

7th Grade NTI DAY #28

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Fake animal news abounds on social media as coronavirus upends life

By National Geographic, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.03.20

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Image 1. Clear waters by gondolas in a Venice canal in Venice, Italy, on March 18, 2020. Viral social media posts claimed swans and dolphins were returning to the waters. It wasn't true. The water has been more clear lately as a result of the decrease in boat activity. The traffic stopped after Italy went on lockdown because of the new coronavirus crisis. Photo: Andrea Pattaro/AFP via Getty Images

The week of March 23, 2020, some happy stories on Twitter soften the bad coronavirus news. Swans had returned to empty Venetian canals in Italy. Dolphins, too. Also, a group of elephants walked through a village in Yunnan, China. They drank a corn drink and passed out in a tea garden.

The new coronavirus is a flu-like illness. In many cases, the disease causes mild symptoms like cough and fever. However, it can make some, such as the elderly or those with existing health problems, very sick. The illness is now spreading quickly across the world, forcing people to stay at home. Many are looking for a bright side. This includes pointing to reports of supposed wildlife triumphs in a humanless world. The posts got hundreds of thousands of retweets. They went viral on Instagram and Tik Tok and made news headlines.

However, it was not real.

The swans in the viral posts regularly appear in the canals where the photo was taken. The "Venetian" dolphins were filmed in the Mediterranean Sea, hundreds of miles away. The Chinese news debunked the elephant post. Elephants are normal in the village. The photo was not real, though.

When something goes viral it becomes very popular quickly.

Too-Good-To-Be-True Stories

In hard times, too-good-to-be-true stories can spread quickly. Happy animal footage soothes people who are stressed. A 2016 report found that the behavior is so powerful that it follows the same patterns as the spread of diseases.

Kaveri Ganapathy Ahuja put together the tweet about the Venice swans. Ahuja, who lives in New Delhi, India, did not know the swans were regulars. Her tweet now has a million "likes."

"The tweet was just about sharing something that brought me joy in these gloomy times," she says. She never expected it to go viral or cause harm. "I wish there was an edit option on Twitter just for moments like this," Ahuja says.

She does not plan to erase the tweet. She says that it still matters. The waters in Venice are clearer than usual because the boats are gone. The tweet also received more likes and retweets than normal. "It's a personal record for me, and I would not like to delete it," she says.

Paulo Ordoveza is a web developer and image verification expert. He runs the Twitter account @picpedant. There, he exposes fake viral posts. He sees firsthand the desire people have to go viral that may drive people to pass around misinformation.

Getting a lot of "likes" and comments "gives us an immediate social reward," says Erin Vogel. She studies human behavior. In other words, the response makes us feel good.



Struggling With Coronavirus And Its Fallout

The need for something to feel good about is high right now. People are struggling with the coronavirus and its fallout. The idea that animals and nature could do well at this time "could help give us a sense of meaning and purpose — that we went through this for a reason," Vogel says.

Many of the viral tweets followed the same theme. "Nature just hit the reset button on us," read a tweet celebrating the supposed Venice dolphins.

"I think people really want to believe in the power of nature to recover," says Susan Clayton. She is an expert in human behavior and the environment. "People hope that, no matter what we've done, nature is powerful enough to rise above it."

The Pew Research Center studies trends across the country. It surveyed Americans and found that half have seen made-up news or information related to the coronavirus. While a fake dolphin story does not seem too serious, spreading false hope does cause harm.

Finding out that these feel-good stories are fake, Vogel says, can make people even more distrustful.

Hope on social media will be important. People stuck at home are connecting with each other through screens. "I'd encourage people to share positive things," says Vogel. "But it doesn't have to be anything dramatic. It just has to be true."

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1. Which TWO of the following sentences from the article include CENTRAL ideas of the article?

- a. These reports of wildlife triumphs in countries hard-hit by the coronavirus got hundreds of thousands of retweets.
- b. In hard times, eye-popping, too-good-to-be-true rumors can spread quickly.
- c. Getting a lot of "likes" and comments "gives us an immediate social reward," says Erin Vogel, a social psychologist at Stanford University in California.
- d. The idea that animals and nature could do well now "could help give us a sense of meaning and purpose — that we went through this for a reason," she says.

2. Read the following summary of the article.

Recent stories about the return of dolphins to the canals of Sardinia turned out to be false, illustrating the power of untrue but uplifting stories to go viral during these difficult times. Experts say that it is valuable to share positive stories on social media, but that false positive information could have negative consequences.

Is this an accurate summary? Why or why not?

- a. Yes; it briefly captures the main events and analyzes the effects of false information from the article.
- b. No; it incorrectly states that experts believe false but positive stories can have negative effects.
- c. Yes; it clearly explains that even untrue uplifting stories could have negative effects.
- d. No; it does not accurately report the city where dolphins had allegedly returned.

3. Which of the following most influenced Kaveri Ganapathy Ahuja?

- a. The desire to share something uplifting.
- b. Her recent visit to Italy, where she saw how dirty the canals were.
- c. The possibility of her post getting thousands of likes and retweets.
- d. Her love of nature and all types of wildlife.

4. Why did Erin Vogel encourage people to share positive stories on social media?

- a. She thinks that if there is enough positive news, people will stop being mean to each other online.
- b. As long as they are true, such stories can help people to connect and cope during this difficult time.
- c. Positive news stories push social media platforms to reduce the spread of misinformation.
- d. Most recent viral social media posts have focused on positive stories about animals.

5. Describe what you think the author's purpose was for writing this text and whether they were successful in this purpose. Support your response with specific details from the text.



11/11

Arachne the Weaver

by ReadWorks

7th Grade Social Studies

Clark/Bloomfield

NTI Day 28



illustration of Arachne

It may seem difficult to take Greek myths seriously. After all, they tell of angry gods, dueling goddesses, snake-haired women, and beasts consisting of both animal and human parts. But mythology was a significant influencing factor in the day-to-day lives of the people of ancient Greece. They didn't have televisions or the Internet. There was no Google then, no encyclopedias, and no way to look some piece of information up quickly and learn it. Instead, the ancient Greeks turned to stories and legends to understand how the world around them operated. They used myths to explain the things they didn't understand, like thunder and earthquakes. And they used myths to make scary things seem less frightening. Over time, myths changed, and their events and details varied from one telling to the next, but their narrative outcomes remained largely the same.

Mythology, in the time of ancient Greece, was used not only to explain various phenomena that we now understand via scientific truths, but to account for the origins of humankind. It answered questions like, "What happens after death?" and, "Why does humanity exist at all?" Myths were also often entertaining, and sometimes humorous and intriguing; remember that there weren't TV episodes or movies in ancient Greece, so people had to entertain themselves in other ways. But more than that, myths told people how to live, and how to tell right from wrong. These stories included morals intended to teach valuable life lessons and instill ethics in their readers.

Take, for instance, the story of Arachne. Arachne was a young girl famed in her region for her spinning and weaving. Her cloth was said to be the softest and fairest of any in the land-so fine that some

believed it to be spun from gold. Because of her skills, Arachne was prideful. She thought herself the best spinner and weaver in the world, and she was certain that no one could match her talents and gifts.

One day, an old woman walked past Arachne weaving on her loom and asked her, "Who taught you to weave so well?"

Arachne replied that she had taught herself, and that she was the best spinner and weaver in the world.

"But perhaps Athena, the goddess of craft and weaving, taught you to spin and weave without your knowing it?"

Arachne, in her vanity, replied, "No, not even Athena is as good as I am."

The old woman then tore away her disguise and revealed herself as Athena. She was enraged that a mortal could be boastful and would dare to compare herself to a goddess. And so, Athena challenged Arachne to a spinning and weaving contest. The rules of the contest were simple: each woman would weave a tapestry, and Zeus, king of the gods, would act as the judge. If Arachne won, Athena would never weave again. And if Athena won, Arachne would never spin or touch a loom for the rest of her life.

Hundreds gathered to watch the two women weave. Arachne wove a cloth from the finest silk. It was said that the cloth was so fine it could barely be felt, but that it had the strength to hold a hundred men. On the cloth, Arachne depicted the failings of the gods, portraits of the gods acting immorally and foolishly.

Athena, on the other hand, is said to have spun with sunbeams, the sky, the fields, and the clouds. She wove a tapestry that showed the gods in all their strength and glory, praising them for their splendor.

It was obvious that Athena's cloth was more spectacular than Arachne's. Even Arachne, upon seeing Athena's tapestry, hid her face in her hands in shame.

In one version of the myth, Athena shredded Arachne's cloth into pieces when she saw how the girl had insulted the gods. But both women knew who the victor was, and Arachne realized that she would never be able to touch a loom again.

Ashamed and devastated at her loss, Arachne attempted to kill herself. Athena, taking pity on Arachne, stopped her. Athena insisted that Arachne remain true to her word and never again spin or touch a loom. Athena then transformed her into a spider so that she could continue to spin and weave beautiful tapestries. All spiders, in Greek mythology, are said to be the children of Arachne.

This particular Greek myth served to warn against the dangers of pride and vanity, as well as caution those seeking to compete against or humiliate the gods.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What did the ancient Greeks turn to in order to understand how the world operated?

- A. books and encyclopedias
- B. gods and goddesses
- C. stories and legends
- D. rulers and laws

2. What does the author describe in the article?

- A. the role of mythology in ancient Greece
- B. the importance of theater in ancient Greece
- C. the origins of humankind according to Greek mythology
- D. how ancient Greek myths changed over time

3. "[M]ythology was a significant influencing factor in the day-to-day lives of the people of ancient Greece."

What evidence from the text supports this statement?

- A. "Myths were [...] sometimes humorous and intriguing[.]"
- B. "[M]yths told people how to live, and how to tell right from wrong."
- C. "[The ancient Greeks] didn't have televisions or the Internet."
- D. "Over time, myths changed, and their events and details varied[...]"

4. Based on the story, how can Arachne be described?

- A. Humble and kind
- B. Clever and generous
- C. Talented and insecure
- D. Vain and disrespectful

5. What is a main message of the story of Arachne?

- A. The gods are immoral and foolish.
- B. People should keep their talents secret.
- C. People should not be vain or prideful.
- D. Gods and humans are equally talented.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

"On the cloth, Arachne **depicted** the failings of the gods, portraits of the gods acting immorally and foolishly.

"Athena, on the other hand, is said to have spun with sunbeams, the sky, the fields, and the clouds. She wove a tapestry that showed the gods in all their strength and glory, praising them for their splendor."

As used in this sentence, what does "**depicted**" mean?

- A. praised
- B. showed
- C. prayed to
- D. warned about

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Athena challenged Arachne to a spinning and weaving contest _____ she was enraged that Arachne dared to compare herself to a goddess.

- A. however
- B. although
- C. because
- D. therefore

8. What did Athena do to Arachne at the end of the story?

9. The text says that the myth of Arachne "served to warn against the dangers of pride and vanity[.]" How does the story of Arachne demonstrate the dangers of pride and vanity? Use details from the story to support your answer.

10. Based on the myth of Arachne, how were the ancient Greeks supposed to live their lives? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

LESSON
7-3**Solving Two-Step Inequalities****Reteach**

When you solve a real-world two-step inequality, you have to

- be sure to solve the inequality correctly, and
- interpret the answer correctly in the context of the problem.

Example

The catfish pond contains 2,500 gallons of water. The pond can hold no more than 3,000 gallons. It is being filled at a rate of 110 gallons per hour. How many whole hours will it take to fill but not overfill the pond?

Step 1: Solve the inequality.

- The pond already contains 2,500 gallons.
- The pond can be filled at a rate of 110 gallons per hour, or $110h$ for the number of gallons added in h hours.
- The pond can hold no more than 3,000 gallons, so $2,500 + 110h \leq 3,000$.
- Solve the inequality:
 $2,500 + 110h \leq 3,000 - 2,500$
 $110h \leq 500$, or $h \leq 4.5$ hours.

Step 2: Interpret the results.

The problem asks for how many *whole* hours would be needed to fill the pond with not more than 3,000 gallons. Since $h \leq 4.5$ hours, 5 hours would fill the pool to overflowing. So, the nearest number of *whole* hours to fill it but not to overfill it would be 4 hours.

1. A cross-country racer travels 20 kilometers before she realizes that she has to cover at least 75 kilometers in order to qualify for the next race. If the racer travels at a rate of 10 kilometers per hour, how many whole hours will it take her to reach the 75-kilometer mark?

With inequality problems, many solutions are possible. In real-world problems these solutions need to be examined for sense.

Example

An animal shelter has \$2,500 in its reserve fund. The shelter charges \$40 per animal placement and would like to have at least \$4,000 in its reserve fund. If the shelter places 30 cats and 10 dogs, will that be enough to meet its goal?

Step 1

Write and solve the inequality:
 $2,500 + 40a \geq 4,000$, or $40a \geq 1,500$
 $a \geq 37.5$

Step 2

If the shelter places 30 cats and 10 dogs, or 40 animals, that will be enough to meet its goal, because $a = 40$ is a solution to the inequality $a \geq 37.5$.

2. Alissa has \$75 worth of bird seed, which she will put into small bags. She will sell each bag for \$7. What is the greatest number of bags she must sell in order to have no less than \$10 worth of bird seed left over?



LESSON
7-3

Solving Two-Step Inequalities

Practice and Problem Solving: A/B

Fill in the blanks to show the steps in solving the inequality.

1. $3x - 5 < 19$

$3x - 5 + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} < 19 + \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$3x < \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$3x + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} < \underline{\hspace{1cm}} \div \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$x < \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

2. $-2x + 12 < -4$

$-2x + 12 - \underline{\hspace{1cm}} < -4 - \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$-2x < \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$-2x + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} > \underline{\hspace{1cm}} \div \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

$x > \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$

3. Why do the inequality signs stay the same in the last two steps of Exercise 1?

4. Why is the inequality sign reversed in the last two steps of Exercise 2?

Solve the inequalities. Show your work.

5. $-7d + 8 > 29$

6. $12 - 3b < 9$

7. $\frac{z}{7} - 6 \geq -5$

8. Fifty students are trying to raise at least \$12,500 for a class trip. They have already raised \$1,250. How much should each student raise, on average, in order to meet the goal? Write and solve the two-step inequality for this problem.

9. At the end of the day, vegetables at Farm Market sell for \$2.00 a pound, and a basket costs \$3.50. If Charlene wants to buy a basket and spend no more than \$10.00 total, how many pounds of vegetables can she buy? Write and solve the inequality.

