

Example 12:

Pregnant man is expecting baby in July

March 27, 2009
The ADVOCA

PREGNANT
Thomas
a trans
man- sa
due in J
He's
Hav
A B:
get pregnant, a
"Sterilization i
reconstruction
article for the g
Incredible," he
I am stable and
Bastie is expect

How many zo
Are they reli
Does the rep

Example 17: Deconstruct this story, using the Guide

College Costs Keep Rising, Report Says

By TAMAR

The price of
in the Consu
Hit hard by a
average of 6
report isued
Patrick Call
called the in
"Given the fi
universities'
education is
unsustainable
"A lot of peo
have to have
don't see am
With room a
now \$15,213
five college
Over the last

Example 13:

Bronx Zoo Cobra Found Alive



ounces, and is believed to be several
being put back on exhibit. She was f
we would have predicted." My Brea
by all of the high-heartedness' amid
Asked what sort of danger the snake
are "shy, secretive creatures," whose
to procure food."
Zoo officials said the Reptile House
investigated how the snake escaped a
conference that officials had not yet
protocol and have people double-che
missing, it was not in the exhibit itse
Since then, staff members at the Wil
conducted sweeping searches.
News of the Egyptian cobra's captur
became a trending topic, and many s
@BronxZooCobra — who has rem
Despite her newfound fame, the snal
Breheny... "Maybe we'll do some ser

Are the key questions answered? Why

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 732 microsieverts per hour was recorded at the plant's main gate at 5 p.m. (2000 GMT). That was down from the 1,000 microsieverts per hour recorded at the same location on Wednesday. The reading was 335 microsieverts per hour. That level was still much higher than it should be, but was not dangerous, and that by comparison the normal of a level of 400 was normal from being outside over the course of a year, Ohmura said.
(Reporting by Terri L Jones)

Find an example of direct evidence and circle it.
Characterize Tetsuo Ohmura as a source using I'M EADN.
How reliable is this report? Why?

CENTER FOR NEWS LITERACY

DECONSTRUCTION WORKBOOK

Over the coming weeks, you'll use this workbook - stocked with examples from actual news reports- to practice "*Deconstruction*," which is a methodical series of steps by which you apply News Literacy concepts to the analysis of component parts of a news report.

The Deconstruction steps are in a chart on the back page of this workbook.

Reminder: Examples in this workbook are drawn from actual news reports, but some have been shortened or altered from the original to suit the purposes of News Literacy exercises.

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:

Link to the audio: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/21/nyregion/21immigrant.html>

An Agent, a Green Card, and a Demand for Sex

By NINA BERNSTEIN (New York Times)

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:**Afghan investigator: US burning of Qurans was intentional**

KABUL -- The burning of copies of the Quran at an American base in Afghanistan was intentional, said a member of the team investigating the incident that triggered widespread and deadly anti-Western protests.

"We believe it is intentional," Maulavi Khaliqdad, a member of the panel established by Afghan President Hamid Karzai, told Deutsche Presse-Agentur on Monday. "If they burnt one or two copies, then we could have said

it could have been a mistake. But they took hundreds of such books to burn. Everyone knew those were religious books."

While the United States said that burning copies of the Muslim holy book last month at Bagram airfield was unintentional, the incident sparked violence that killed 30, including American troops shot by Afghan soldiers.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it was "revenge" for the Quran burning, spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a text message to media according to Reuters.

Doubts are growing that the United States and Afghanistan could narrow sharp differences in negotiations and reach a long-term strategic partnership deal.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement, which Washington and Kabul have been discussing for over a year, will be the framework for U.S. involvement in Afghanistan beyond 2014, when the last foreign combat troops are due to leave Afghanistan.

Find an example of direct evidence and circle it.

Characterize Maulavi Khaliqdad as a source using I'M

VAIN _____

What weight do you give his investigation's findings? 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.

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 conclusion could replace the inference? Is it provided? What is the common logical fallacy demonstrated in this story?

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.

<p><i>What is asserted?</i> _____</p> <p><i>What kind of evidence is used to verify the death toll?</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>What kind of source, according to your I'M VAIN analysis is:</i></p> <p><i>Paul Browne</i> _____</p> <p><i>Raymond Kelly</i> _____</p> <p><i>Ashanti Jackson</i> _____</p> <p><i>Shamel Bookard</i> _____</p>
--

Example 8:

October 8, 2010, 11:05 am

Cake Man Raven Closed by Health Department

By [BRENDEN BECK](#),
Community Contributor
The Local, a Times/CUNY blog
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.

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:**Accused G.I. ‘Snapped’ Under Strain, Official Says**

By ERIC SCHMITT and WILLIAM YARDLEY

WASHINGTON — The American staff sergeant suspected of killing 16 Afghan villagers had been drinking alcohol — a violation of military rules in combat zones — and suffering from the stress related to his fourth combat tour and tensions with his wife about the deployments on the night of the massacre, a senior American official said Thursday.

“When it all comes out, it will be a combination of stress, alcohol and domestic issues — he just snapped,” said the official, who has been briefed on the investigation and who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the soldier has not yet been formally charged. His comments drew from accounts of the sergeant’s state of mind from two other soldiers with whom he illicitly drank alcohol on the night of the shootings, the official said, and those soldiers face disciplinary action.

As new details emerged about possible reasons behind the shootings, a lawyer who said he had been retained by the sergeant’s family, John Henry Browne, held a news conference in Seattle on Thursday and also spoke to some reporters individually. He told The Associated Press that the day before the massacre, a friend of the sergeant had lost a leg in an explosion. That could not be independently confirmed.

The comments by the lawyer, and the account by the American official, confirmed by a senior official at the Pentagon, are the most detailed descriptions so far of the state of the sergeant, a 38-year-old married father of two who was on his first combat tour in Afghanistan but his fourth over all, including three in Iraq, since he enlisted in 2001. Mr. Browne said it was “nonsense” that there were exceptional marital tensions. “I know that is not true,” he said at a news conference at his office Thursday night in Seattle. Mr. Browne added that the inaccuracy of the claim made him “suspicious” of the suggestion that alcohol and stress contributed, though he noted that virtually anyone at a remote base in Afghanistan would be under stress.

Mr. Browne said the soldier suffered a concussion during a vehicle rollover accident caused by a roadside bomb. He also lost part of a foot in another episode.

Mr. Browne criticized anonymous reports from government officials, calling them baseless. “The government is going to want to blame this on an individual rather than blame it on the war,” he said. Mr. Browne told The A.P. that the sergeant’s family said he had “never said anything antagonistic about Muslims.”

The sergeant has refused to speak to investigators, invoking his right to a lawyer shortly after he surrendered on returning to his base after the shootings.

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:**GOP voters' passion uneven for Romney, Santorum**

By ALAN FRAM

Associated Press

Mitt Romney may lead in delegates and Rick Santorum might have momentum, but neither of the two leading Republican presidential candidates is having an easy time exciting even his own voters.

Out of a dozen states where voters in the GOP contest have been polled, most Romney voters have said they strongly favor him in just five of them. A majority of Santorum voters felt that committed to him only four times out of 11 states where he was on the ballot and voters were surveyed.

Each man is struggling to consistently spark the intensity that could separate him from the pack.

Consider that Arizona is the only state where Romney had a higher proportion of voters expressing strong feelings about him than his rivals did. And Santorum hasn't had that edge in any state yet, despite an animated campaign style and passion for hot-button social issues like contraception that have contrasted with Romney's stiffer, more analytic manner.

On average, 50 percent of Romney voters and 49 percent of Santorum's say they strongly favor their candidate, with the rest expressing reservations about their man or a greater dislike for his rivals, according to entrance and exit polls of voters in 12 states.

Republican operatives express concern about Romney and Santorum. They say the figures raise questions about how quickly the GOP will be able to end its drawn-out slugfest and begin generating voter enthusiasm for a nominee to challenge President Barack Obama in November.

"At this point in the game, you should be drawing the troops toward you. The intensity about you should be pretty strong," said Mike McKenna, a Republican consultant not working for any of the contenders.

Political professionals generally consider intensity of support a key ingredient to a winning campaign. Such enthusiasm can help pave the way for everything from yard signs to campaign contributions to voters who show up on Election Day.

"Motivation is the name of the game in trying to get people to the polls," said Josh Putnam, a political scientist at Davidson University. "It makes campaigns' work easier if they can bank some votes, so to speak."

The data comes from surveys of voters conducted for The Associated Press and the television networks by Edison Research in 12 states that have held GOP contests.

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:

Chances Are 'Pink Slime' Is In Grocery Store Beef, Too

If you're trying to determine whether the ground chuck you buy in the grocery store contains so-called pink slime, or lean beef trimmings, you won't find it on the ingredient list.

"It's not required to be labeled," explains Don Schaffner, a food scientist at Rutgers University.

An estimated 70 percent of the ground beef supply contains these lean bits of meat derived from muscle and connective tissue. The industry calls the trimmings Lean Finely Textured Beef.

With Thursday's USDA announcement giving schools the options to order beef that does not include these trimmings, and the publicity over the online petition initiated by The Lunch Tray blogger Bettina Siegel, which quickly drew more than 200,000 signatures, it's clear that there's a lot of disgust over the concept of pink slime. And with a name like this, how could there not be?

But Schaffner says the suggestion of an ooey, gooey liquid is deceiving. Lost in the social-media outrage, he says, is the understanding that lean beef trimmings are a way of taking fatty bits of meat and extracting the lean part.

"What the process does is take the mostly fat trimmings and heat them up so the fat becomes a liquid," explains Schaffner, "and then uses a process to separate the lean portion from the fat portion."

The safety concerns stem from reports that the lean beef trimmings are likely to harbor pathogens, such as E. coli or Salmonella and other bacteria. And Schaffner, who has worked as a consultant to the meat industry, says this is true. "The bacteria risk comes from the fact that these are pieces that are being cut away from the outside of the meat, and that's where the bacteria are likely to be."

The industry recognizes this, and has adopted a practice of treating the meat trimmings with a gas made of ammonium hydroxide. This kills the pathogen, but according to critics, even if it solves one problem, it creates another. They say using ammonium hydroxide is gross, and they worry about its safety. The American Meat Institute defends the practice. "This is not the same ammonia you'd use in cleaning supplies," explains Betsy Booren of the AMI Foundation. "It's a gas, it's a different compound, and it's a well-established processing intervention that has a long history of success."

But consumer sentiment has been turning against meat treated with ammonium hydroxide for a while. In January 2011, McDonald's announced that it would no longer use ammonia-treated beef in its burgers. And other fast-food chains, including Taco Bell and Burger King, have made similar decisions.

List the assertions you find: _____

Is the story fair to meat producers? To the evidence? Explain

What example(s) of context do you find?

Example 16:**WH money helps pay for NYPD Muslim surveillance****Associated Press**

WASHINGTON - Millions of dollars in White House money has helped pay for New York Police Department programs that put entire American Muslim neighborhoods under surveillance.

The money is part of a little-known grant intended to help law enforcement fight drug crimes. Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the Bush and Obama administrations have provided \$135 million to the New York and New Jersey region through the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, known as HIDTA.

Some of that money — it's unclear exactly how much because the program has little oversight — has paid for the cars that plainclothes NYPD officers used to conduct surveillance on Muslim neighborhoods. It also paid for computers that store even innocuous information about Muslim college students, mosque sermons and social events.

When NYPD Commissioner Raymond Kelly was filled in on these efforts, his briefings were prepared on HIDTA computers.

The AP confirmed the use of White House money through secret police documents and interviews with current and former city and federal officials. The AP also obtained electronic documents with digital signatures indicating they were created and saved on HIDTA computers. The HIDTA grant program is overseen by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The disclosure that the White House is at least partially paying for the NYPD's wholesale surveillance of places where Muslims eat, shop, work and pray complicates efforts by the Obama administration to stay out of the fray over New York's controversial counterterrorism programs. The administration has championed outreach to American Muslims and has said law enforcement should not put entire communities under suspicion.

The Obama administration, however, has pointedly refused to endorse or repudiate the NYPD programs it helps pay for. The White House last week declined to comment on its grant payments.

John Brennan, Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, last year called the NYPD's efforts "heroic" but would not elaborate. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, whose department also gives grant money to the NYPD and is one of the lead federal agencies helping police build relationships with Muslims, has refused in recent months to discuss the police tactics. Tom Perez, the Justice Department's top civil rights lawyer, has repeatedly refused to answer questions about the NYPD.

Outside Washington, the NYPD's efforts drew increased criticism last week. College administrators at Yale, Columbia and elsewhere issued harsh rebukes for NYPD's infiltration of Muslim student groups and its monitoring of school websites. New Jersey's governor and the mayor of its largest city have complained about the NYPD's widespread surveillance there, outside New York's police jurisdiction.

The White House HIDTA grant program was established at the height of the drug war to help police fight drug gangs and unravel supply routes. It has provided about \$2.3 billion to local authorities in the past decade.

After the terror attacks, law enforcement was allowed to use some of that money to fight terrorism. It's unclear how much HIDTA money has been used to pay for the intelligence division, in part because NYPD intelligence operations receive scant oversight in New York.

Congress, which approves the money for the program, is not provided with a detailed breakdown of activities. None of the NYPD's clandestine programs is cited in the New York-New Jersey region's annual reports to Congress between 2006 and 2010.

NYPD spokesman Paul Browne did not respond to questions the AP sent to him in two emails about the White House money and the department's intelligence division.

Most of the money from the White House grants in New York and New Jersey has been spent fighting drugs, said Chauncey Parker, director of the program there. He said less than \$1.3 million was spent on vehicles used by the NYPD intelligence unit.

"Those cars are used to collect and analyze counterterrorism information with the goal of preventing a terrorist attack in New York City or anywhere else," Parker said. "If it's been used for specific counterterrorism effort, then it's been used to pay for those cars."

Former police officials told the AP those vehicles have been used to photograph mosques and record the license plates of worshippers.

In addition to paying for the cars, the White House money pays for part of the office space the intelligence division shares with other agencies in Manhattan.

When police compiled lists of Muslims who took new, Americanized names, they kept those records on HIDTA computer servers. That was ongoing as recently as October, city officials said.

Many NYPD intelligence officers, including those that conducted surveillance of Muslim neighborhoods, had HIDTA email addresses. Briefing documents for Kelly, the police commissioner, were compiled on HIDTA computers. Those documents described what police informants were hearing inside mosques and which academic conferences Muslim scholars attended.

When police wanted to pay a confidential informant, they were told to sign onto the HIDTA website to file the paperwork, according to a 2007 internal document obtained by the AP.

Parker said the White House grant money was never used to pay any of the NYPD intelligence division's confidential informants. The HIDTA computer systems, he said, are platforms that allow different law enforcement agencies to share information and work.

"I am shocked to hear that federal dollars may have helped finance the NYPD's misguided efforts to spy on Muslims in America," said Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., one of 34 members of Congress who have asked the Justice Department and House Judiciary Committee to investigate the NYPD.

The connection between NYPD and the White House anti-drug grant program surfaced years ago, during a long-running civil rights lawsuit against police. Civil rights attorneys asked in court about a "demonstration debriefing form" that police used whenever they arrested people for civil disobedience. The form carried the seal of both the NYPD Intelligence Division and HIDTA.

A city lawyer downplayed any connection. She said the NYPD and HIDTA not only shared office space, they also shared office supplies like paper. The NYPD form with the

seal of a White House anti-drug program was "a recycled piece of paper that got picked up and modified," attorney Gail Donoghue told a federal judge in 2003.

The issue died in court and was never pursued further.

Last week, the controversy over NYPD's programs drew one former Obama administration official into the discussion.

After the AP revealed an extensive program to monitor Muslims in Newark, N.J., police there denied knowing anything about it. The Newark police director at the time, Garry McCarthy, has since moved on to lead Chicago's police department where President Barack Obama's first chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, is now the mayor.

"We don't do that in Chicago and we're not going to do that," Emanuel said last week.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie said the NYPD surveillance in his state was "disturbing" and has asked the attorney general to investigate. Christie was New Jersey's top federal prosecutor and sat on the HIDTA executive board during 2006 and 2007 when the NYPD was conducting surveillance in New Jersey cities. Christie said he didn't know that, in 2007, the NYPD catalogued every mosque and Muslim business in Newark, the state's largest city.

Deconstruct this story by answering the questions in the Deconstruction Guide

Example 17: Deconstruct this story, using all steps of 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

The Deconstruction Method

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 “arm’s-length?”

3. Evaluate the reliability of the sources using **I’M VA/IN**:

✓ **I**ndependent sources are better than self-interested sources.

✓ **M**ultiple sources are better than a single source.

✓ Sources who **V**erify are better than sources who assert: “I know” vs. “I believe”

✓ **A**uthoritative/**I**nformed sources are better than uninformed sources.

✓ **N**amed 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?