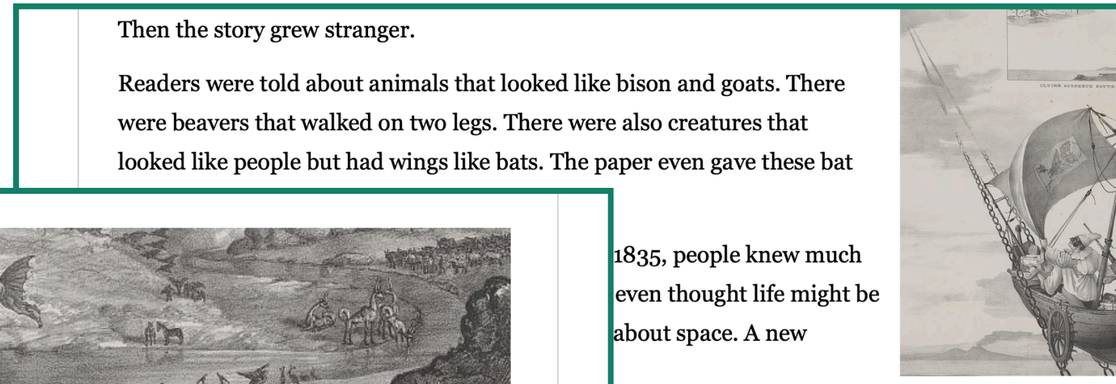
HIGH-INTEREST READING WITHOUT THE BABYISH FEEL

Accessible informational text for older students who need reading support with real topics, age-appropriate design, and meaningful thinking.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level is 4.3





Bat People on the Moon?

The Great Moon Hoax of 1835

Vocabulary	
claim	a statement that someone says is true
discovery	something found or learned for the first time
evidence	facts or details used to show whether something is true
conspiracy	a belief that people secretly planned something, often without proof
explanation	information that tells why something happened

In August 1835, readers in New York saw a wild story in a newspaper called The Sun. The paper said a famous scientist had found life on the moon. There were forests, lakes, strange animals, and even people with wings like bats.

The story was not true. But many readers did not know that.

A Real Scientist

Then the story grew stranger.

Readers were told about animals that looked like bison and goats. There were beavers that walked on two legs. There were also creatures that looked like people but had wings like bats. The paper even gave these bat

1835, people knew much
even thought life might be
about space. A new

al. The newspaper gave exact details and used the
. The claims also became strange little by little inst

elves. There was no internet, live video, or fast wa
far away. If a report used trusted names and scie

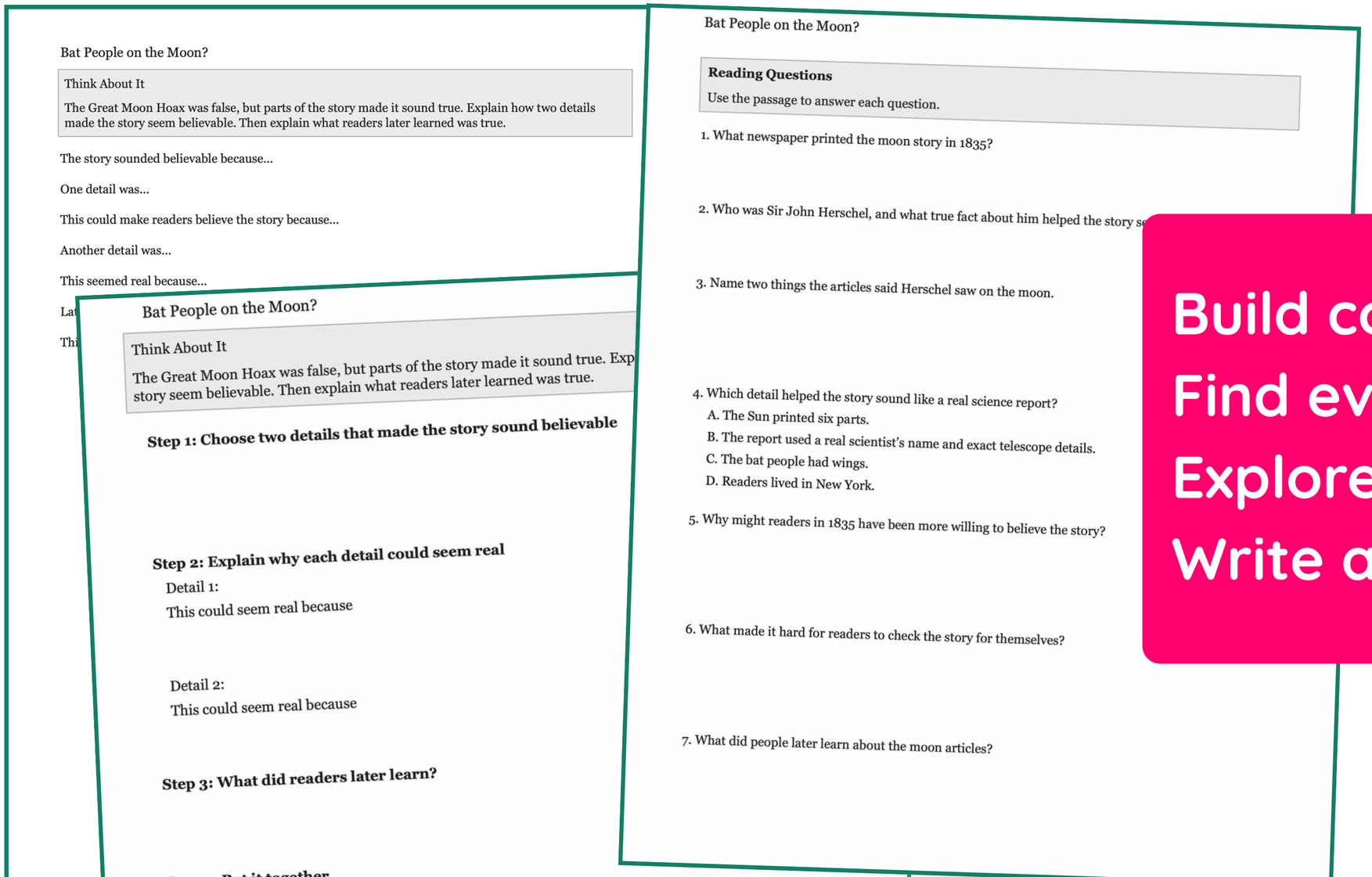
read it. Some readers believed they were learning

eavers, or cities on the moon. A Sun writer named
later said he meant it as a joke about strange ideas

it sound true.

event on the moon. In 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts

READ. THINK. USE THE TEXT.



Bat People on the Moon?

Think About It

The Great Moon Hoax was false, but parts of the story made it sound true. Explain how two details made the story seem believable. Then explain what readers later learned was true.

The story sounded believable because...

One detail was...

This could make readers believe the story because...

Another detail was...

This seemed real because...

Bat People on the Moon?

Think About It

The Great Moon Hoax was false, but parts of the story made it sound true. Exp
story seem believable. Then explain what readers later learned was true.

Step 1: Choose two details that made the story sound believable

Step 2: Explain why each detail could seem real

Detail 1:

This could seem real because

Detail 2:

This could seem real because

Step 3: What did readers later learn?

Bat People on the Moon?

Reading Questions

Use the passage to answer each question.

1. What newspaper printed the moon story in 1835?

2. Who was Sir John Herschel, and what true fact about him helped the story s

3. Name two things the articles said Herschel saw on the moon.

4. Which detail helped the story sound like a real science report?
   A. The Sun printed six parts.
   B. The report used a real scientist's name and exact telescope details.
   C. The bat people had wings.
   D. Readers lived in New York.

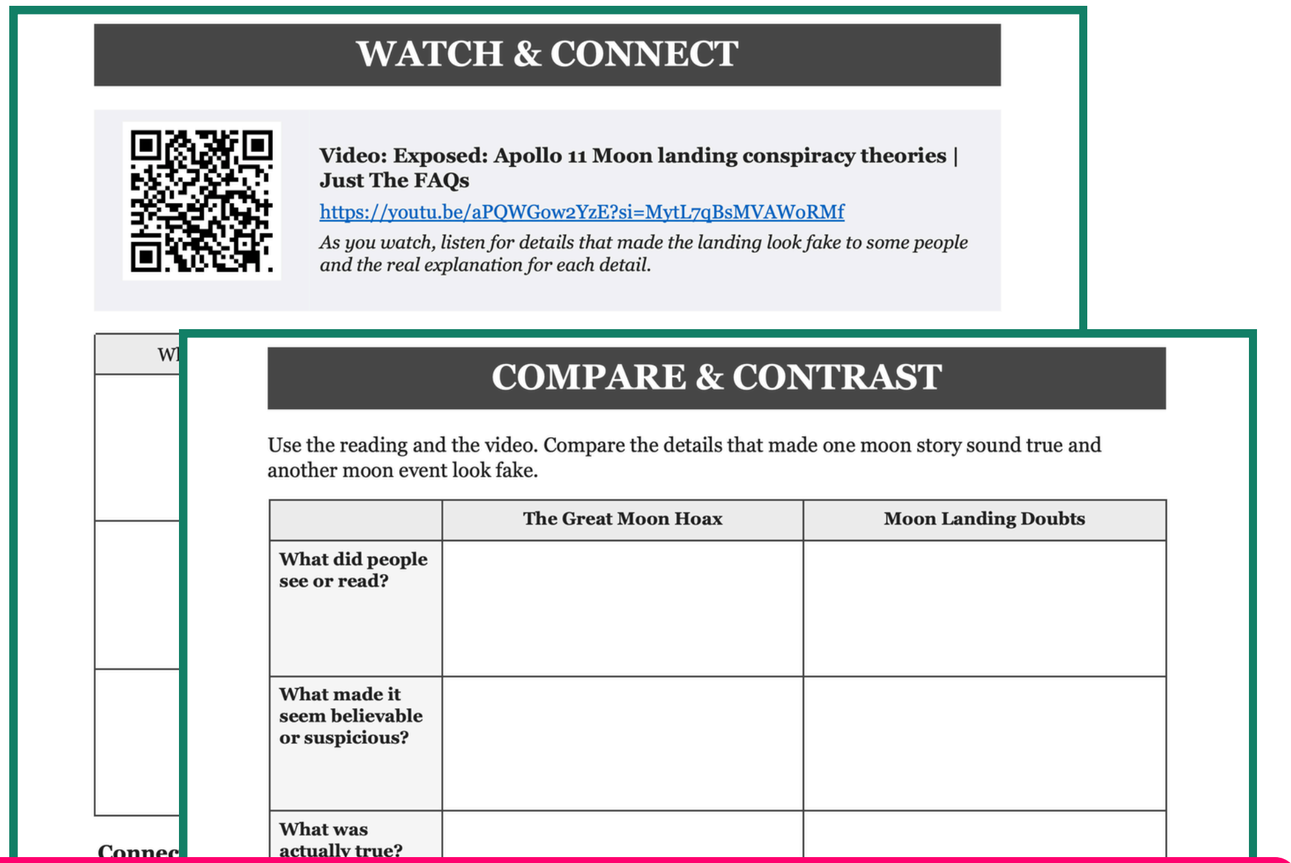
5. Why might readers in 1835 have been more willing to believe the story?

6. What made it hard for readers to check the story for themselves?

7. What did people later learn about the moon articles?

Build comprehension
Find evidence
Explore the featured skill
Write about the reading

GO BEYOND BASIC COMPREHENSION



WATCH & CONNECT

Video: Exposed: Apollo 11 Moon landing conspiracy theories | Just The FAQs

https://youtu.be/aPQWGow2YzE?si=MytL7qBsMVAWoRMf

As you watch, listen for details that made the landing look fake to some people and the real explanation for each detail.

COMPARE & CONTRAST

Use the reading and the video. Compare the details that made one moon story sound true and another moon event look fake.

	The Great Moon Hoax	Moon Landing Doubts
What did people see or read?		
What made it seem believable or suspicious?		
What was actually true?		

Featured Skill: Compare & Contrast

Students read about a hoax that people believed and watch a video about why some people think the moon landing was faked. They use structured tools to compare & contrast the two.

USE IT YOUR WAY

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Bat People on the Moon: A Newspaper Hoax That Fooled Readers

How This Resource Is Designed

This resource is intentionally flexible. A teacher can use only the passage and comprehension questions, add one Think About It response, teach the compare-and-contrast organizer, connect the reading to the video, or combine the pieces for a fuller multi-source lesson. Students don't need to complete every page.

Core reading: Informational passage about the 1835 Great Moon Hoax and modern questions about the moon landing. The reading uses compare and contrast to examine how details can make information seem believable or suspicious.

At a Glance

Comprehension: Text-dependent questions fo

Reading Think About It: Two versions of the stems and one with step-by-step support.

Compare & Contrast Organizer: Students c believable with details that made some people q

Watch & Connect: Video organizer comparing real explanations.

Optional extensions: Morphology, vocabulary, discussion, writing, and creating a student-made hoax.

Suggested Pathways

Pathway	Use	Suggested Sequence
Core	Short reading lesson	Passage → Reading Questions → choose one Reading Think About It
Compare & Contrast Focus	Teach the central text structure	Passage → Questions → Compare & Contrast Organizer → Think About It
Reading + Video	Add listening and source connection	Passage → Questions → Watch & Connect → compare information from both sources
Full	Multi-source lesson	Passage → Questions → Organizer → Word Study → Watch & Connect → Think About It → Extension. For Compare & Contrast Focus, change it to: Passage → Questions → Organizer → Video details → Think

Choose one of the suggested pathways

OPTIONAL READING EXTENSIONS

Morphology: *discovery*

- Break apart *discovery*: *dis-* means "remove" or "opposite," and *cover* is something that hides. A discovery removes the cover from something so people can see it for the first time.
- Build a word family: cover → uncover → discover → discovery → discoverer.
- Ask students how *uncover* and *discover* are alike and what "discovery" the newspaper claimed.

Morphology: *conspiracy*

- Break apart *conspiracy*: *con-* means "together" and *spir* means "breathe." A conspiracy is like people "breathing together," or whispering a secret plan to each other.
- Connect *spir* to *inspire* and *respiration*.
- Ask how the picture of people whispering together helps explain the word.

Morphology: *astronomer*

- Break apart *astronomer*: *astro* means "star" or "space."
- Discuss related words such as *astronomy* and *astronaut*.
- Ask what an astronomer studies and how an astronaut is different from an astronomer.

Morphology: *telescope*

- Break apart *telescope*: *tele* means "far," and *scope* means "look" or "see."
- Connect *telescope* to *microscope* and other *scope* words.

Pre

Or build your own with optional extensions

Vocabulary in Context

- Find the vocabulary words in the passage and highlight clues that explain their meanings.
- Good examples include *claim, evidence, discovery, conspiracy,* and *explanation*.



My name is Cathy White, Ed.D., and I'm the creator behind Pathwise Works. I've spent 25+ years in education, and I build frameworks and systems to help educators have **more time** to actually teach.

Work smarter, not harder!

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