

Example 12:

Pregnant man is expecting baby in July

March 27, 2009
The ADVOCA

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Example 17: Deconstruct this story, using the Guide

College Costs Keep Rising, Report Says

By TAMAR

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Example 13:

Bronx Zoo Cobra Found Alive

By KYLESA GOODMAN and CORIE ALBARRAZEN



Example 4:

Radiation level falls at Japan Fukushima plant: agency

(Reuters) - The level of radiation detected at the Tokyo Electric Power Co Fukushima plant has fallen steadily over the past 12 hours, an official at Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency said on Thursday.

A level of 152 microsieverts per hour was recorded at the plant's main gate at 5 p.m. (800 microsieverts is the maximum level allowed for the public). The reading was 338 microsieverts per hour at 11 a.m. Thursday.

That level was still much higher than it should be, but was not dangerous, and that by comparison absorption of a level of 400 was normal from being outside over the course of a year, Ohmura said.
(Reporting by Tessa Jones)



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NEWS LITERACY DECONSTRUCTION WORKBOOK

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Zoo officials said the Reptile House
investigated how the snake escaped a
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News of the Egyptian cobra's captur
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Despite her newfound fame, the snal
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Are the key questions answered? Why?

Find an example of direct evidence and circle it.

Characterize Tetsuo Ohmura as a source using T.M.I.A.N.

How reliable is this report? Why?

Deconstruction is the application of News Literacy Concepts to the analysis of component parts of a news report in order to dispassionately judge its reliability.

A Deconstruction Guide

1. Summarize the main points and then check: Does the headline and the lead support the main point(s) of the story?
2. How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct or indirect?
3. Evaluate the reliability of the sources using **I'M VA/IN**:
 - ✓ Independent sources are better than self-interested sources.
 - ✓ Multiple sources are better than a single source.
 - ✓ Sources who **Verify** are better than sources who assert: "I know" vs. "I believe"
 - ✓ **Authoritative/Informed** sources are better than uninformed sources.
 - ✓ **Named** sources are better than unnamed sources
4. Does the reporter make his or her work transparent?
5. Does the reporter place the story in context?
6. Are the key questions answered?
7. Is the story fair?

Note: Examples in this workbook are drawn from actual news reports. Some have been shortened or altered from the original to suit the purposes of News Literacy exercises. Do not cite or quote from these versions.

Example 1:

Assaults Plague Campus

On October 17, 2006, Peter Baigent, the Vice President of Student Affairs sent an e-mail to the entire university informing students, staff and faculty of the recent sexual assault of two female students.

According to Douglas Little, Assistant Chief of the Stony Brook Police Department, the two men allegedly involved with the assault are known to the police. Little commented, "Both the Suffolk County police and Stony Brook Police departments are working on the case together."

When asked about the safety of the campus community with respect to this recent incident, Little mentioned, "There is no threat to the campus community." However, upon further questioning, Little did continue on to say that the campus community should remain vigilant when considering these types of crimes.

Little reported, "Sexual assault is a very underreported crime." He continued, "The [two] women were very courageous, and the university has given them 100% support." Little was unable to provide any information about the location of the attack on campus because of possible violations of the privacy of the two female students.

Aside from this recent incident, students also have the ability to become involved with the pro-active measures set in place by the university to minimize the occurrence of such attacks.

- Is this headline adequately supported in this story? Point to specifics in the story

Example 2:

Foreclosure freeze could put security clearances at risk

By Dina ElBoghdady and Dana Hedgpeth

Washington Post Staff Writers

Wednesday, October 20, 2010; 2:31 PM

The sudden moratorium on many foreclosures across the country is unexpectedly putting some federal workers and contractors at jeopardy of losing their security clearance because of the heightened uncertainty clouding their finances, according to lawyers who handle these cases.

Employees with security clearances are monitored by the government to see whether they have financial problems that that would make them vulnerable to bribery or blackmail. And with many financial companies adopting some form of foreclosure freeze in recent weeks, it's taking longer for some delinquent borrowers to resolve their mortgage cases and put their troubles behind them, lawyers said.

This problem is especially acute in the Washington region, home to nearly a third of the the nation's 854,000 employees with top-secret clearances.

"Getting to the bottom of resolving debt is more complicated when the lenders are in paralysis," said Dennis Sysko, a national security lawyer in Glen Burnie. "The longer it is unresolved, the longer the cloud remains."

Lawyers in the Washington area said they are starting to field inquiries about foreclosure delays from workers who have security clearances or are trying to get them. Many don't know whether they should be elated or concerned about the turn of events.

Find the headline and the "lead." Do they support the main point of the story?

Example 3:[CLICK HERE FOR AUDIO](#)**An Agent, a Green Card, and a Demand for Sex**

By NINA BERNSTEIN

No problems so far, the immigration agent told the American citizen and his 22-year-old Colombian wife at her green card interview in December. After he stapled one of their wedding photos to her application for legal permanent residency, he had just one more question: What was her cellphone number?

The calls from the agent started three days later. He hinted, she said, at his power to derail her life and deport her relatives, alluding to a brush she had with the law before her marriage. He summoned her to a private meeting. And at noon on Dec. 21, in a parked car on Queens Boulevard, he named his price — not realizing that she was recording everything on the cellphone in her purse.

“I want sex,” he said on the recording. “One or two times. That’s all. You get your green card. You won’t have to see me anymore.”

She reluctantly agreed to a future meeting. But when she tried to leave his car, he demanded oral sex “now,” to “know that you’re serious.” And despite her protests, she said, he got his way.

The 16-minute recording, which the woman first took to The New York Times and then to the Queens district attorney, suggests the vast power of low-level immigration law enforcers, and a growing desperation on the part of immigrants seeking legal status. The aftermath, which included the arrest of an immigration agent last week, underscores the difficulty and danger of making a complaint, even in the rare case when abuse of power may have been caught on tape.

No one knows how widespread sexual blackmail is, but the case echoes other instances of sexual coercion that have surfaced in recent years, including agents criminally charged in Atlanta, Miami and Santa Ana, Calif. And it raises broader questions about the system’s vulnerability to corruption at a time when millions of noncitizens live in a kind of legal no-man’s land, increasingly fearful of seeking the law’s protection.

A lead (pronounced “leed”) is a sentence or two near the top of a news article. An effective lead catches the reader’s attention honestly and makes them want to keep reading. It doesn’t need to summarize the entire story, but it should convey the main point. Usually it’s the first sentence, but occasionally a reporter starts with some scene-setting or an anecdote, but quickly follows up with a “lead” that tells you where the story is going.

- Find the lead and circle it.

-In this story, circle examples of direct and indirect evidence

-Find an example of context. Circle it.

-How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Explain

Example 4:

Radiation level falls at Japan Fukushima plant: agency



(Reuters) - The level of radiation detected at the Tokyo Electric Power Co Fukushima plant has fallen steadily over the past 12 hours, an official at Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency said on Thursday.

A level of 752 microsieverts per hour was recorded at the plant's main gate at 5 p.m. (0800 GMT) on Wednesday, said the official, Tetsuo Ohmura. The monitoring point was then changed to the plant's west gate and readings were taken every 30 minutes, he said. At 5 a.m. the reading was 338 microsieverts per hour. That level was still much higher than it should be, but was not dangerous, and that by comparison absorption of a level of 400 was normal from being outside over the course of a year, Ohmura said.

(Reporting by Terril Jones)

Find an example of direct evidence and circle it.

Characterize Tetsuo Ohmura as a source using I'M VAIN _____

How reliable is this report? Why? _____

Example 5:

Crime Blotter Has a Regular: Yankees Caps

By MANNY FERNANDEZ

Published: September 15, 2010

...A curious phenomenon has emerged at the intersection of fashion, sports and crime: dozens of men and women who have robbed, beaten, stabbed and shot at their fellow New Yorkers have done so while wearing Yankees caps or clothing.

Yankees caps and clothing have dominated the crime blotter for so long, in so many parts of the city and in so many types of offenses, that it defies an easy explanation.

Criminologists, sports marketing analysts, consumer psychologists and Yankees fans have developed their own theories, with some attributing the trend to the popularity of the caps among gangsta rappers and others wondering whether criminals are identifying with the team's aura of money, power and success.

Since 2000, more than 100 people who have been suspects or persons of interest in connection with serious crimes in New York City wore Yankees apparel at the time of the crimes or at the time of their arrest or arraignment. The tally is based on a review of [New York Police Department](#) news releases, surveillance video and images of robberies and other crimes, as well as police sketches and newspaper articles that described suspects' clothing. No other sports team comes close.

The [Mets](#), forever in the shadow of their Bronx rivals, are perhaps grateful to be losing this one: only about a dozen people in the same review were found to be wearing Mets gear.

One criminologist said the trend might be a result of what could be called the [Jay-Z](#) effect.

The rapper Jay-Z has worn a Yankees cap for years — on his album covers and in his videos — and has helped turn the cap into a ubiquitous fashion accessory for urban youths (“I made the Yankee hat more famous than a Yankee can,” he boasts in one song).

It is but one of several theories. Sports marketing analysts say it is a matter of numbers: the Yankees sell more merchandise than any other baseball team. As of August, they hold a 25.13 percent market share of nationwide sales of merchandise licensed by Major League Baseball, with the Red Sox second at 7.96 percent and the Mets seventh at 5.32 percent, according to [SportsOneSource](#), a firm that tracks the sporting goods industry. For criminals outside New York, the team's caps and clothing are nearly as popular.

The man who robbed a Chase branch in a Chicago suburb in May wore a Yankees cap. In July, a young man in a Yankees cap assaulted an 81-year-old woman in her home, about 2,800 miles from Yankee Stadium, in Seattle.

“Why people pick the Yankees over the [Mariners](#), I don't know,” said Detective Mark Jamieson, a Seattle police spokesman. “It just happened to be an article of clothing he was wearing on that particular day.”

Find an example of direct evidence and of indirect evidence and circle it.

- In what way does this reporter (and people commenting in the story) use inference: the process of combining clues with observations to come up with a hypothesis that might logically explain a pattern or might connect the wrong sets of causes and effects.

Example 6:

Pulling all-nighters earns lower GPAs

By Michael Virtanen, Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — Students who rely on all-nighters to bring up their grades might want to sleep on that strategy: A new survey says those who never study all night have slightly higher GPAs than those who do.

A survey of 120 students at St. Lawrence University, a small liberal arts college in northern New York, found that students who have never pulled an all-nighter have average GPAs of 3.1, compared to 2.9 for those who have.

The study, by assistant professor of psychology Pamela Thacher, is to be included in the January issue of [Behavioral Sleep Medicine](#).

"It's not a big difference, but it's pretty striking," Thacher said. "I am primarily a sleep researcher and I know nobody thinks clearly at 4 in the morning. You think you do, but you can't."

A second study by Thacher, a clinical psychologist, had "extremely similar" results showing lower grades among the sleep skippers. Many college students, of course, have inadequate or irregular sleep, for reasons ranging from excessive caffeine to poor time management.

Prav Chatani, a St. Lawrence sophomore who wasn't involved in either study, said the findings made sense.

The neuroscience major has been pulling fewer all-nighters, but recently stayed up until "around 4 or 5 in the morning" to prepare for an organic chemistry test and a neuroscience presentation, he said.

He found himself unable to remember some of the things he had studied.

"A lot of students were under the impression all-nighters were a very useful tool for accomplishing work, that caffeine intake was very useful in meeting deadlines and stuff like that," said Chatani, who had a 3.4 GPA last semester and doesn't expect to do too badly this semester, either. Dr. Howard Weiss, a physician at St. Peter's Sleep Center in Albany, said the study results make sense.

"Certainly that data is out there showing that short sleep duration absolutely interferes with concentration, interferes with performance on objective testing," he said.

Find an example of inference and circle it. What kind of evidence could replace the inference? Is it provided?

Example 7:



The death toll in a horrific bus accident on a New York highway has risen to 14. Police Department spokesman Paul Browne says a passenger who had initially survived the wreck died at a hospital Saturday afternoon.

Authorities say there were about 32 people aboard the bus when it overturned on Interstate 95 as it returned from the Mohegan Sun casino in Connecticut.

As it toppled, the bus was sliced, end to end, by the support pole for a large sign. The accident happened at about 5:30 a.m. on the New England Thruway at the Hutchinson River Parkway in the Bronx.

The bus was heading southbound when it flipped on its side. It then skidded into the support post for a large highway sign. The post sliced through the length of the bus at the passenger seat level, officials said.

New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said the bus was moving at "a significant rate of speed," according to ABC station WABC-TV in New York.

Shamel Bookard and Ashanti Jackson, friends of Oferdel Williams, the driver of the bus, described him as the kind of person who is likely overwhelmed with sadness at what happened.

"I'm sure he's greatly sorry for what did happen," Jackson told WABC-TV.

They said Williams is known for his courage.

"Years ago he ran into a burning building and saved a family, there was a girl, a grandmother in a wheelchair, he brought them out the fire," Bookard told WABC-TV.

"Our -- and the entire city's -- prayers, thoughts and sympathies are with the victims, and their families and loved ones," said New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg in a statement.

What is asserted? _____

What kind of evidence is used to verify the death toll?

What kind of source, according to your I'M VAIN analysis is:

Paul Browne _____

Raymond Kelly _____

Ashanti Jackson _____

Shamel Bookard _____

Example 8:

October 8, 2010, 11:05 am

Cake Man Raven Closed by Health Department

By [BRENDEN BECK](#),
Community Contributor
Citing four “critical”
sanitary violations, the New
York City Department of
Health closed [Cake Man
Raven Confectionery](#), the
Fulton Street bakery

famous for its red velvet cake and celebrity connections on Wednesday.

A handwritten sign told customers that Cake Man Raven Confectionery was out of cakes. Passersby may not have noticed the two bright yellow Health Department signs pasted to the shop’s front doors Thursday night, which read “Notice: Closed.” That’s because two large plants obstructed the signs. More prominently displayed was a handwritten sign that read “Sorry for inconvenience, cakes sold out for today.”

The Health Department Web site lists violations including: Food from unapproved or unknown source, flies present, lack of a hand washing facility near the food preparation area and toilet room, and the supervisor of operations lacking a food protection certificate.

The shop, which sells cake baked at another facility, did not have running water, according to a statement released by the Health Department.

The recent problems started at the beginning of the month, before the health inspection, said one employee, who did not want to be identified by name for fear of losing the job. “Cake Man was late on his water bill, and because of that we weren’t able to flush the toilets or wash our hands,” said the employee. The employee also recalled problems from [last month’s health inspection](#) that have yet to be remedied: “Our permit wasn’t renewed, our certificates saying we were allowed to handle food were fake.”

The store has often been late to pay its staff in the last few months, the employee said. “Since the end of July, our pay days have been very shifty,” said the employee. “They [management] always claim they don’t know who is in charge of paying us or when we’re getting paid. Sometimes we get paid by cash, and last time we got paid it was by check. It’s pretty random.”

In Lecture 9, we discussed three elements to look for when weighing an anonymous source. Are all three found in this story? Based on your findings, how much weight do you give this anonymous source?

Identify an example of direct evidence _____

How close does this reporter come to opening the freezer? _____

Example 9:

March 6, 2011

Criticism and Questions Over Plan to Move Macy's Thanksgiving Parade Out of Times Sq.

By NOAH ROSENBERG

Thanksgiving is a time of tradition: turkey, family and, for the past 84 years, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. In that regard, this year will be no different. But in 2012, Macy's said this week, it will alter its parade route, bypassing Times Square and Seventh Avenue entirely. The departure has stoked the ire of some Times Square business owners and other stakeholders, who say the new route — along Avenue of the Americas — is at best a bland alternative to the flash of Times Square. They also say the rerouting will have dire financial consequences for the hotels, retailers and advertisers who rely on the exposure that decades of Thanksgiving ritual has brought. Jason Post, a spokesman for the mayor, said Tuesday that the rerouting was due to scheduled construction in “the bow tie area of Times Square,” and would be in effect through the 2013 parade. In 2014, Mr. Post said, the route will be “re-evaluated.”

But some critics are skeptical. A community leader who spoke on the condition of anonymity to preserve his publicly neutral stance, said he was at a meeting with Macy's representatives last year, at which the retailer “threatened to move the parade to another city,” unless the route changes were agreed upon. The Macy's representatives, the community leader said, cited a need to appease NBC, the broadcast licensee of the parade, as a reason to alter the route. On Tuesday, the parade spokesman for Macy's, Orlando Veras, confirmed the change and said in an e-mail that Macy's officials felt that Avenue of the Americas was “quite simply the safest route.” The e-mail also said, “NBC is not involved in any way in this change.” “NBC gives them a huge amount of money,” the community leader said of Macy's, “and CBS, in the last few years, has covered the parade from Times Square,” using MTV Studios as a broadcast hub. “CBS doesn't give them a dime,” the official said. The switch in the route would effectively cost CBS its bird's-eye view of the parade. “So Macy's is protecting their own interests, and from their own point of view it makes sense,” the community leader said. A CBS spokesman said the network declined to comment on the parade route change. An NBC executive said that Macy's had been pushing for the move to Avenue of the Americas since the Times Square stretch of Broadway was turned into a pedestrian plaza, in 2009, and the original parade route down Broadway was switched to Seventh Avenue. The network, the executive said, had not been involved in the decision to move the route to Avenue of the Americas on its way to Herald Square. Fred Rosenberg, president of the Times Square Advertising Coalition, and a senior vice president with Sherwood Equities, which owns several buildings along the current parade route, said his members “would love to flush out what is really going on,” and are waiting for answers.

Evaluate the anonymous source, using the three-part test outlined in lecture.

Evaluate the sources, using IM VAIN

What could you conclude from this story about the reasons for the move?

Example 10:**Experts Had Long Criticized Potential Weakness in Design of Stricken Reactor**

By TOM ZELLER Jr.

Published: March 15, 2011

The warnings were stark and issued repeatedly as far back as 1972: If the cooling systems ever failed at a “Mark 1” nuclear reactor, the primary containment vessel surrounding the reactor would probably burst as the fuel rods inside overheated. Dangerous radiation would spew into the environment.

Now, with one Mark 1 containment vessel **damaged** at the embattled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant and other vessels there under severe strain, the weaknesses of the design — developed in the 1960s by General Electric — could be contributing to the unfolding catastrophe.

When the ability to cool a reactor is **compromised**, the containment vessel is the last line of defense. Typically made of steel and concrete, it is designed to prevent — for a time — melting fuel rods from spewing radiation into the environment if cooling efforts completely fail.

In some reactors, known as pressurized water reactors, the system is sealed inside a thick steel-and-cement tomb. Most nuclear reactors around the world are of this type.

But the type of containment vessel and pressure suppression system used in the failing reactors at **Japan’s** Fukushima Daiichi plant is physically less robust, and it has long been thought to be more susceptible to failure in an emergency than competing designs. In the United States, 23 reactors at 16 locations use the Mark 1 design, including the Oyster Creek plant in central New Jersey, the Dresden plant near Chicago and the Monticello plant near Minneapolis.

In 1972, Stephen H. Hanauer, then a safety official with the Atomic Energy Commission, **recommended** that the Mark 1 system be discontinued because it presented unacceptable safety risks...(and) was more susceptible to explosion and rupture from a buildup in hydrogen — a situation that may have unfolded at the Fukushima Daiichi plant. Later that same year, Joseph Hendrie, who would later become chairman of the **Nuclear Regulatory Commission**, a successor agency to the atomic commission, **said the idea of a ban on such systems was attractive**. But the technology had been so widely accepted by the industry and regulatory officials, he said, that “reversal of this hallowed policy, particularly at this time, could well be the end of nuclear power.”

In an e-mail on Tuesday, David Lochbaum, director of the Nuclear Safety Program at the Union for Concerned Scientists, said those words seemed ironic now, given the potential global ripples from the Japanese accident.

“Not banning them might be the end of nuclear power,” said Mr. Lochbaum, a nuclear engineer who spent 17 years working in nuclear facilities, including three that used the G.E. design.

Michael Tetuan, a spokesman for G.E.’s water and power division, staunchly defended the technology this week, calling it “the industry’s workhorse with a proven track record of safety and reliability for more than 40 years.”

Mr. Tetuan said there are currently 32 Mark 1 boiling-water reactors operating safely around the globe. “There has never been a breach of a Mark 1 containment system,” he said.

Using IM VAIN analysis, rate Lochbaum, Tetuan, the Union of Concerned Scientists and Hendrie?

Does this reporter make his work transparent? Where?(circle it)

Identify an example of context and circle it. If it were not included, how would that change your understanding of the situation?

Example 11:**U.S. Drones Fight Mexican Drug Trade**

By GINGER THOMPSON and MARK MAZZETTI

Published: March 15, 2011

WASHINGTON — Stepping up its involvement in Mexico’s drug war, the Obama administration has begun sending drones deep into Mexican territory to gather intelligence that helps locate major traffickers and follow their networks, according to American and Mexican officials.

The Pentagon began flying high-altitude, unarmed drones over Mexican skies last month, American military officials said, in hopes of collecting information to turn over to Mexican law enforcement agencies. Other administration officials said a Homeland Security drone helped Mexican authorities find several suspects Immigration agent. President Obama and his Mexican counterpart, Felipe Calderón, formally agreed to continue the surveillance flights during a White House meeting on March 3. The American assistance has been kept secret because of legal restrictions in Mexico and the heated political sensitivities there about sovereignty, the officials said.

Before the outbreak of drug violence in Mexico that has left more than 34,000 dead in the past four years, such an agreement would have been all but unthinkable, they said.

Pentagon, State Department, Homeland Security and Mexican officials declined to comment publicly about the introduction of drones in Mexico’s counternarcotics efforts. But some officials, speaking only on the condition of anonymity, said the move was evidence of the two countries’ deepening cooperation in efforts to prevail over a common threat.

In recent years, the United States has steadily stepped up its role in fighting Mexican drug trafficking, though officials offer few details of the cooperation. The greatest growth involves intelligence gathering, with Homeland Security and the American military flying manned aircraft and drones along the United States’ southern border — and now over Mexican territory — that are capable of peering deep into Mexico and tracking criminals’ communications and movements, officials said.

In addition, the United States trains thousands of Mexican troops and police officers, collaborates with specially vetted Mexican security units, conducts eavesdropping in Mexico and upgrades Mexican security equipment and intelligence technology, according to American law enforcement and intelligence officials.

“It wasn’t that long ago when there was no way the D.E.A. could conduct the kinds of activities they are doing now,” said Mike Vigil, a retired chief of international operations for the DEA.

Are the sources reliable or not? Explain

Do the reporters make their work transparent? Explain

Does the reporter place the story in context? If so, circle the appropriate section

Based on these answers, how reliable do you think this report is?

Example 12:

Pregnant man is expecting baby in July

March 27, 2008

The ADVOCATE Magazine



By COMBINED NEWS SERVICE

An Oregon transgendered man who used to be a woman says he is five-months pregnant..

Thomas Beatie, who's expecting a girl, tells his story in a first-person account published in "The Advocate" magazine.

Beatie is legally a male and lives with his wife, Nancy. He claims to have stopped taking his testosterone injections to

get pregnant, and that conception was achieved through home insemination.

"Sterilization is not a requirement for sex reassignment, so I decided to have chest reconstruction and testosterone therapy but kept my reproductive rights," he writes in the article for the gay and lesbian magazine. "How does it feel to be a pregnant man? Incredible," he adds. "Despite the fact that my belly is growing with a new life inside me, I am stable and confident being the man that I am."

Beatie is expected to give birth in July.

How many sources are used?

Are they reliable? Why or why not?

Does the reporter place the story in context?

What is missing from this story?

Example 13:**The New York Times**

She's been found!

The Egyptian cobra at the Bronx Zoo that had been [missing for seven days](#) has been located, officials said on Thursday.

The cobra is "alive and well," James J. Breheny, the zoo's director, told dozens of reporters who had gathered for a 4 p.m. news conference at the zoo. The adolescent snake was found inside a non-public area of the zoo's Reptile House, and was in "really good condition," he said.

Mr. Breheny said the snake, which is 24 inches long, weighs about 3

ounces, and is believed to be several months old, would rest for a short period of time before being put back on exhibit. She was found coiled in a secluded dark corner — "almost exactly as we would have predicted," Mr. Breheny said — and was caught at 9 a.m. using tongs and a piece of equipment he compared to a golf club. He said the snake avoided detection because it was lurking in an area with an "extremely complicated" system of equipment and a "labyrinth of pipes."

Since her escape, the cobra had inspired feverish news coverage and a [wildly popular fake Twitter feed](#).

Robert Stolarik for The New York Times James J. Breheny, Director of the Bronx Zoo, announced at a news conference that the cobra had been found early Thursday morning.

Mr. Breheny said the zoo had appreciated the media attention but "didn't want to get distracted by all of the light-heartedness" amid what was ultimately "a serious situation."

Asked what sort of danger the snake would have posed, Mr. Breheny said that snakes in general are "shy, secretive creatures," whose venom is "not primarily a defense mechanism. It's a way to procure food."

Zoo officials said the Reptile House would remain closed for several days while they investigated how the snake escaped and monitored the escapee. Mr. Breheny said at the news conference that officials had not yet changed any protocol but "have double-checked existing protocol and have people double-checking each other." Last Friday, when the snake went missing, it was not in the exhibit itself but in an off-exhibit holding cage.

Since then, staff members at the Wildlife Conservation Society, which operates the zoo, had conducted sweeping searches.

News of the Egyptian cobra's capture reverberated in the Twittersphere, where it quickly became a trending topic, and many said they would miss the frequent updates from @BronxZoosCobra — who has remained silent since the capture.

Despite her newfound fame, the snake has no official name. But that may change. Said Mr. Breheny: "Maybe we'll do some sort of naming contest."

Are the key questions answered? What are they and what are the answers?

Example 14:



Updated: Thu., Mar. 17, 2011, 7:21 AM

Gov rips 'Housewives' hubby

By DAN MANGAN

Last Updated: 7:21 AM, March 17, 2011
Posted: 1:54 AM, March 17, 2011

The show may be "Real," but his home, apparently, is not.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie yesterday suspended -- and demanded the resignation of -- the husband of one of the "Real Housewives of New Jersey" from a water commission, saying he misled officials about his "real" residence.

Christie said Albert Manzo, whose wife, Caroline, is a star of the reality show, had claimed in 2008 -- when he was nominated to serve on the North Jersey Water District Supply Commission -- that he lived in the Brownstone restaurant in Paterson, which he co-owns.

In reality, Christie said, Manzo lives with his wife in Franklin Lakes, in a home featured in episodes of the Bravo reality show.

Manzo maintains the Brownstone is his legal residence and he won't resign.

Should this story be fair or balanced? Explain your answer and which category the story, as written, falls in.

Are the key questions all answered in this story? List any missing information:

Example 15:**Muslim removed from flight blames Rep. King's hearings**

March 17, 2011

by THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A Muslim woman said Wednesday that she wants a [Southwest Airlines](#) crew disciplined for removing her from a flight for wearing a headscarf.

Irum Abbasi, 31, told reporters at a news conference outside [San Diego](#)'s airport that she was forced off a [San Jose](#)-bound flight in

[San Diego](#) on Sunday because a flight attendant found her to be suspicious.

Abbasi attributed her removal to growing anti-Muslim sentiment in the U.S. and said that it was a direct result of the congressional hearing called by Rep. [Peter King](#), R-N.Y., on the radicalization of U.S. Muslims.

Abbasi said she was told that a flight attendant overheard her say on her cell phone words to the effect of: "It's a go." The mother of three, who is originally from [Pakistan](#), told reporters that she said, "I've got to go," before hanging up because the flight was about to depart. She believes the flight attendant made the assumption about her comment because she was wearing an Islamic head scarf.

After patting down her head scarf and talking to her, [Transportation Security Administration](#) agents recognized the mistake and told her it was not necessary to inspect her purse or cell phone, Abbasi said.

But they refused to let her back on the plane, telling her the crew was uncomfortable with her on the flight, according to Abbasi. She was booked on the next flight.

"I was in tears," Abbasi said. "I was just crying. I have lived in the United States for 10 years. I am a U.S. citizen."

Southwest spokesman Chris Mainz said the airline has apologized to Abbasi twice, including the day of the incident. The airline also gave her a voucher for another flight, he said.

Abbasi said she gave the voucher to someone else and at this point does not want to fly Southwest again. She said she wants a written apology and a guarantee that the crew will be disciplined.

Abbasi, who is originally from [Pakistan](#), said the verbal apology "doesn't make me feel better."

Mainz said the airlines is looking into the matter but does not disclose internal actions.

"Southwest has a 40-year history of treating all of our customers with great respect and care," Mainz said. "We treat all our customers the same and we think all of our employees do a very good job of that."

Hanif Mohebi, director of the [San Diego](#) chapter of the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#), said his group believes she was targeted because of her head scarf.

The same day Abbasi was removed from a plane, pilots on an [Alaska Airlines](#) flight from [Mexico City](#) to [Los Angeles](#) locked down the cockpit and alerted authorities when a flight crew grew alarmed at the behavior of three men who were conducting an elaborate orthodox Jewish prayer.

List the assertions you find: _____

Is the story fair to Southwest Airlines? To the crew of the flight? To Ms. Abbasi? Explain

What example(s) of context do you find?

Example 16: Deconstruct this story, using the Guide**A Deconstruction Guide**

1. Summarize the main points and then check: Does the headline and the lead support the main point(s) of the story?
2. How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct or indirect?
3. Evaluate the reliability of the sources using **I'M VA/IN**:
 - ✓ Independent sources are better than self-interested sources.
 - ✓ Multiple sources are better than a single source.
 - ✓ Sources who **Verify** are better than sources who assert: "I know" vs. "I believe"
 - ✓ **Authoritative/Informed** sources are better than uninformed sources.
 - ✓ Named sources are better than unnamed sources
4. Does the reporter make his or her work transparent?
5. Does the reporter place the story in context?
6. Are the key questions answered?
7. Is the story fair?

For Youths, Depression Often Has a Sequel

By PAM BELLUCK

The New York Times

Published: November 1, 2010

About half of adolescents who recovered from [major depression](#) became depressed again within five years, regardless of what treatment or therapy they received to get over their initial [depression](#), a new study shows.

The study, [published Monday in Archives of General Psychiatry](#), also found that girls were more likely to have another major depression, which surprised researchers because, as adults, women have not been considered more likely to have a recurrence than men. In the study, nearly 200 adolescents, 12 to 17, received 12 weeks of fluoxetine ([Prozac](#)), cognitive behavioral therapy, both, or a placebo pill. (Those not receiving cognitive therapy met with a psychiatrist for basic support.) Placebo-takers who did not improve after 12 weeks could choose any of the other treatments.

Researchers had previously found that those receiving the Prozac-and-cognitive-therapy combination recovered faster from the first depression. So they expected those youths to be less prone to another depression.

But that did not happen. After 36 weeks, improvement for everyone was similar, researchers said, and by two years most completely recovered. But by five years, 47 percent suffered another major depression, no matter what treatment had helped them recover.

"It looks like we don't have a treatment yet that really prevents recurrence," said the study's lead author, Dr. John Curry, a psychologist in the [psychiatry](#) department at the

[Duke University](#) School of Medicine. “And we don’t have much of an indicator while the person is in treatment of how protected they’re going to be against recurrence.”

The researchers also expected that youths who improved almost fully during the 12 weeks would have less chance of recurrence. They did not, although those showing no improvement at all at 12 weeks were more prone to another depression after recovery than those who showed at least some progress during the 12 weeks. Teenagers who also suffered from anxiety were more likely to become depressed again.

“It’s a very important study,” said Dr. Aradhana Bela Sood, medical director of the Virginia Treatment Center for Children, who was not involved in the research. “As you counsel families, you can say there’s a 50 percent chance that this is going to recur,” and “now that we know that being female and having anxiety predisposes them, it’s certainly going to make me focus on the population who has this profile.”

Dr. Curry said that while girls are known to be more prone to initial depression, it was unclear why 57 percent of girls who recovered became depressed again, compared with 33 percent of boys. “Maybe it has to do with something in girls around the particular age that this is going on, stressful life events or the way people cope with stress,” he said.

Dr. Sood said that it might be related to hormonal changes or that “women tend to brood more, so the slightest stress is multiplied many times.”

Dr. David Brent, a psychiatry professor at [University of Pittsburgh](#)’s medical school, who was not involved in the research, wondered whether more girls experienced a “more pure type of depression than you see in boys,” he said. “Maybe more boys get into trouble and feel sad, but when trouble goes away they feel better.”

Most who got depressed again had only one episode in five years, but a few had two or three. The adolescent’s age made no difference.

Dr. Curry said one limitation to the study was that researchers did not look at specific events in the youths’ lives to see if some encountered more stress than others. His team plans to examine whether those who received therapy or drug treatment over the five years were more or less prone to another depression.

“We don’t know if the disorder is recurrent because it’s recurrent or because something happens to you after the first episode that makes you more vulnerable to another one,”

Dr. Brent said. The study “points up the need for some kind of aftercare to prevent recurrence,” he said, and “highlights that what we’re doing now is not good enough.”

Deconstruct this story by answering the questions in the Deconstruction Guide

Example 17: Deconstruct this story, using the Guide

College Costs Keep Rising, Report Says

By TAMAR LEWIN

The New York Times

The price of a college education rose substantially last year, despite a 2.1 percent decline in the [Consumer Price Index](#) from July 2008 to July 2009.

Hit hard by state budget cuts, four-year public colleges raised tuition and fees by an average of 6.5 percent last year. Prices at private colleges rose 4.4 percent, according to a [report](#) issued Tuesday by the [College Board](#).

Patrick Callan, president of the [National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education](#), called the increases “hugely disappointing.”

“Given the financial hardship of the country, it’s simply astonishing that colleges and universities would have this kind of increases,” Mr. Callan said. “It tells you that higher education is still a seller’s market. The level of debt we’re asking people to undertake is unsustainable.

“A lot of people think we can solve the problem with more financial aid, but I think we have to have some cost containment. For all the talk about reinventing higher education, I don’t see any results.”

With room and board, the average total cost of attendance at a public four-year college is now \$15,213, the report found. At private nonprofit colleges, which enroll about one in five college students nationally, the average total cost of attendance is now \$35,636.

Over the last 30 years, college costs have risen steadily, especially at four-year public universities, once considered the affordable route to higher education. At such universities, the last decade’s increases, adjusted for inflation, have been the steepest.

At private universities and public two-year institutions, the rate of increase has slowed over the last decade. The 4.4 percent rise in tuition at private colleges last year, for example, was smaller than in past years, when it has been about 6 percent.

In releasing the figures, the College Board, a membership organization made up of schools, colleges, universities and education organizations, put a bright face on the issue. Sandy Baum, the senior policy analyst who wrote the report, “Trends in College Pricing 2009,” said the findings were not as bad as they might have been, since in times of recession, tuition increases are often “really, really steep.”

Ms. Baum emphasized that it was important for families to understand that only about a third of students pay the published tuition, or sticker price. Most pay a lower net cost because they get some kind of assistance, whether in the form of a scholarship from the university, a federal Pell grant or state aid.

Nonetheless, Ms. Baum acknowledged that over time, the costs trends at four-year public universities have been troubling.

“From 1979 to 1989, the annual rate adjusted for inflation was 3 percent,” she said, “the next decade was 4 percent, and the most recent decade 5 percent. So the trend was exacerbated in recent years.”

Public universities have been forced to raise tuition largely because state governments, facing huge budget shortfalls, have reduced spending on higher education. But many education experts said colleges must do a better job of cutting costs.

“Colleges need to be looking for ways to permanently restructure, not just cut their budgets,” said Jane Wellman, executive director of the [Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity and Accountability](#). “A perfect example is furloughs, in hopes that eventually the work force can come back. But this isn’t a one-time problem, and eventually they’ll have to bite the bullet and reduce their work force.”

About two-thirds of full-time undergraduates receive grants, according to “[Trends in Student Aid 2009](#),” a companion College Board report by Ms. Baum that was also released Tuesday. And grant aid, especially Pell grants, has been growing.

Taking into account both grant aid and tax credits and deductions, Ms. Baum said, the situation looks far less dire.

“The really interesting thing to me,” she said, “is if you look at net prices students pay, considering the grant aid and tax benefits, students at public two-year institutions are actually paying less, in inflation-adjusted dollars. And that’s pretty significant. Even though the sticker price, adjusting for inflation, is up 20 percent in the past five years, the net price is actually lower than it was five years ago.”

But with college costs so high, borrowing is increasing as well. Although grant aid rose significantly in the 2008-9 school year, the latest year for which data are available, student borrowing — and the gap between available resources and the overall cost of attending college — continued to increase, the report said.

The borrowing has changed, though, with a significant shift away from private loans as the credit markets froze and federal loans expanded. According to the new report, total education borrowing increased 5 percent from 2007-8 to 2008-9, the report said, but private loans declined by about half last year, to about \$11 billion, while federal loans increased by about \$15 billion.

Last year, the average grant aid per student was \$5,041, with the largest amounts coming from colleges and universities and the federal government.

At public four-year colleges, the report found, two-thirds of the grant money is given as merit aid, that is, without considering the recipient’s financial need.

“It is particularly disturbing that public colleges are using such a large share of their financial aid resources for so-called merit aid in these tough times,” said Lauren Asher, president of the Institute for College Access and Success.

This year, the report found, full-time students at private, nonprofit four-year institutions — those with the most expensive tuition — are receiving about \$14,400 in grant aid and federal tax benefits, reducing their net tuition and fees to about \$11,900, from the published \$26,300.

Full-time students at public four-year colleges and universities receive an estimated average of about \$5,400 in grant aid and federal tax benefits, reducing their net tuition and fees to about \$1,600, from the published \$7,000.

And full-time students at public two-year colleges actually get an average \$3,000 in grant aid and tax benefits — enough to pay the average \$2,500 tuition and fees and still have \$500 left toward living expenses.

Deconstruct this story using the Guide

A Deconstruction Guide

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