers getting on the trains.

17. Mr. Brown, a grumpy man, has moved from Birmingham to a small village. The house he has bought is very close to the church. The church clock chimes the hours and the quarter hours, night and day. Mr. Brown complains that the chimes keep him and Mrs. Brown awake at night, and he wants them stopped. Nobody else in the village has ever complained.

The village committee discussed various possibilities:

- a. Switch the chimes off altogether.
- b. Switch them off at night.
- c. Switch just the quarter hour chimes off at night.
- d. Do nothing.

18. Mr. Brown has another complaint. Farmer Mason takes his cows along the village road twice a day to his dairy for milking. They do leave some mess on the road, and traffic can be held up for a few minutes morning and evening. Mr. Brown says the mess on the road makes his car dirty, and traffic hold-ups make him late for work. There is a longer way round that the cows could go, but it is a lot further, and only possible if they are in certain fields.

What might the village committee decide to do about this situation?

- a. Tell Mr. Brown that he is living in the country now, and this is just something he will have to put up with.
- b. Tell Farmer Mason to take his cows by the longer route.
- c. A compromise solution.

19. Dad was wondering where to take the family for lunch for Milly's birthday. He remembered noticing a sign outside the village of Little Ridding which said, 'The Peach Tree. Voted the best place to eat in the village'. 'That could be worth a try,' he thought.



Think of some questions that would help Dad decide whether The Peach Tree is a good restaurant or not.

20. He had had a long day at the local dog show, but Jack said it was worth it. His cocker spaniel puppy had won a rosette, and Jack boasted to his sister that Monty would one day win Best in Show at Crufts. Sally is a bit doubtful about Monty's win, as nobody is sure that Monty is actually a pedigree dog, or exactly how old he is.

Can you think of some questions she might have wanted to ask Jack about it?

21. At the end of the holidays, Betsy claimed to be the winner of the Holiday Reading Competition. The challenge had been to read eight books, six fiction and two nonfiction, including one travel book and one by a foreign author. Betsy knew she hadn't met all the conditions, but she was pretty sure nobody else had either.

22. A notice went up on the board outside the Scout Hut, and everyone concerned was messaged. The committee had decided that for one evening a week, Tuesday, the Scout Hut would be made available for use by different local groups. The Scouts would continue to have the use of the hut for the other six days.

23. A group of parents, who all have plots on the same allotment, have come up with an idea. They are going to give any child who is interested a small patch of ground for themselves where they can grow flowers or vegetables.

24. Your school has been given a generous gift. The donor will pay for Year 5 to have a whole weekend away, with all activities included.



Analysing advertisements

- 1. THE BRAND NEW JUMBOBURGER!** A three-course feast in a bite for only £2!
- 2. BOYS AND GIRLS! YOU NEED A NEW FLEECE!** Be up to the minute, and get our brand-new style while stocks last! You have three weeks! Worldwide Fleeces.
- 3. SUPREMA QUARTZ WATCH BARGAIN!** The Fairy Watch House has this popular watch at a lower price than any other retailer. Outshine your friends when you wear this little beauty. Comes with its own velvet-lined box. Only £55.
- 4. NEW SMARTPHONE FROM PLUM RETAILING FOR UNDER £500! – THE MOMENT EVERYONE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR!** Don't be left at the starting gate!
- 5. THE GREAT GAMES COMPENDIUM!** All of your favourite family games in one beautiful handy box. The Christmas Present of the Year!
- 6. FABULOUS FLOWERS. THE EAST OF ENGLAND'S LEADING FLORIST.** Same day free deliveries make us the outstanding place to go for exquisite hand-tied bouquets. Prices from £25.
- 7. GARDENERS! OUR NEW PELLETS CAN KILL UP TO 90% OF THE SLUGS THAT ARE CAUSING HAVOC IN YOUR FLOWERBEDS.** Biodegradable, safe for pets, each packet contains enough pellets to treat 50 square metres of soil.
- 8. THE TOTE BAG THAT WILL SWEEP THE BOARD!** Twelve separate compartments, each with a different coloured lining to make them easy to identify. Outer pocket for mobile. Two different strap lengths. Anti-thief fastening. Includes wallet and make-up bag. £55.
- 9. SLEEPOVER PARTIES! COME CAMPING IN THE GLORIOUS YORKSHIRE DALES.** We will arrange a 24-hour party for you and up to ten friends. Activities, tents, evening barbeque and next day's breakfast all included. £30 per person.
- 10. TRIED EVERYTHING FOR YOUR SPOTS? BET YOU HAVEN'T TRIED OUR WONDERCREAM!**
Apply it at night for a week, and you will have the beautiful clear skin of top models!
- 11. NINE TO TWELVE YEARS OLD AND DON'T OWN A SWINGLER SKATEBOARD?** Don't be the odd one out! Get up to date with our high-performance board.
- 12. THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING! A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO JUNIOR BUTTERFLY WATCHER** for your birthday. Get all our special bargains. Introductory offer of free trip to Alton Towers.



13. **BE THE MOST POPULAR GIRL IN TOWN!** Let your friends come and chill in your room with our **SUPERCOMFY** bean bags. Affordable prices to tempt you! One day delivery.
14. **PHONES! TABLETS! LAPTOPS! END OF SALE CLEARANCE.** Whopping 20% off everything! Hurry, the offer only lasts till the end of this week.
15. **WEIGHTAWAY!** Eat what you like and still lose weight! See your weight plummet! An end to dreary useless diets! Contact Weightaway on 9500 . . .
16. **TREASURE HUNTERS! BE A TREASURE HUNTER FOR A DAY!** The Treasure Hunters' Club provides a day out for young enthusiasts. Small groups with a dedicated guide. You will be introduced to all the fun and excitement of finding buried treasure. You will be lent a divining rod, and shown how to use it. Old coins, jewellery, broken pots and jars – you can be guaranteed to find something! Club members have already had their finds displayed in museums all over the country.
17. **MIRACLE SYRUP!** Feeling tired and listless, sleeping badly, lost your appetite? Try our Miracle Syrup, a pick-me-up that will make you feel on top of the world again in just two weeks. Contains fargulate. Over 18s only.
18. **SILK PERFECTION SHAMPOO** – At last something completely new in shampoos. Contains orchid oil. Leaves your hair shinier and easier to manage than ever before.
19. Here is the advertisement that persuaded the Richards family to book this flat for their seaside holiday:

Lovely holiday flat in Longhaven. Five minutes from the beach with sea view. Suit family of four. Fully-fitted kitchen with American style fridge/freezer, excellent shower room.

By the time the Richards family had found the right block of flats they had crossed three busy roads, and were getting further and further from the beach. 'Well,' Dad said, 'I suppose you could make it to the flat in five minutes if you were a fast runner, and lucky enough not to be knocked down by a bus.' The flat was on the top floor. By standing on a chair, Ben said he could just about catch a glimpse, over the rooftops, of a strip of shining sea.

20. Here is the advertisement that persuaded Jinny and Mark to go and look at **Rose Cottage:**

Beautiful 17th-century cottage in glorious countryside. Fully modernised. Pretty garden and patio. Five miles from the bustling town of Sandchester with its booming businesses, factories, and hotels.



Jinny and Mark were house hunting, deep in the Devon countryside. The little lane grew narrower and more winding, and the hedges closed in until they were almost touching the car. 'Hope we don't meet a tractor,' said Jinny. 'I haven't seen a passing place in ages.' 'This would be fun and games in the winter with a few inches of snow,' said Mark. 'Any time of year we'd be lucky if we ever got to work on time. Five miles might as well be 50.'

21. Here is the advertisement that made Jim consider buying the old barn and sheds:

Walled yard, spacious barn and two sheds. Ideal for farmer or small holder as extra space. Could be used for livestock, or housing tractors and other machinery. In need of some repairs.

'Good lord!' said the builder, gazing in disbelief at the ramshackle farm buildings. The roof of the barn had a huge hole in it, the door hung off its hinges, and the window was missing most of its glass. The sheds leant drunkenly towards each other, loose planks clattering in the wind. 'You said some work needed doing,' continued the builder, 'but you didn't say it needed a complete rebuild. It's more of a job than I can take on at the moment.'

22. Here is the advertisement that made Great Aunt Jessie decide to go on the South Coast coach tour:

Tour the south coast of England! Air-conditioned coach, with spacious seating and on-board toilet. Three overnight stops in four-star hotels. Tour takes in Dover, Folkestone, Hythe, Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton, and Hove.

Aunt Jessie had been on a coach tour of the south coast, and Dad went to meet her on her return. He had been worried that his 90-year-old aunt would find the holiday stressful. However, as he helped her down the steps of the coach it was clear she was not only in robust good health, but also in a rage. 'John, I was **so** looking forward to Brighton. Do you know what we saw of it? Just a cup of tea in a Brighton petrol station!'

23. This is the poster Ethan saw:

'CRUISE AROUND GORGEOUS LAKE BROADMERE. STOP OFF AT LAKESIDE CAFE. TRIP TAKES FOUR HOURS. ICE CREAMS AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS ON BOARD. KIDS GO FREE. (up to three kids)

It was the last day of the holiday in the Lake District, and Dad said any more treats had better be cheap – you needed to be a millionaire to feed and entertain a family of six. Then Ethan spotted the poster. 'OK,' said Dad. 'We can just about afford it. Let's queue for the next boat.' The man in the ticket office looked at Dad and Mum, and



then his gaze travelled slowly over Ethan, Bess, Teddy and little Josie. 'Sorry Sir,' he said. 'You'll have to pay the full adult whack for the little one.'

24. This is the notice Dad had spotted in the brochure of West Country holidays:

Stay in our boutique hotel on magical Angel Rock Island! Perched high above the sea, with the castle looming over you and the fishing boats bobbing below, this is truly a hotel out of a fairy story. Take the ferry (or the causeway when passable) to cross to Torbridge. Torbridge boasts waterskiing, scuba diving, windsurfing, sand and rock pools for the little ones. Two Michelin-starred restaurants.

The boat trip across to the tiny rocky island had been an amazing start to the holiday. From their bedroom window in the hotel Maia and Sasha looked across to the busy town on the mainland, with its sandy beach, pier, shops and cafes. 'That's where we'll go tomorrow,' Maia said. It was only after breakfast next day, when the family went down to catch the ferry that the awful truth dawned. A notice by the jetty read 'FERRY SAILINGS 8.30 a.m. AND 6.30 p.m... CAUSEWAY PASSABLE TWO HOURS A DAY, VARIABLE HOURS. 'We're going to have to plan our activities rather carefully,' said Dad grimly. 'Wait till I get hold of that travel agent.'



Suggesting alternatives

1. Mr Harris, the new head teacher, announced to the school council that from next Monday students may only use backpacks that have been bought in the school shop. The backpacks are £15.99 each. He asked the members of the school council for their views on this plan.
2. When the Jones family arrived at Amsterdam airport on Thursday they were horrified to find that their flight home had been cancelled. The lady at the enquiries desk said there wouldn't be another available flight until the following Tuesday.
3. It was Ava's birthday and her grandparents were taking her out to lunch. When they arrived at the restaurant they were told they would have to wait about 30 minutes for a table. Ava looked disappointed – she had been looking forward to a pizza at Bella Mondo.
4. When Billy got home from school he realised he'd left his house key in the house. Mum was at work and Billy's sister had band practice and wouldn't be home until half past six. It was starting to rain.
5. Luca's grandad gave him £20 for his birthday. There was a new game he really wanted which cost £15.99 but he also wanted some football shin pads which were £5.60. He had a look in his money box and only found 20p.
6. Katie and her friend Tilly decided to cycle to the beach. The shortest way was about two miles, up a long, steep hill. The other way was about four miles but was flat most of the way. As they packed up a picnic the girls tried to decide what to do.
7. Joey and Ellie were staying with their grandparents. Grandad got a couple of games out of the cupboard. 'I want to play Snakes and Ladders,' said Ellie. 'No, I want to play Jenga,' grumbled Joey, tipping the wooden pieces onto the table.
8. Greenhill Junior School is running a competition to see which class can come up with the best recycling ideas. Year 5 want everyone to bring in an item from home that can be repaired in school. The head teacher is not keen on this idea.
9. The council have put up a sign saying that children may no longer ride scooters in the local playground. The playground has swings, slides, a zip wire and a roundabout. There is also a skate park. The local children are furious not to be able to ride their scooters in the park.



10. Evie's mum said she could take two friends to the cinema on her birthday. The trouble was, Evie had three best friends and she didn't want to leave one of them out.
11. Bella and Grace's parents said they could have a pet as long as they agreed to look after it. Bella wanted a rabbit but Grace was desperate for a guinea pig. They had both pets in the pet shop.
12. The dentist told Emma that she should use dental floss to clean the spaces between her teeth. She looked in the chemist's and discovered that all the floss available was made of plastic. Emma did not like this idea.
13. Tom left his bicycle on the pavement outside his friend Ricky's house while they went to football practice. When he got back he was horrified to find that it was no longer there.
14. Mrs. Fletcher couldn't decide whether to make a strawberry meringue or a raspberry mousse. She had picked two huge bowls of both kinds of fruit and they needed eating up.
15. You are going to work with a partner to make your own board game. You will need a list of any equipment and a set of rules for the game.
16. Fred Jones got out his toolbox. The latch on the front gate was broken and it wouldn't stay closed. He found the right-sized screwdriver and tried to undo the hinges but it was a bit rusty and wouldn't budge.
17. There is a new girl in Year 5. Her name is Sophia and she is Italian. At the moment she doesn't speak very much English and she seems very shy. Amy and Daisy want to make friends with her.
18. Dan has seen a pair of very cool trainers that he really wants. The trouble is his mum says they are far too expensive. 'But Mum, all my friends have got that sort!' he said.
19. Katie was staying with her nana and grandad. She was out in their garden shed when she noticed a very old-looking wooden box. When she rattled it she could hear something inside. However, the box seemed to be locked.
20. The students in Year 6 were asked to design a ramp for toy cars to race down. The idea was to see which cars would travel the furthest.
21. Mrs. May was knitting a sweater for her granddaughter. She had finished the back and front but it looked as if she was going to run out of wool before the sleeves were completed.
22. When Sam and Josh reached the cinema the queue stretched right down the road. 'We'll never get in at this rate,' muttered Sam.



- 23. Anna and her friend Zak decided to go to Macdonald's for a burger. They had just ordered a quarter pounder each when Anna realised she had left her purse at home.**
- 24. Freddie's kitten climbed right to the top of the cherry tree in the garden. Now it was mewling pathetically from the highest branch and didn't seem to be able to get down.**



Challenging claims

1. **Doing voluntary work, such as gardening for elderly people, makes children happier.**
2. **Fireworks should be banned, as they cause serious air pollution, and may frighten dogs.**
3. **Cat owners should be made to fit their cats with a collar and a bell, to prevent them from killing birds.**
4. **All children should belong to a social group outside school, such as Brownies, Cub Scouts, Guides, Scouts, drama groups, music groups, or sports groups.**
5. **A foreign language should be taught in primary school from Key Stage 1, Year 1.**
6. **Doctors and scientists say that films, TV, other outlets such as YouTube and Netflix, and particularly video games, are too loud, and can damage your hearing.**
7. **We should all start eating fish instead of meat as often as possible.**
8. **No part of any rainforest should be cut down for farmers to grow crops.**
9. **All adults should be required by law to make regular donations to charities.**
10. **Bicycle lanes should take priority over motor vehicles.**
11. **Komodo Island will close to tourists except for those who can pay high prices to visit. The sum of £800 has been mentioned. This is to protect the habitat of the Komodo dragons, which is being damaged by so many visitors, and to stop people stealing the animals.**
12. **Visiting museums, historic sites, and buildings is a more effective way of learning than classroom teaching.**
13. **The sale of chocolate Easter eggs contributes to overweight and unhealthy eating habits, and should be restricted or banned.**
14. **Face-to-face games and competitions are more fun than playing online.**
15. **Schools should include regular outdoor learning opportunities, such as those at Forest Schools.**
16. **Petrol and diesel vehicles should be taken off the road immediately to reduce pollution.**



- 17. Money spent on animal charities would be better spent on underprivileged children.**
- 18. Vaccination against measles should be a legal requirement.**
- 19. Space explorations, such as missions to Mars and the Moon, are a waste of money.**
- 20. Families should be limited to two children each, to stop over-populating the planet.**
- 21. Wildlife reserves in the UK should be joined up, to enable wildlife to move about freely. Extra land needed for this should take priority over house-building.**
- 22. Schools should give children four hours of sport or physical activity every week.**
- 23. Children should be banned from online gaming under the age of 15.**
- 24. Protest marches and sit-ins should be banned.**



Detecting bias

Bias is prejudice against one person or group in favour of another.

In the first two paragraphs, the same event is being reported by two different newspapers.

Two local newspapers, the Cove Express and the Bay Daily, reported on the Under-12s' football match between the Cove Rovers and the Bay Battlers.

1. 'The sad result of this disappointing match was a win to the Cove Rovers. The Bay Battlers fought valiantly against an opposing team which seemed to include at least two over-12s, judging by their height. A doubtful decision by the umpire gave the last goal to the visitors.'

Here is another report on the same match:

2. 'An exciting away match yesterday thrilled the spectators. Both sides played with courage and determination, but happily the outcome of a win to the Rovers was never in doubt. They showed the results of their training by fantastic teamwork, and Bailey scored a brilliant goal in the final two minutes. On this form we can hope they will make it to the final round.'
3. A long and bitter feud between neighbours finally came to court yesterday. Mr. Saunders, wealthy owner of a chain of Birmingham shops, is suing Mr. Yeats, well known and popular locally as the generous sponsor of the Mayfield Cricket team. Mr. Yeats was charged with using a footpath which runs past their properties. Both men claim ownership of the path.
4. Tenants of the Swallowfield flats have taken sides in a heated dispute. The case concerns the unauthorised use of the grassy area in the centre of the development. Complaints refer to children playing football or cricket there, resulting in broken windows. There are reports of smoking, drinking, and drug use among groups of teenagers. Reasonable requests for the groups to move on are met with abuse. Longsuffering tenants point out that there is a large play area available nearby, and a youth centre opened recently.



5. The owners of Priors Heath have finally had enough of irresponsible dog owners. Notices have been put up on footpaths to say that dogs must be kept on the lead. It is to be hoped that the herd of fallow deer will now return to the area. Fences have been repaired, and extra containers for dog waste installed.
6. Popular author Susan Manners has published yet another far-fetched fantasy romp, to the delight, it must be said, of her many fans. The hero and heroine of her series appear again, still battling unsuccessfully against an unlikely array of monsters and villains. Alas, by the end of the book they have still survived everything the powers of evil can throw at them, and will no doubt live to feature in still further volumes.
7. Wellprice Stores have received complaints about the joyful seasonal music being played in their shops to mark this Christmas month. Complaints are that it is too loud, prevents conversation, and (improbably) that it can damage hearing. A further charge is that it trivialises religion by the constant playing of carols. Wellprice maintains stoutly that the music adds to the warmth, good cheer and excitement of the Festive Season, and with truth that the carols are being given a wider audience than that of churchgoers only.
8. Mr. Bill Wainwright, of The Old Manor, Markham, will appear in court on Friday on a charge of shoplifting. He is accused of stealing two packets of cigarettes and a pack of batteries from Messrs. Tidmarsh and Co. Mr. Wainwright, 65, a non-smoker, is a faithful and helpful member of several committees in the town, a stalwart supporter of the amateur dramatic society, and a generous donor to the youth club. He will be represented by Mr. Allison.
9. Mrs. Norris is a passionate lover of birds, and her garden is filled with feeders to attract the tits, finches and robins. Some rarer visitors also come – beautiful goldfinches, long tailed tits, even the occasional shy woodpecker. Next-door neighbour Mrs. Fairbrother has recently acquired a second cat, a lean, rangy, hungry-eyed hunter. Since the arrival of this animal, Mrs. Norris keeps coming across tiny tragic feathered corpses, bearing the marks of teeth and claws. Mrs. Norris and Mrs. Fairbrother are at daggers drawn.
10. After the river burst its banks and flooded the town, 50 householders found themselves with several inches of water in their living rooms and kitchens. In nearby Braidmouth residents were rescued by boat from upstairs windows by heroic emergency services. Somehow council workers managed to deliver sandbags to every flooded house, though in some cases they came too late to



keep the worst of the water out. Householders unable to stay in their homes remained cheerful, and made the most of the basic comforts in the sports hall, hastily turned into a dormitory by a team of council volunteers.

11. After police raided the Goto Club last week on a charge of rowdy behaviour, the club has been closed down indefinitely. The only social venue for teenagers in the town, Goto has been a cheerful sight with its brightly painted facade and welcoming signs. Older residents speak affectionately of their membership of the club in their youth, and the long-term friendships formed there.
12. 'Thank you for your e-mail applying for the position of junior chef in our school's kitchen. I would be grateful for further information on various points. Could you supply details of the surprising number of places you seem to have worked at in such a short career? You make no mention of GCSE or A-levels: at what age did you leave school? I would also appreciate details of your date of birth, and any qualifications, if any, you have acquired since then.
13. Sir, Your paper reports a so-called 'riot' taking place in the town square on Saturday. It suggested that up to 50 young people were involved, and described the square the following morning as being 'totally trashed'. I have walked through the square myself, and apart from a few overturned chairs outside the cafe it appeared very much as usual for a Sunday morning. I trust the police will take a more balanced view of the incident than highly-strung passers-by evidently did.
14. Hi Mum, went for interview in the building society like you suggested. Made myself up extra carefully, new bright red lipstick, hair up on top, new cropped jeans. I put on that shirt you thought was a bit on the low-cut side, but I thought it looked good. Very short interview, and no luck. Oh well. Text me back. Lou Xx
15. Have to go to Lizzie Fairburn's new play on Saturday, as they want me to write a review of it. Hope this time I'll be able to get out of the theatre before the last trains run. After sitting through her last effort I had to stay over in a hotel! Hope she's learnt to say what she wants in fewer words. I'll text you.
16. The town centre was this morning inundated with over-zealous volunteers collecting for the charity Save the Grey Squirrel. I tried to explain to the misguided collectors that the wretched tree rats are not in any need of help, but I had no success!



- 17. Parts of London were brought to a standstill this morning as vast lines of placard-waving protesters marched through the streets. Scuffles broke out between commuters trying vainly to get to their workplace, and the single-minded activists, some of whom were prepared to resort to violence. A protester had to be dragged off the roof of an underground train for his own safety, while frustrated passengers watched in horror.**
- 18. On Thursday the Garden Club welcomed the famous garden designer Amanda Keeble, who gave us a most challenging talk. Her theme was 'Planting for a hotter, drier climate', and we were startled by the pictures of her own garden. The beautiful green lawns and dazzling borders were gone, and in their place were huge clumps of bamboo and reeds, conifers, ornamental thistles, and cacti. Those of us who have visited Amanda's garden in the past could not help but feel sad.**
- 19. David Blake's new exhibition opened at the Swan Gallery this week. My hopes for a new direction in his art were dashed. The same angular shapes, sheets of plain colour, and distorted figures covered every wall.**
- 20. Withit Builders are seeking planning permission for 60 houses on the outskirts of Dunton. Since the rapid growth of the industrial estate, demand for houses has trebled and waiting lists are very long. Regret at the loss of some beautiful woodland is understandable, but skilled workers bringing their families to Dunton will also bring much-needed prosperity.**
- 21. The recent gales brought down some of the lovely old plane trees lining Southern Alley. The town council immediately promised to replace them, but residents with long memories will remember the tragic loss of oaks in the park in the 2010 storms. Arguments are still raging about what should take their place.**
- 22. The security camera on the corner of East Street and Gully Lane showed an indistinct stout figure which could have been man or woman, wearing a hood. Mrs. Edna Billings admitted to having been in the area at the time but stoutly denied having anything to do with the break-in. Mrs. Billings has lived in Stratton all her life, and holds a record for having given temporary foster care to more than 40 children. Mrs. Billings denies ever having owned a 'hoodie'.**



23. A new couple had moved in next door to the Jones's. 'I hear the bloke votes for our useless member of parliament,' Mr Jones said disgustedly to his wife. 'Probably supports all his daft do-gooding ideas. Shan't support him if he applies to join the Friday club.'
24. Readers, you should prepare yourselves for yet *another* strike. Despite recent pay rises, improvement in work patterns and longer holidays, these so-called workers are now pressing for four-day working weeks and time off on bank holidays. Their consideration for the public they 'serve' has been proved over and over to be nil. If only my profession could enjoy their advantages!



Lucky dip

April Fools (Jokes made up to trick people on April 1st, April Fool's Day)

1. A new law will require bars and cafes to supply take-away mugs made of newspaper. These mugs are environmentally friendly, as the paper has already been used once, and is re-cycled.
2. The *Daily Rag* reports that an uninhabited island in the Pacific Ocean is drifting towards the coast of Chile at a rate of one kilometre a day. It is likely to collide with the mainland within the next year. Conservationists are working on a plan to halt the island before it hits land.
3. Villagers in Little Ditchling report sightings of a blue whale in the river. Crowds of sightseers line the riverbanks twice a day as the whale visits at about nine in the morning and eight at night. The local paper offers a large cash prize for the best photo of the creature.
4. Farmers are reporting a disastrous spaghetti harvest this autumn. As the wet weather continues, fields of flattened spaghetti lie waste. There are pictures of desperate farmers hanging the limp spaghetti strands out to dry.
5. The Great Pizza Race. This year, instead of rolling giant cheeses, villagers will roll giant pizzas from top to bottom of Bagbury Hill. The winner gets a crate of beer, and onlookers can have a slice of the pizza.
6. Training sessions have been taking place to teach dogs to drive. The dogs will accompany people with limited vision, and will also act as support to newly qualified drivers. The first dog graduates will drive in convoy up the Mall to Buckingham Palace on 1st April.

Scams (Illegal plans for making money, especially ones that involve tricking people)

7. Bella was reading her weekly magazine, *Cool Girl*. On the back page it said, 'Call this number with your credit card details and you will receive a professional NailArt kit.' When Mum came home from work, Bella tried hard to persuade her to call the number.



8. Ben listened to his nan talking on the phone. She looked very excited. 'So, if I give you my bank details, you will send me a £1,000 voucher for that Mediterranean cruise?' she asked, reaching for her handbag. 'I'm the first to phone in? How lucky is that!'
9. Supaparcels Express offers fast delivery of the things you need from stores you love. With our new delivery app, packages will arrive within hours of ordering, and reach you wherever you are – on the beach, in the woods, on a run. Download the app, today for only £9.99 and try it for yourself.
10. PERLICE NOTICE put out your old TV's, computers and raji's on pavement on thursday will be kerlected for recycling.
11. ROVING ROOFERS! Has your roof been damaged in the storms? Don't wait months for a builder. Put down a small cash deposit, and the Roving Roofers will make your house weatherproof again within days!
12. THE FIXIT FIRM. Caught out by a dodgy deal? Can't get your money back? Call us on 793590021 and our skilled negotiators will sort it out for you.

Scare stories (Untrue or misleading reports which spread alarm or fear, sometimes on purpose)

13. BOUQUET DANGER! Beware those lovely bunches of flowers sent to brighten your birthday. The chemicals used to kill pests on the blossoms might also kill you!
14. MAXIPEP DRINKS ARE DANGEROUS! An ingredient in the drinks can dissolve metal nails and clean the grime off car engines. What might Maxipeps be doing to your stomach?
15. MIGRANT INVASION! At the present rate of immigration, the extra weight will cause the British Isles to sink under the sea within a hundred years.
16. DECAY caused by eating spinach! Fifty people were given large helpings of spinach every day for a six-month trial period. At the end of the trial, ten per cent of the subjects were found to have tooth decay.
17. HEARING LOSS caused by living near railway lines. 20% were found to have slight or significant degrees of deafness.
18. TRAVEL STRESS cancels out the benefit of overseas holidays.



Fake or false news (Stories presented as news, containing deliberately false information, spread by traditional news media or on-line social media)

19. JAVELINS FOOTBALL TEAM LIKELY TO LOSE FULL-BACK! Danny Summers visits clinic over old injury.

If Danny is unfit, his team's chances in the big match would be damaged.

20. HOST OF TV RELIGIOUS PROGRAMME CAUGHT SHOPLIFTING

This story would damage the TV host's reputation.

21. MAJOR SHOP CHAIN 'ALLRIGHT' PAYS WAGES BELOW NATIONAL MINIMUM.

This rumour could damage Allright's reputation and harm its profits.

22. FABULOUS SINGER MAISIEBELLE SENDS 'DOUBLE' TO CHARITY EVENTS.

Sensation Magazine will follow up this story. See next week's issue for more hair-raising revelations!

This story would be damaging to Maisiebelle. It suggests she can't be bothered attend events held by charities she supports.

23. HUGE CROWD OF PROTESTERS GATHERS OUTSIDE CHEMICALS FACTORY.

This factory makes a chemical used in military missiles.

24. VET CALLED TO SEE FLYING FINISH, HOT FAVOURITE FOR THE DERBY.

After reading this tweet, people might think Flying Finish had less chance of winning the Derby.



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