GENERATION HUMAN RIGHTS

HEARD! Lesson Three
Current Fake News

Time: 45 Minutes

Overview
In this class students will use multimedia sources to learn about the Pizzagate story. The class will watch a video as an introduction to the story. Students will break into small groups to read and strategically analyze text from two different news articles. The class will engage in critical discussion and make connections to larger social and political trends and their own lives as media consumers.

Essential Questions
What responsibility do journalists have to report the truth?
Should there be consequences for reporting fake news?
What makes someone believe a news story is true?
How do you know when something is true?

Learning Goals:
Students will be able to:
- analyze and evaluate a variety of news media stories.
- demonstrate understanding of the role of media in our society.
- investigate and discuss the importance of reliable information sources.

HEARD! Glossary
- *Debunk*: expose the falseness or hollowness of (a myth, idea, or belief).

- *Propaganda*: information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.

- *Objective reporting: To maintain objectivity in **journalism**, journalists should present the facts whether or not they like or agree with those facts. **Objective reporting** is meant to portray issues and events in a neutral and unbiased manner, regardless of the writers opinion or personal beliefs.*

- Verify: make sure or demonstrate that (something) is true, accurate, or justified.

Materials for Instructor:
- Links to articles and or printouts

Materials for Student:
- Homework from previous class
- HEARD journals

I. Students Report Back on Fake News (5 min.)
Begin the class by asking one or two students to talk about the "fake news" stories they found for homework and identify:

- How or where they found the story?
- How did the story spread through media sources?
- Anyone find the same or similar stories?

II. Pizzagate Video (6 min.)
Share with students that we are going to investigate a well-known example of Fake News, Pizzagate. Ask students if anyone has heard of Pizzagate
(Optional - The teacher may scroll through the article as a brief introduction to the story before showing the video.)

Before the investigation begins go over the new vocabulary additions to the HEARD! Glossary. Although the students usually create their own class definitions, due to timing we are going to use the standard dictionary definitions during this class. Encourage students to use this new vocabulary as they go through the activities.

Show the Pizzagate video
        Washington Post Article & Video

III. Group Jigsaw Reading & discussion for comprehension (16 min.)
Break students into groups of four

Student groups read the NY Times article

Students are directed to read the selection of text assigned to them. Here is the article broken into 4 sections. When the reading has been completed, each group holds its

own discussion for approximately 10 minutes to talk about the material and identify the most important points. Each student takes turns teaching what he or she has read / learned to the other members. Each group synthesizes meaning to gain understanding.

IV. Shared Reading (8 min.)
Remaining in their reading groups, ask students to take turns reading the following article out loud.
Students read Gunman in Pizzagate article

V. Critical Analysis: whole class discussion (8 min.)
Ask students:

- What does this make you think about the importance of knowing how to separate "fake news" from "real news?""
- Who were the victims?
- Was the gunman a victim?

Tell students:
The man who created the fake news story, Alex Jones offered an apology to the owner.
Link to article source of quotes.

Share these quotes - if possible project them onto whiteboard:

"I made comments about Mr. Alefantis that in hindsight I regret, and for which I apologize to him," Jones said. "We relied on third-party accounts of alleged activities and conduct at the restaurant. We also relied on accounts of [two] reporters who are no longer with us."

He added, "To my knowledge today, neither Mr. Alefantis nor his restaurant Comet Ping Pong, were involved in any human trafficking as was part of the theories about Pizzagate." The story, he said, "was based upon what we now believe was an incorrect narrative."

Ask students:

- Does his apology abdicate his responsibility for publishing the fake news?

- Why would they want to create this piece of fake news? What was the motivation?

Closing Discussion (2 min.)

Ask students:

How are news stories packaged together to make us think they are true?