

# Fake news: Reporting unbelievable things that someone said

## Flying penguins? Watch the BBC video.



This is what the explorer said



“This recently discovered colony of penguins **is** unlike any other.”



“These little fellas **can** do something no other penguins **can**.”



“They **fly** thousands of miles to the rainforests of South America where they **spend** the winter basking in the tropical sun.”

“They **don’t** need to huddle together every winter for protection against the bitter cold.”

This is what Robert told his friends

I saw a cool video on YouTube the other day. It was about penguins that can fly!

It was a BBC documentary but it can’t be true! The reporter said that they had recently discovered a colony of penguins that **was** unlike any other. He claimed that they **could fly** and actually **flew** south every winter and **spent** the cold season in warmer regions.

He showed the video and you could see the penguins flying! He said that they **didn’t** need to huddle together to keep warm because they could fly to the South.

## Now it’s your turn:

STEP1: Look at the words in bold. What do you notice?

Then read what Maxi and his brother said about it.

Maxi is announcing some cool news



Robert is reporting **fake** news



“Wow, you won’t believe what they have discovered in Madagascar.

I saw a BBC video where an explorer showed some flying penguins. I didn’t know they can do that. I thought penguins were too heavy to fly, but the video really showed flying penguins. How amazing.

The explorer **explained that** they **are** unlike any other penguins in the world. They **don’t spend** the winter in the ice, and **they don’t need to huddle** together to protect themselves against the cold. They **fly** south to warmer countries, just like other birds. **He said that** they **can** fly thousands of miles and **spend** the winter in the tropical sun. Isn’t this amazing? I would really like to see these flying penguins myself.”

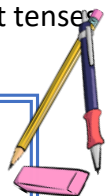
“Have you seen the BBC video about flying penguins? It went viral on all the social media. It showed an explorer in Madagascar and **he said** that **he had discovered** a colony of penguins that **was** unlike any other in the world. **He said that** these penguins **didn’t spend** the winter in the ice – huddling together against the cold, but that they **could fly**. **He explained that** these special penguins **could fly** to warmer regions and spend the winter there, just like other birds do. In the video you could see the penguins running and then starting to lift off. Then the video showed lots of black birds flying in the sky. At first it seemed very convincing – but then I noticed that it was published on April 1<sup>st</sup>. So, the whole thing is obviously a hoax. Of course, penguins do not fly.

### What do you notice?

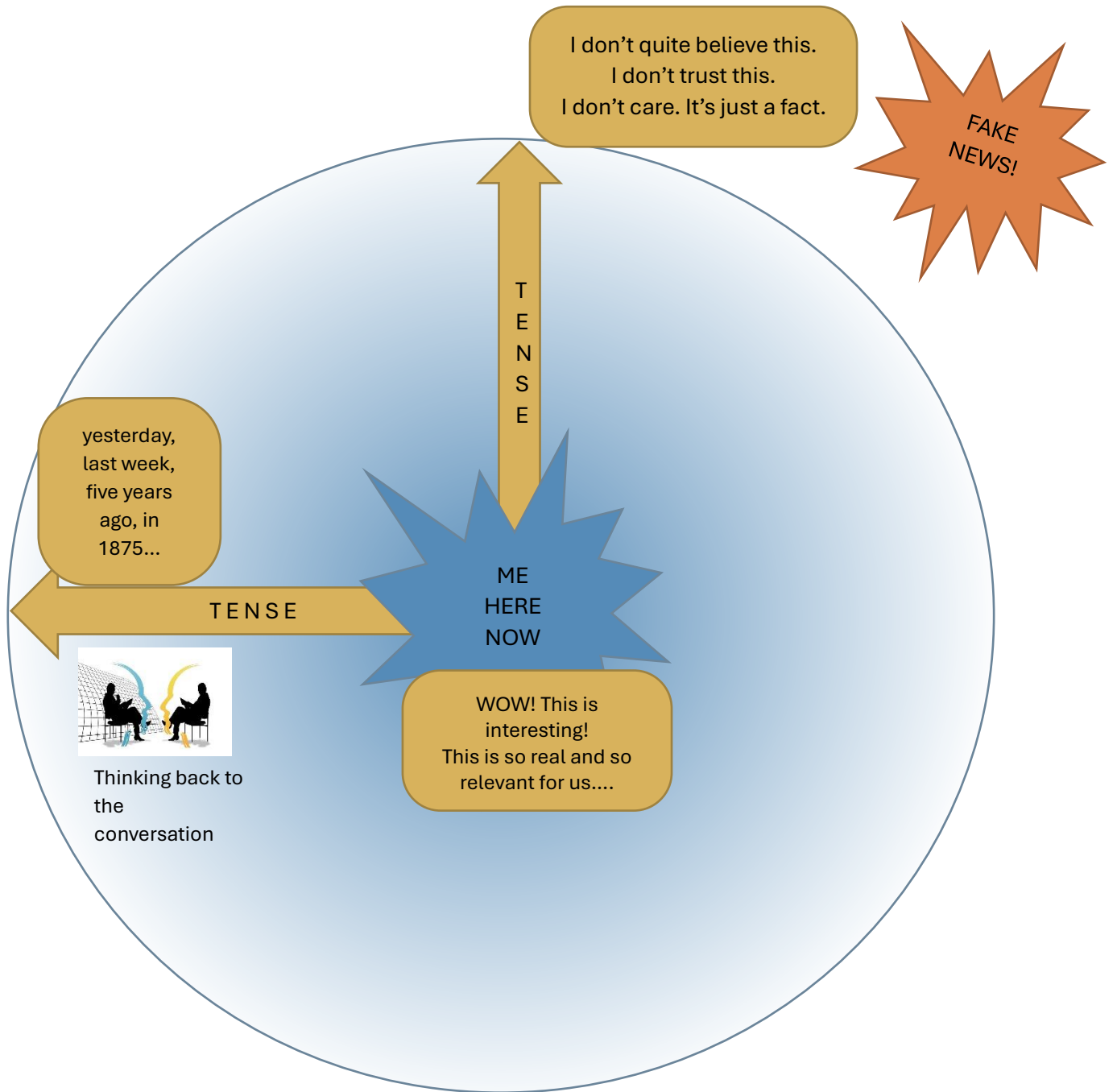
Both Maxi and his brother Robert are talking about the same video. Why are they using different tenses here?

Maxi uses the \_\_\_\_\_ because....

Robert uses the \_\_\_\_\_ because ...




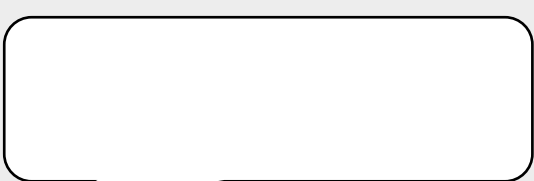



# The Reporting Circle



For the teacher

## Let's explain:

<b>Announcing interesting news</b>	<b>Reporting <u>fake information</u></b>
<p>Maxi is <b>announcing</b> cool news. He thinks this is great and wants to tell us about these cool animals. Therefore, he is using the ..... tense.</p>	<p>Robart knows that penguins are too heavy to fly, and he does not believe that the information is correct. He thinks this is fake news. Robart is <b>reporting</b> the news in the ..... tense.</p>
<p>In everyday situations we often use the present tense to talk about interesting news or facts that we have heard of or read. We use the present tense, because these facts seem important and relevant to us now.</p>	<p>When we report fake news or things that are no longer true, we report these in the ..... tense. We use the .....tense to “push the information away from us” – that means – to show that we do not trust it.</p>
<p>“I have some good news for you all. We are going to buy a new basketball hoop for the schoolyard.”</p>	<p>The phrase <b>he/she claimed that</b> – also shows that we do not trust the information that we are reporting.</p>
<p>Ms. Wagner said that we will get a new basketball hoop for our schoolyard.</p>	<p><b>Your Turn</b> <b>What did the people actually say?</b></p>
<p><b>Your Turn</b> <b>What did the teachers actually say?</b></p>	<p></p>
<p>“We ...”</p>	<p>The reporter <b>claimed</b> that the penguins in Madagascar <b>could fly</b>.</p>
<p>Our teacher <b>told us that we are going to</b> visit the Zotter chocolate factory next week. Cool, isn't it?</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p>Trump <b>announced</b> that he <b>would</b> build a wall at the border to Mexico.</p>
<p>Ms. Pö <b>said</b> that we <b>can</b> take part in the GOAL project and write our own online story books with our international friends.</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p>Ms. Bergmann <b>promised</b> that we <b>would</b> watch a film but then we had to do a grammar exercise!</p>
<p>Ms. Bergmann <b>promised</b> that we <b>will</b> watch a film in the next lesson.</p>	

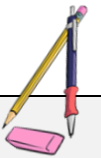
## More examples of reporting fake news

Last week I met an old friend of mine and we got into a really weird conversation. Mark really thinks that aliens **exist** and **are** all around us. He **claimed** that they **were abducting** humans and **were doing** strange experiments on them. He **was** really scared and said that he **didn't leave** the house at night anymore.

He then **added** that you also **had to be** careful outside, even during the day. He asked if I **knew** about chemtrails. He **claimed** that politicians **wanted to control** people, so they **added** chemicals to the fuel of airplanes and if you **wanted** to be safe, you **had** to wear a helmet made of metal or stay inside.

I tried to reassure him, but he didn't want to hear my arguments. **He told me to read** the warnings on Facebook and Telegram and **he promised to send** me some links to shocking videos. Mark seemed really scared – I don't know where he got all the fake news from. Maybe he spends too much time on the internet!

## What were Mark's exact words?



He said: *"I am sure that aliens ..... and .....all around us. They are abducting humans and ..... strange experiments on them. I ..... really scared. I ..... the house at night anymore.*

*But you also ..... careful when you go outside during the day. Do you \_\_\_\_\_ about chemtrails? The politicians ..... people, so they ..... chemicals to the fuel of airplanes. If you ..... to be safe, you ..... a helmet made of metal or stay inside.*

*I'll send you some links so you can watch the shocking information yourself. You won't believe it – it's really scary what they are trying to do to us. "*

## Now it's your turn.

Here are a few examples of recent fake-news headlines. Report in 1 sentence what the articles or videos said.



### Research Team taught Gorilla to Knit

The article said that a research team .....  
.....but I don't think gorillas can do this.

### Boy saw UFO over Vienna

The boy claimed that he .....  
but I am sure it was just an airplane.

### Facebook: Global warming does not exist

I saw a comment on Facebook. The writer claimed that  
..... but  
.....

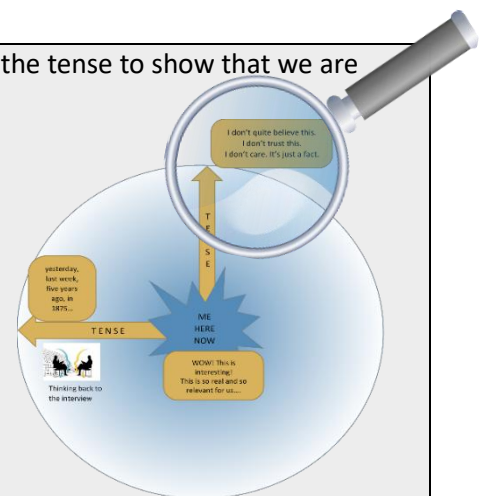
Now add 3 more examples of fake news that you have come across.

I read on the internet that \_\_\_\_\_  
Someone told me that \_\_\_\_\_  
My classmate claimed that \_\_\_\_\_

## Let's recap: Reporting fake news

We report fake news in the **past tense (or the past perfect tense)** . We use the tense to show that we are distancing ourselves from **information that we doubt** (anzweifeln)

The phrase **he/she claimed that** – also shows that we do not trust the information that we are reporting.



"Aliens **are** abducting humans."

**He claimed** that Aliens **were** abducting humans.

"Gorillas **can** learn to knit."

**He said** that gorillas **could** learn to knit.

"I **have discovered** flying penguins."

The explorer **explained that** he **had discovered** flying penguins.

**But**, we can use the **present tense to announce important, interesting and trustworthy information** that we have heard or read.

Our teachers promised that we **will** soon get a new basketball hoop for our schoolyard. (Here you trust your teachers)

Mom told us that she **is going to** have another baby. I am so excited.