WHAT YOUR COLLEAGUES ARE SAYING . . .

If I were in charge of the world, every school would have a required media studies course, and every faculty would do a book study around *Fighting Fake News*. This book is an essential tool in helping students to be more consciously aware, reflective, and rational about the waves of news and other forms of "angertainment." I lost count of how many times I said, "Yes!" while reading this book.

—Kelly Gallagher
Teacher, Author, and Consultant

Fighting Fake News is a must-read for every teacher. I plan to read it and reread it because I know each time, I will be able to glean better information. I would love to have the opportunity to see this kind of instruction put into place.

—Lydia Bagley
Instructional Support Specialist, Cobb County School District

Talk about timely! *Fighting Fake News* begins by describing the cognitive short-cuts we all (not just the fringe) are prone to—how we so easily fit information to pre-existing biases. The authors show how digital media exploit this tendency by directing us to sources that feed these prejudices. And they provide carefully crafted lessons to promote critical analysis and thoughtful citizenship. It's the book we need now.

—Thomas Newkirk
Professor Emeritus at the University of New Hampshire

The authors have provided a timely and important analysis of the problem of fake news and how teachers can help students become more critical readers in a digital world. Drawing from their years of research into teaching reading and argument, the authors make the turn to digital texts with the same passion and commitment to developing students' literacies that they bring to all their work. *Fighting Fake News* is clearly organized, providing a wealth of practical lessons for teachers to adapt.

—Kristen Turner
Professor of Teacher Education and Program Director, Drew University

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Fighting Fake News

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For our students and our students' students, living in tumultuous times.
We wrote this book for you.

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Fighting Fake News

Teaching Students to Identify and Interrogate Information Pollution

Jeffrey D. Wilhelm
Michael W. Smith
Hugh Kesson
Deborah Appleman

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Guide to Lessons

CHAPTER 3: LESSONS FOR GETTING STARTED: KNOWING YOUR OWN MIND

Lesson 3.1: Finding Good Information, Evaluating It, and Verifying It. This lesson is designed to build habits for finding good information, verifying strong and safe evidence through lateral reading, evaluating data patterns, and mindfully justifying interpretations of these patterns. (p. 46)

Lesson 3.2: Ranking and Evaluating Evidence. This lesson provides deliberate practice with evidentiary reasoning because students must explain how any example fits the criteria better or (not) and asks them to consciously "choose to believe or disbelieve." (p. 50)

Lesson 3.3: Learning With a Beginner's Mind. In this lesson, students learn how to open their minds and actively seek out different perspectives while confirming and disconfirming information so that we openly see the breadth of reasonable alternate positions in conversations about different topics. (p. 57)

Lesson 3.4: Actively Seeking Out Alternative Positions. By developing understanding of the Default Mode System of the brain, this lesson helps students look for counterclaims, new perspectives, and disconfirming evidence relative to their own usual viewpoints. (p. 60)

Lesson 3.5: Trigger Tracking and Fever Charts. This lesson utilizes Fever Charts as a tool for us to become aware of, and then control, our cognitive biases. (p. 63)

Lesson 3.6: Monitoring Mind Misdirection. This lesson examines optical illusions and misdirection texts to help us see how our brain can misperceive due to cognitive biases like confirmation or availability bias. It helps learners understand what happens when they read and how to promote more mindful and powerful reading.

Lesson 3.7: "Noticing and Naming" Practice for Controlling Cognitive Biases. This lesson concentrates on understanding and recognizing three of the most common cognitive biases: availability, confirmation, and overdramatization biases. (p. 71)

Lesson 3.8: Self-Study of Social Media Use. In this lesson, learners monitor their own social media use and explore how we are all being manipulated through cognitive bias. (p. 83)

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Lesson 3.9: Autobiographical Research: Developing Self-Awareness Through Self-Studies. This lesson asks students to reflect on their day-to-day lives to promote *mindsight*, a kind of focused attention that allows us to see the internal workings of our own minds. (p. 87)

Lesson 3.10: Having Hard Conversations. In this lesson, we brainstorm how we can help ourselves and others to remain open and curious in the face of cognitive biases. (p. 90)

CHAPTER 4: LESSONS USING RULES OF NOTICE IN ONLINE READING

Lesson 4.1: Introducing the Rules of Notice. This lesson asks students to carefully look at texts so that they can begin to consider how the texts are intended to signal and direct the reader to notice particular things. Students will examine the details of print advertisements. (p. 109)

Social Media Extension: Students will consider how stories are at the heart of social media communication. Students will have a creative opportunity to think like designers and apply the rules of notice to reading social media texts. (p. 118)

Lesson 4.2: The Rules of Notice and News Online. In this lesson, we practice looking at how digital texts are constructed to share messages and practice applying the rules of notice to online news. (p. 120)

Social Media Extension: This lesson provides opportunities to practice recognizing the rules of notice and the reading path we take through social media sites. (p. 126)

Lesson 4.3: The Rules of Notice and Social Media. In this lesson, students practice applying the rules of notice to social media texts. (p. 128)

CHAPTER 5: LESSONS FOR TEACHING POINT OF VIEW IN DIGITAL MEDIA

Lesson 5.1: Who's Telling the Story and Why Does That Matter? This lesson is designed to help students understand how point of view influences readers' understanding of and response to literary texts. In it, students will work with a variety of texts, including a fable by Aesop and two poems from Edgar Lee Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*. (p. 144)

Social Media Extension: The social media extension asks students to apply what they've learned to their analysis of Twitter feuds. (p. 154)

Lesson 5.2: Applying Literary Understandings to Digital Texts. This lesson asks students to apply what they have learned to their critical reading of websites that focus on celebrities and health. (p. 156)

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Social Media Extension: The social media extension asks students develop criteria for the reliability of posts on issues that matter to them. (p. 163)

CHAPTER 6: LESSONS FOR EXAMINING NEWS, NONFICTION, AND DIGITAL TEXTS THROUGH LITERARY LENSES

Lesson 6.1: Fake News and Fairy Tales. This lesson uses *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* to illustrate how the teller of the tale determines what the "true" story is. (p. 173)

Lesson 6.2: A Not-So-Modest Proposal. This lesson uses the classic text by Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal," to demonstrate how to look at a text from a variety of critical perspectives, each yielding a different reading. (p. 176)

Lesson 6.3: Barack Obama: In the Running? This lesson centers on a real fake news article that claimed Barack Obama was running for president of Kenya. Students will use a variety of lenses to excavate the ideology behind the fake claims. (p. 178)

Lesson 6.4: A Theory Relay. In small groups, students will encounter five different fake news websites. Armed with theory cards, they will use different theoretical perspectives to consider the motivations behind each of the websites. (p. 181)

Lesson 6.5: How to Tell a True War Story: Tim O'Brien and Ukraine. This lesson begins with a discussion of the difference between fact and fiction as animated in Tim O'Brien's classic story, "How to Tell a True War Story" from *The Things They Carried*. We then look at news dispatches from different sources covering the war in Ukraine and discuss the degree to which fact and fiction are intermingled. (p. 185)

CHAPTER 7: LESSONS FOR TEACHING STUDENTS TO EVALUATE EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH

Lesson 7.1: Thinking About Evidence in Text-Based Arguments. This lesson focuses on having students write about the extent to which Atticus Finch is a role model and in doing so evaluating evidence from both within and outside the text. (p. 203)

Social Media Extension: This asks students to examine and evaluate responses to *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Twitter and Facebook. (p. 206)

Lesson 7.2: Thinking About Evidence in Topical Issues. This lesson focuses on preparing students to write an argument about the impact of social media on youth by evaluating the way that research is presented in digital sources. (p. 212)

Social Media Extension: This asks students to evaluate the research presented on a tweet endorsing a personal care product. (p. 221)

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PART I

So Much at Stake

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