UNIT 9

Getting at the Truth



Stone figures of Rapa Nui

PREVIEW

A A PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION? | Listen to the description of an unexplained mystery. What is still unknown about the stone figures? What are two theories that might explain the mystery?

B ZOOM-IN | Read and listen to two friends discuss the believability of news stories. Notice the featured words and phrases.

UNDERSTAND A VARIETY OF ACCENTS
David = Japanese
Marco = Spanish



David: Say, do you listen to Mike Mone on talk radio?
Marco: Sometimes. Why do you ask?
David: Well, he had this guy on the show the other day talking about UFOs . . . You know, unidentified flying objects.
Marco: Oh . . . like flying saucers?
David: Right. It seems that there have been around 120 sightings by U.S. military pilots. A few were captured on video.
Marco: So does that confirm we were being visited by aliens from another planet?
David: I take it you don't think that's possible. Do you think it might be a hoax?
Marco: I couldn't really say, since I haven't seen the evidence. All we know is those pilots saw something they couldn't identify.
David: Well, the videos were released to the public a few years back. So you can go online and see them for yourself.
Marco: Maybe I will.
David: But get this: Mone's guest claimed that the U.S. military wanted to keep the whole thing hushed up so no one would know about it.
Marco: You don't buy that, do you?
David: Me? Not really. Even *I* have to admit it sounds pretty far-fetched.
Marco: Totally. If it were true, why would the videos have been released for everyone to see?
David: I know. It just doesn't add up, does it?
Marco: You have to take these things with a grain of salt. People make all kinds of fishy statements on that show. If they can't provide any evidence, I'd rather play the skeptic and ask questions.
David: Speaking of which, I was listening to a podcast yesterday about how easy it's always been to fool people into believing pretty much *anything*. It's true. People can be so gullible.



C UNDERSTAND FROM CONTEXT | With a partner, paraphrase each featured sentence or phrase.

1 I take it [you don't think that's possible].
2 I couldn't really say.
3 But get this:
4 [They wanted] to keep the whole thing hushed up.
5 You don't buy that, do you?
6 That sounds pretty far-fetched.
7 It just doesn't add up.
8 [You have to] take these things with a grain of salt.

D LOOK IT UP AND SHARE | Find a word or phrase in Zoom-In that was new to you. Look it up and use it in a sentence. Share your sentence with a partner.

E THINK AND EXPLAIN | With a parter, discuss the questions and explain your reasons.

1 Would it make sense for the U.S. military to want to keep the events under wraps yet at the same time release the videos for the public to see?
2 What do you think Marco means when he calls some statements "fishy"?

F GROUP WORK | Discuss the topics.

1 How can people avoid being fooled into believing fishy statements and falling for hoaxes?
2 Why do you think far-fetched stories are so appealing?

Lesson 1 Speculate about what happened
Lesson 2 Suggest a plausible explanation
Lesson 3 Discuss why people fall for pranks
Lesson 4 Evaluate the trustworthiness of information sources

G TALKING POINTS | Take the self-test.



How gullible are you?

Circle the number on the continuum that most closely describes you. Then total your points.

	Yes, that's me!				No, that's not me at all.
Do you trust others easily and assume people have good intentions?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel embarrassed because you easily fall for hoaxes?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you rely on your feelings and instincts to evaluate unlikely claims?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you jump to conclusions without knowing all the facts?	1	2	3	4	5

	Yes, that's me!				No, that's not me at all.
Do you tend to question the things people say?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you turn down offers because you think they sound too good to be true?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you learn from your mistakes so you won't repeat them?	5	4	3	2	1
Before you believe an unlikely claim, do you ask for explanations and facts?	5	4	3	2	1

Total points ○

8–12: You appear to be pretty gullible! Time to start taking things with a grain of salt.

13–23: You're not likely to fall for a hoax anytime soon.

24–40: Nothing can make it past you ... You've got a good head on your shoulders.

START TALKING

DISCUSSION With a partner, use the featured words and phrases from Zoom-In to discuss the self-test you just took.

I don't think the self-test really adds up. Just because I said I usually trust people, doesn't mean I'm gullible.

So I take it you think the ratings on the self-test are pretty far-fetched?

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1 COMMUNICATION GOAL Speculate about what happened

A VOCABULARY | Degrees of certainty | Read and listen. Then listen again and repeat.



VERY CERTAIN	
Clearly, It's obvious (that) There's no question (that)	someone's holding the door.
ALMOST CERTAIN	
Most likely Probably I'll bet I suppose	someone's holding the door.
UNCERTAIN	
Maybe It's possible (that) I wonder if	someone's holding the door.

B LISTEN TO ACTIVATE VOCABULARY | Listen to each conversation and circle the phrase that best completes the statement. Then explain your choices.

1 She's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain)
He's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain) | about the reason Jade got grounded.

2 She's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain)
He's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain) | about the reason Jack is in debt.

3 She's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain)
He's (very certain / almost certain / uncertain) | why Linda got her kids a puppy.

C PAIR WORK | With a partner, take turns speculating about what's happening in the photo. Answer each question, using the degree of certainty provided.

1



"I think it's obvious that he's afraid of something."

A Why do you think the man is running? (It's obvious that . . .)
B What do you think happened earlier? (I'll bet . . .)
C What do you think is going to happen next? (Maybe . . .)

2



A What do you think the child did? (Clearly, . . .)
B What do you think he's thinking right now? (Most likely . . .)
C What do you think his parents are thinking? (It's possible that . . .)

3



A Who do you think she's talking to? (There's no question that . . .)
B What do you think happened? (I'll bet . . .)
C What do you think is going to happen next? (I wonder if . . .)

4



A What do you think the cat is doing? (It's obvious that . . .)
B What do you think the cat was doing earlier? (I suppose . . .)
C What do you think will happen next? (Maybe . . .)

COMMUNICATION ACTIVATOR

Now let's speculate about what happened.



A CONVERSATION MODEL | Read and listen.

A: I wonder what's taking Nick so long. He said he'd be here by nine.
B: Do you think something happened?
A: Probably nothing. I'll bet he got stuck in traffic.
B: I suppose. But it's not like him not to call.
A: That's true. Maybe his phone died.
B: Could be. I always forget to charge mine.

Social language
Responses to speculation
- **uncertain:** Could be. / Maybe.
- **almost certain:** I suppose. / Most likely.
- **very certain:** Clearly. / Definitely.

B PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE | Listen again and repeat. Then practice the Conversation Model with a partner.

C IN YOUR OWN WORDS | Create a similar conversation, using the ideas. Start like this: *I wonder . . .* Be sure to change roles and then partners. (Option: Use the Unit 9 Energizer Worksheet.)

Ideas
- Your teacher hasn't arrived yet.
- Your friend's flight hasn't landed yet.
- Your computer screen is frozen.
- Your favorite restaurant looks open, but the door is locked.
- The package you're expecting still hasn't been delivered.
- You haven't seen your neighbor for a week.
- When you call your parents, no one answers the phone.
- Your own idea:

RECYCLE THIS LANGUAGE
I wonder [why / where / when / how / who / what] . . .
I'm not sure [if / whether] . . .
It doesn't really add up.
I don't really buy that.
That seems a little fishy.
I guess I'm just a worrywart.
[He's] usually very [considerate / trustworthy].
Well, I'm [an optimist].
What a pain in the neck!

KEEP TALKING!
- **Continue to speculate, using varying degrees of certainty.**
- **Say as much as you can.**

Watch the video for ideas!

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2 COMMUNICATION GOAL Suggest a plausible explanation

A GRAMMAR CLOSE-UP | Read about some well-known mysteries and the way some people explain them. Notice the featured grammar.

SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREAT MYSTERIES . . .

The Nazca Lines



In southern Peru, huge lines and shapes were carved into the earth more than 1,500 years ago. They can only be seen from an airplane. No one knows what they were used for or how they were designed or made.

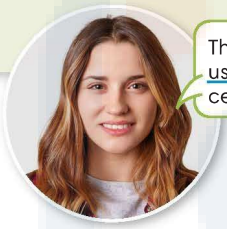


People might have made small drawings first in order to plan the lines.

Stonehenge



Experts say these huge stones in England came from mountains 257 kilometers away over 3,000 years ago. No one knows for sure how the stones were carried or put into place. The purpose of the stones is unknown.



They must have been used for religious ceremonies.

The Terracotta Army



An army of more than 8,000 clay figures was placed in the tomb of China's first emperor, to protect and serve him. Most of the central tomb has not been opened, and archaeologists speculate that doing so may be very dangerous.



The tomb could have been designed to kill anyone who tried to steal anything from it.

B PAIR WORK | Which mysteries seem the most interesting to you? Explain why.

C GRAMMAR | Perfect modals: active and passive voice

Form a perfect modal in the passive voice with a modal + have been and a past participle. Place not before have for the negative.

The stones **could** only **have been moved** with the help of a lot of people.
The tomb **might not have been discovered** if a farmer hadn't been digging for water.

Remember: Perfect modals in the active voice are formed with a modal (or a modal-like expression) + have and a past participle.
No one **could have moved** the stones without help.

GRAMMAR EXPANDER p. 128
Perfect modals: short responses (active and passive voice)

Perfect modals are often used in the active and passive voice to speculate about the past with different degrees of certainty.

Active voice	Passive voice
very certain	
Planning the shapes **had to have been** confusing.	They **had to have been drawn** first.
It **couldn't** (or **can't**) **have been** easy to carry the stones.	Moving them **couldn't** (or **can't**) **have been done** alone.
almost certain	
The Terracotta Army **must have taken** a long time to make.	They **must have been made** by a lot of people.
The Nazca Lines **must not have been** visible from the ground.	They **must not have been seen** by anyone for centuries.
uncertain	
Stonehenge **might** (or **may**) **have been** an important place.	It **might** (or **may**) **have been used** for religious purposes.
They **could have moved** the stones using logs.	The stones also **could have been moved** using ropes.

D UNDERSTAND THE GRAMMAR | Look at Grammar Close-Up again. Which featured statements are in the active voice? Which are in the passive voice?

PRONUNCIATION LESSON p. 139
Reduction and linking in perfect modals in the passive voice

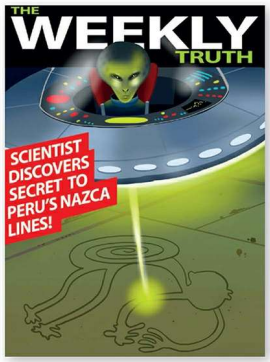
E GRAMMAR PRACTICE | On a separate sheet of paper, rewrite the sentences with perfect modals in the active voice.

Hunting had to have been the cause of the carrier pigeon's extinction.

1 There's no question that hunting was the cause of the carrier pigeon's extinction.
2 Scientists believe that it's possible some form of life existed on the planet Mars billions of years ago.
3 It's possible the people of Rapa Nui cut down all the trees on the island to help move the stone figures.
4 Historians think that the Rapa Nui islanders probably didn't move the stone figures using tree logs.
5 It's possible that the U.S. military pilots saw something other than spacecraft from another planet.
6 The Terracotta Army's purpose was most likely to protect the emperor after his death.

F GRAMMAR PRACTICE | Complete the conversations, using perfect modals in the passive voice.

1



A: I suppose the Nazca Lines ..... (could / design) by aliens from another planet, right?

B: Come on! You don't really buy that, do you?

2



A: I read that some people believe Stonehenge ..... (may / build) by the same people who carved the figures on the island of Rapa Nui.

B: That sounds pretty far-fetched to me!

3



A: Do you think the emperor ..... (might / bury) in a different location from where the Terracotta Army was found?

B: Of course not. He ..... (had to / bury) with the soldiers who were supposed to protect him.

4



A: I don't see how the videos could be real. It doesn't seem plausible that they ..... (could / record) while the pilots were busy flying their planes.

B: Why not? The planes ..... (might / build) to record video automatically.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVATOR

Now let's suggest a plausible explanation.

A TALKING POINTS | Suggest plausible or far-fetched explanations for at least two of the mysteries. Write notes to speculate with different degrees of certainty, using perfect modals.

The Nazca Lines	Stonehenge	The Terracotta Army	Another mystery you know

B DISCUSSION | Using your Talking Points and the Vocabulary from page 92, discuss your explanations.

> "I believe Stonehenge **had to have been used** for religious purposes. **Clearly**, that's what makes the most sense."

KEEP TALKING!

- Ask your partner questions.
- Challenge your partner's ideas.
- Say as much as you can.

Watch the video for ideas!

C PRESENTATION | Choose one of the mysteries and present your explanations to the class. Answer questions and support your ideas.

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3 COMMUNICATION GOAL Discuss why people fall for pranks

A **WORD STUDY** | **Adjectives with the suffix –able** | **Many adjectives are formed by combining a verb + the suffix –able, meaning "able to be." Notice that some adjectives undergo spelling changes. You can use a dictionary to check spelling. Listen and repeat.**

(accept)	acceptable	Their explanation is not **acceptable** to most people.
(afford)	affordable	I'm not sure your research would be **affordable** for the university.
(believe)	believable	I don't find her explanation **believable** at all.
(debate)	debatable	The claim that UFOs are actually alien spacecraft is **debatable**.
(desire)	desirable	They live in a highly **desirable** part of the city.
(do)	doable	Your suggestions should be very **doable.**
(predict)	predictable	They tend to ask the same **predictable** questions at every meeting.
(prove)	provable	In fact, his theories are neither **provable** nor **unprovable**.
(question)	questionable	Their **questionable** claims seem pretty fishy to me.
(rely)	reliable	The information came from a very **reliable** source.

Antonyms of some adjectives with –able are formed by adding the negative prefix un-.
unacceptable
unaffordable
unbelievable
unpredictable
unreliable

B **WORD STUDY PRACTICE** | **Use adjectives from Exercise A to complete each statement. (More than one answer may make sense.)**

1 His story just isn't very ..... . So many of the details sound far-fetched.
2 These jeans cost way too much. I'm not sure why street market jeans would be so ..... .
3 Just because the U.S. military says it has some unclear videos of UFOs doesn't mean that the existence of alien visitors is ..... . There needs to be better evidence than that.
4 How the people of Rapa Nui moved the huge stone figures to their final locations is ..... . There are a number of different theories about that.
5 The details about the epidemic come from very ..... sources. Some of the world's top doctors provided the information.

C **UNDERSTAND FROM CONTEXT** | **Listen to the interview about a journalist who is famous for his pranks. With a partner, define what a "prank" is.**



D **LISTEN FOR SUPPORTING DETAILS** | **Read the statements. Then listen to the interview again. Write T (true) or F (false). Listen again if necessary to confirm your answers.**

Paris Fashion Week

..... 1 The designer of the fake jeans created the fake website.
..... 2 Oobah Butler used fashion designer Giorgio Armani's name to get in to the event.
..... 3 Oobah Butler's participation in the event resulted in more interest in the fake brand.
..... 4 The person who created the fake brand name was happy about the prank.

The Shed at Dulwich

..... 5 The website included the restaurant's address.
..... 6 The website included photos of real dishes.
..... 7 The restaurant was completely booked for six months.
..... 8 Butler served customers only one dinner in six months.



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E LISTEN TO SUMMARIZE | Write two short summaries describing Oobah Butler's two pranks.

Paris Fashion Week



The Shed at Dulwich



F CRITICAL THINKING | Why do you think Oobah Butler created the pranks described in the program? What did he want to prove?

COMMUNICATION ACTIVATOR

Now let's discuss why people fall for pranks.

A TALKING POINTS | With a partner, create your own prank. Discuss and write notes on the notepad.

What's the prank? *We're going to create a fake social media account with a famous singer's name.*

What's the prank?

How will you introduce your idea? (e.g., a website, business cards, a social media ad, etc.)

How will you convince people to believe that your idea is something real?

When, if ever, will you publicly announce that your idea is just a prank?

What do you hope will be the result of your prank? Could it have a dangerous outcome?

Ideas
- a fake restaurant
- a fake company
- a fake brand name
- a fake celebrity
- a fake sports team
- Your own idea:

B PRESENTATION | With your partner, use your notes from Talking Points to present your idea for a prank to the class. The class then decides which pranks people would most likely fall for.

C DISCUSSION | Discuss the questions with your classmates. Provide reasons.

1. What details made your classmates' pranks the most believable? What details made others too questionable?
2. Do you think people in general are too gullible? Or do you think they are generally too skeptical to fall for your classmates' pranks?



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4 COMMUNICATION GOAL

Evaluate the trustworthiness of information sources

A READING | Read about a radio program that had an impact on broadcasting rules in the U.S. Why did some people criticize its creators?

THE HOAX THAT WASN'T

On October 30, 1938, between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m., people across the U.S. were glued to their radios, as they were every evening, to catch the latest news and listen to their favorite programs. One program, *The Mercury Theater on the Air*, began with a weather report. Partway through, an announcer cut in with a short statement that scientists had just observed strange unexplained explosions on the planet Mars. The weather report continued and was followed by a piano concert. Suddenly, the concert was interrupted by an announcement that something had been seen falling from the sky and had crashed on a farm near New York City. As the concert continued, an announcer broke in again, introducing "live" coverage by a news reporter at the scene of the crash. Suddenly the reporter called out, "Wait! Something's happening!" and he described a horrifying scene as aliens from Mars attacked people with poison gas and fire. Additional reports confirmed thousands of deaths across the country as major cities were evacuated. And at 9:00, the show ended.

The next morning, newspapers reported scenes of mass hysteria from the night before, including enormous traffic jams across the country as people fled their homes in terror. According to the reports, hospitals received numerous patients requiring treatment for shock, and the police were swamped with thousands of panicked phone calls from people asking what to do. The newspapers criticized the show, and its creator, for what many considered to be the greatest hoax of its time, terrifying more than one million listeners and causing widespread panic.

The show's creator was Orson Welles, a 23-year-old actor and rising star at the beginning of his career. *The Mercury Theater on the Air* was known for its dramatic depictions of fictional works. And this time, the actor wanted to thrill the audience with a show based on the classic H.G. Wells science-fiction novel *The War of the Worlds*, bringing the novel to life as a radio play that would make the audience feel as if they were right there as the "attack" unfolded. Welles claimed he had never intended to fool anyone. But the show became an infamous example of the power of radio broadcasting to do just that.

As a result, the experience persuaded the broadcasting industry to create tougher rules for radio, and subsequently TV, to prevent such an event from happening again. The show's reputation for causing mass hysteria lasted for decades. However, in the twenty-first century, further investigation has revealed that the stories of mass panic were greatly exaggerated.

It turns out that the number of listeners was much smaller than many had believed—most people had been listening to other shows. The program's radio scripts clearly indicated that, in addition to telling listeners what they were about to hear, Welles interrupted the play four times to remind them that it was just a piece of fiction. Furthermore, there was little evidence that anyone had been admitted to a hospital because of the broadcast.



So where did the story of widespread terror and panic originate? Some claim that it was an attempt by print media to convince people of the dangers of radio. In fact, a CBS audience survey showed that most listeners understood that it was a prank and enjoyed the fun. And Welles went on to become one of the most celebrated movie directors of all time.

B INFER INFORMATION | With a partner, discuss each statement and argue whether it's probably true or unlikely to be true. Support your argument with information from the article. Your arguments may differ.

1 Despite new evidence about the 1938 events, some people did panic when they heard the news reports about an alien invasion from Mars.
2 The only way someone could have believed the radio play's news report is if he or she had turned it on after it had already started.
3 In the 1930s, companies that published newspapers and those that broadcast radio programs competed against each other for the public's attention.
4 Welles's actions before and during the radio play prove that he never intended to fool anyone.
5 Welles's career benefited from the notoriety of the *War of the Worlds* radio play.

> "I think that's probably true. According to the article, researchers in this century claimed that the reports of mass panic were exaggerated, not false."

C DRAW CONCLUSIONS | Complete the statements with the choices, according to the article. Then, with a partner, evaluate each one's likelihood of being true, using degrees of certainty when possible.

.....	1 The creators of the radio play . . .	a	have discovered that reports of mass panic were questionable.
.....	2 Newspaper writers of the time . . .	b	didn't accurately report what happened the night of the broadcast.
.....	3 Most listeners of *War of the Worlds* . . .	c	didn't think listeners would be so gullible.
.....	4 More recent investigators . . .	d	were aware it was fiction.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVATOR

Now let's evaluate the trustworthiness of information sources.

A TALKING POINTS | Complete the survey and calculate your score. Then compare results with a partner. Which one of you is generally more skeptical?

ARE YOU A SKEPTIC?

What percentage of the following information do you think is true?

the news you read in print	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
the news you get from TV or radio	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
the news you read online	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
what people claim on social media	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
what you hear politicians say	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
what you see and hear in ads	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
what your family tells you	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%
what your friends tell you	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%	10%	0%

HOW SKEPTICAL ARE YOU?

First add up all the percentage numbers you circled to get your total. Then calculate your average score by dividing your total by 8.

TOTAL

AVERAGE SCORE

NOT SKEPTICAL — VERY SKEPTICAL

100% 90% 70% 50% 30% 10% 0%

B DISCUSSION | Using your survey from Talking Points, complete the charts and tell your classmates about the information sources you trust the most and the least. Talk about the best ways to determine if information you read or hear is true. (Option: Use the Unit 9 Soft Skills Booster, p. 159.)

The information source I trust the most	The information source I trust the least
Why?	Why?

RECYCLE THIS LANGUAGE

I happened to read an article about . . .
In that case, . . .
The story really took off.
What I don't like is . . .
Their reporting is [upbeat / lively / unique].
I fell for it.

WRITING HANDBOOK p. 149

- **Skill** Avoiding sentence fragments
- **Task** Write a short imaginary news report



PROGRESS SELF-CHECK

NOW I CAN

- ☐ Speculate about what happened.
- ☐ Suggest a plausible explanation.
- ☐ Discuss why people fall for pranks.
- ☐ Evaluate the trustworthiness of information sources.

For more practice . . . Unit Review / *Connect TV* Test-Taking Skills Booster

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