

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

Content note

The real sources include AI-generated images from disasters such as Hurricane Helene. Preview them, and do not share images of real people in distress, even to debunk them.

Overview

Students read a short story in which a realistic image captioned “Courtyard flooded today, stay away” spreads through a campus group chat. They compare the image, Sami’s zoom-in, a secondhand reply, a detector score and the campus alerts page with NIST’s overview of detection. They then write the verification note Jordy posts instead of the image.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- explain the difference between how a file was made and what it shows
- summarize a technical source accurately
- write a plan as ordered steps

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- separate authenticity checks from event checks in a posting plan
- represent the limits NIST describes accurately

Objectives, continued

- include a correction plan and a risk statement
- design steps a small team could follow

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A to D, the NIST summary and Adobe’s labeled Firefly examples
- A plan template: check, decide, post, correct

The task in this edition

Task: Build a verification and risk plan for the crew’s accounts: steps before posting any image, and a correction plan if one proves false.

Students make: Plan, 400—500 words

Pacing

Opener (page 391): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the summary line aloud and go straight to the evidence.

Key terms (pages 392 and 393): 4 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 397): 6 min. Short on time: 5 min. Students fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 398): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 399 and 400): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Read the NIST paragraph. Skip In the news.

Sort the evidence (page 401): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 402): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 403 and 404): 12 min. Short on time: 12 min.

Your draft (page 405): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 406 and 407): 6 min. Short on time: 3 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Questions to discuss (pages 408 and 409): 8 min. Short on time: 2 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 410): at home.

Periods: full chapter 89 minutes; one period 60 minutes.

Standards

RI.11-12.1 Back up an analysis with the strongest evidence from the text, including where the text leaves things uncertain.

W.11-12.2 Write an explanatory text that conveys complex ideas clearly and accurately.

Case 20 plan, continued

Standards, continued

W.11-12.5 Strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting, focusing on what matters most for the purpose and audience.

SL.11-12.1.c Keep a discussion moving with questions that probe reasoning and evidence, and make sure the full range of views is heard.

SL.11-12.1.d Respond to different views, pull together what each side says, resolve conflicts where possible and name what still needs research.

D3.2.9-12 Judge a source’s credibility by looking at how experts value it. In this case: Students evaluate how credible a detector result is and what it measures.

D3.3.9-12 Draw evidence from several sources to find inconsistencies, then revise or strengthen claims. In this case: Students look for inconsistencies across the image, caption and independent records.

D4.3.9-12 Present arguments and explanations to audiences outside the classroom in print, oral or digital form. In this case: Students adapt a verification note for the crew’s followers.

Codes of ethics

- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Truth and accuracy above all
- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It

Codes of ethics, continued

- **PRSA Code of Ethics:** Disclosure of Information

Heat map

- **Opener (page 391):** Low
- **Key terms (pages 392 and 393):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 397):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 398):** Low
- **Key idea (pages 399 and 400):** Low
- **Sort the evidence (page 401):** Low
- **Practice (page 402):** Low
- **Your task (pages 403 and 404):** Low
- **Your draft (page 405):** Low
- **Check your work (pages 406 and 407):** Low

Try it at your school

Pause before you share an image as news.

- Find where the image first appeared before reposting
- Check an official or independent source for the event
- If you can’t confirm it, say so or don’t share it
- Suggest a “check before posting” rule for a club account you help run

Try it at your school, continued

Who to ask: School librarian or media specialist, journalism advisor, campus communications office

Safety: Don’t download or share images of real people that could embarrass or harm them, even to debunk them. Report harmful fakes to a trusted adult and the platform.

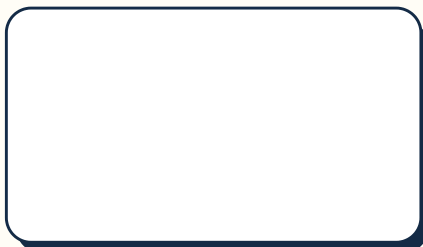
Sources

- UC Berkeley School of Information, “Hany Farid breaks down the viral Helene image,” October 4, 2024
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), “Reducing Risks Posed by Synthetic Content: An Overview of Technical Approaches to Digital Content Transparency,” No date listed

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

A realistic image says the campus courtyard flooded today, and Jordy must decide what the six o'clock recap can say about it.

On your own Read What happened and underline the caption's claim. About 4 minutes.



Lupa holds a cropped photo of a courtyard next to the full photo pinned on a board. The full photo also shows a blue doorway.

Your role: You're the one who writes the verification note Jordy posts at six. **New skill:** Confirm an image with independent sources.

What happened

It is Wednesday, 3:10 p.m. For twenty minutes, an image has been going around the group chat. It looks like a photo of the campus courtyard, with water over the paving and benches. The caption says, "Courtyard flooded today, stay away." It showed up at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date and no name.

Jordy is putting together the crew's recap, which goes out at six. Sami has zoomed in on a hand in the picture, and the fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. Someone ran the image through a free online detector. It reported "12% likely AI-generated."

A reply in the chat says the writer's roommate's friend saw water near the library. Jordy checks the campus facilities alerts page. It shows no active alerts, but its last update was Monday morning.

Your question: Did the courtyard flood today, and what should the recap say about the image?

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Read the summary line aloud and go straight to the evidence.

Say this

"This image lands in your chat with the caption "Courtyard flooded today, stay away." Would you share it?" — Ask for a show of hands. Do not correct anyone yet.

Watch for

Misconception: Students decide from how real the image looks. **Listen for:** "It looks totally real, so it happened." **Then:** Ask what the image cannot tell you: who took it, when and where.

Support

- Read What happened aloud. Describe the image aloud for students with low vision.

Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 4 minutes.

Provenance Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled.

En español: procedencia

In this case: The courtyard image arrived at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date and no named poster. Its provenance is unknown.

Corroboration Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source.

En español: corroboración

In this case: A campus alert or someone's dated photo of the courtyard could corroborate the flood. A roommate's friend's report of water near the library cannot.

Verification note A verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.

En español: nota de verificación

In this case: Instead of posting the image, the recap says what the crew checked, what it found and what is still unknown.

Who is involved

Sami

Checking where the image came from

"Everyone's zooming in on the hand. I did too, and it's weird. But I still don't know who posted this."

Jordy

Putting the six o'clock recap together

"The recap goes out at six. Right now I have an image with no source, a strange hand and an alerts page that hasn't updated since Monday."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

"Provenance asks where a file came from. What do we know about this image's provenance?" — Only when it appeared, 2:48 p.m. No link, no date, no name.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat any second report as corroboration. **Listen for:** "Someone else saw water, so it's confirmed." **Then:** Ask who saw what, where and when. The report is secondhand, and the library is a different place from the courtyard.

📖 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term with an example from the case.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

Any first guess is fine. Students return to it on the My take page.

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, do you think the courtyard flooded today?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

☛ My first guess is that the image is fake, because the hand looks strange.

Notes

[illegible]

This page continues page 392. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 392.

Reading passage

When the honest answer is unverified

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 5 minutes.

Words to know

- **Provenance:** Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled.
- **Corroboration:** Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source.
- **Verification note:** A verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.
- **Claim:** A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Holding statement:** A holding statement is a short update that says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more.
- **Correction:** A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

The story: A deadline and a picture

The crew’s casebook began with a seven-second clip in a group chat. It ends with a single image. At 2:48 p.m. on a Wednesday, a photo-like picture of the campus courtyard appears in the chat, showing water over the paving and benches. Its caption reads, “Courtyard flooded today, stay away.” It arrives with no link, no date on the image and no original poster named. A person in the foreground holds up a phone.

Jordy, who edits the crew’s films and checks every cut before calling it finished, is assembling the six o’clock recap. Within twenty minutes, four pieces of evidence have arrived, and each points somewhere different. Sami posts a zoomed screenshot at 3:02 showing a foreground hand whose fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. A free online detector reports “12% likely AI-generated.” A reply relays that the writer’s roommate’s friend saw water near the library. And at 3:10, Jordy checks the campus facilities alerts page: “No active alerts. Last update: Monday, 9:15 a.m.”

Sami, a design student who notices details for a living, is the first to step back from them. The hand is weird, she agrees, but the more important question is who posted the image first, and when. Jordy states the dilemma plainly. They wanted a clean yes or no, and they do not have one.

Your role is to write the verification note Jordy posts at six.

⌚ Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (748 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

❓ Stop and think

1. **After “The story: A deadline and a picture”:** Why can a detector score answer the wrong question even if it is accurate?
2. **After “Weighing evidence without overclaiming”:** Why does a question mark fail to stop an image from misleading people?
3. **After “Detection, provenance and professional standards”:** Who could be harmed if the crew called a real photo fake?

❓ **Stop and think.** Why can a detector score answer the wrong question even if it is accurate?

Weighing evidence without overclaiming

Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled. Checking provenance first is the Case 1 skill, finding the original source, applied to images. This image has none, so every other clue has to be weighed without an anchor.

Each clue has a specific weakness. The caption is a **claim**, a statement that something is true that can be checked with evidence. The hand is an anomaly, which justifies closer scrutiny and proves nothing, since generated images can look natural and real photos can look strange. The detector score is uninterpretable without knowing the tool's error rates. Sami's question, twelve percent of what, gets at that. It also answers a different question from the one that matters. Even a perfect detector could not say whether the courtyard flooded today. The secondhand report fails on two counts: it is not firsthand, and it concerns the library, not the courtyard.

Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source. Case 9's skill, checking the official source for your area, points to the alerts page, but its last update on Monday limits what its silence can mean. A dated photo from someone at the courtyard would be stronger.

The new skill is confirming an image with independent sources, and publishing only what was checked. Jordy rejects the middle path of posting the image with a question mark, because the image travels regardless of the punctuation. The recap instead carries a **verification note**, a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown. It is a descendant of Case 1's **holding statement**, which says what is known, what is still being checked and when people will hear more. It also sets up Case 3's obligation. If new evidence arrives, a **correction** or update appears where the note did. "Unverified" is sometimes the most accurate conclusion available.

❓ **Stop and think.** Why does a question mark fail to stop an image from misleading people?

Detection, provenance and professional standards

NIST's overview of synthetic content describes provenance data, labeling, watermarking and detection, and it explains the technical limits of each (NIST, November 20, 2024). Real incidents show why no single signal suffices. The Hurricane Helene image of a crying girl with a puppy had no traceable photographer or outlet, and forensics researcher Hany Farid identified internal inconsistencies (UC Berkeley School of Information, October 4, 2024). The News Literacy Project's RumorGuard check on that image models a verification note, setting out what is known, what is not and why (RumorGuard, no date listed). In 2023, fake images of a Pentagon explosion were shared by verified accounts, showing that a trusted-looking sharer is not provenance (CNN, May 22, 2023).

This page continues page 394. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 394.

Detection, provenance and professional standards, continued

Human perception is not a reliable safeguard. In a PNAS study, people could not reliably distinguish AI-synthesized faces from real ones (Nightingale and Farid, February 14, 2022).

Journalism codes frame Jordy's choice as a duty. The RTDNA code says journalism "verifies, provides relevant context, tells the rest of the story and acknowledges the absence of important additional information" (RTDNA Code of Ethics, June 11, 2015). The SPJ code asks journalists to "identify sources clearly" (SPJ Code of Ethics, September 6, 2014).

? **Stop and think.** Who could be harmed if the crew called a real photo fake?

Sources

Real source | National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) | November 20, 2024

Reducing Risks Posed by Synthetic Content: An Overview of Technical Approaches to Digital Content Transparency

Real source | UC Berkeley School of Information | October 4, 2024

Hany Farid breaks down the viral Helene image

Real source | RumorGuard (News Literacy Project) | No date listed

Widely shared image of crying girl and puppy after Helene is AI generated

Real source | CNN | May 22, 2023

'Verified' Twitter accounts share fake image of 'explosion' near Pentagon, causing confusion

Real source | PNAS (Nightingale & Farid) | February 14, 2022

AI-synthesized faces are indistinguishable from real faces and more trustworthy

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) | 2015

RTDNA Code of Ethics

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) | 2014

SPJ Code of Ethics

This page continues page 394. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 394.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document and write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 6 minutes.

Evidence A | Group-chat post

The courtyard image and its caption

Image, described: a photo-like view of the campus courtyard with water over the paving and benches. A person in the foreground holds up a phone. Caption: “Courtyard flooded today, stay away.” Shared Wednesday at 2:48 p.m. with no link, no date on the image and no original poster named.

Look closely: Underline what the caption claims. Circle what the post is missing.

What it shows

➤ A realistic image and a caption that claims a flood today, with no link or date.

What it leaves out

➤ The first poster, and when and where the image was made or taken.

Evidence B | Screenshot

Sami’s zoom-in on the hand

Zoomed screenshot of the foreground hand: the fingers seem to merge at the knuckles. Sami posted it in the crew chat on Wednesday at 3:02 p.m.

Look closely: What does the odd hand tell you? What can it not tell you?

What it shows

➤ A visual clue that calls for a closer look. It is not proof in either direction.

What it leaves out

➤ Whether the image was generated, edited, or real but from another day or place.

Case 20 | Look at the evidence | Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Students fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

💬 Say this

“For each document, ask two questions: what can it show, and what can it not show?” — Model it on the odd hand: a reason to look closer, not proof.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the detector score as a verdict. **Listen for:** “Twelve percent means it’s real.” **Then:** Ask what the tool measured and how often it is wrong. The score is silent about the flood.

📄 Support

- Describe the image and the zoomed hand aloud.
- Give each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask which evidence bears on how the image was made and which bears on whether the courtyard flooded.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Detector result

A score from a free online detector

“12% likely AI-generated.”

Look closely: What did the tool measure? Does it say anything about the flood?

What it shows

➤ One tool’s low score about how the image was made. It is silent about the event.

What it leaves out

➤ The tool’s error rate, and whether the courtyard flooded today.

Evidence D | Web page

The campus facilities alerts page, checked at 3:10 p.m.

“No active alerts. Last update: Monday, 9:15 a.m. Scheduled elevator maintenance in Science Hall, completed.”

Look closely: When was this page last updated? Compare that with the caption’s claim.

What it shows

➤ No active alerts at 3:10 p.m., but the last update was Monday at 9:15 a.m.

What it leaves out

➤ Whether anyone checked the page since Monday, or how fast it reports floods.

What is still missing from the evidence?

➤ The earliest post and its date, whether the image shows this courtyard on this day, and any dated firsthand photo. We also don’t know how fast the alerts page reports floods.

Case 20 | Look at the evidence

| Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Students fill in only the What it leaves out boxes.

💬 Say this

“For each document, ask two questions: what can it show, and what can it not show?” — Model it on the odd hand: a reason to look closer, not proof.

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Misconception: Students treat the detector score as a verdict. **Listen for:** “Twelve percent means it’s real.” **Then:** Ask what the tool measured and how often it is wrong. The score is silent about the flood.

📄 Support

- Describe the image and the zoomed hand aloud.
- Give each document on its own half-page with the key line enlarged.
- **Cognates:** image (imagen), evidence (evidencia), verification (verificación), corroboration (corroboración), original (original), confirm (confirmar), alert (alerta), independent (independiente).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask which evidence bears on how the image was made and which bears on whether the courtyard flooded.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key idea: provenance

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 8 minutes.

Provenance is information about where an image or a document came from and how it has been handled. Check it first when an image claims to show a news event. An image can look polished and still be generated, edited, old or shared with the wrong caption. The courtyard image arrived with no link, no date and no named poster, so its provenance is unknown.

A detail or a tool can give a clue, but it cannot settle the question. An odd-looking hand is a reason to look closer. A natural-looking hand does not prove that an image is real, either. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) describes several ways to track, label, watermark and detect synthetic content, such as AI-generated images. NIST explains that each approach has technical limits.

For a claim about a real event, look for the earliest post, its date and place, and corroboration.

Corroboration is support for a claim from an independent source. Here, that could be a campus alert or someone's dated photo of the courtyard. If you cannot confirm the claim, write a verification note. A

verification note is a short record of what you checked, what you found and what is still unknown.

Professional standards

Real source | Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA)

RTDNA Code of Ethics: Truth and accuracy above all

"Journalism verifies, provides relevant context, tells the rest of the story and acknowledges the absence of important additional information."

In plain words: The RTDNA code asks news staff to say what they checked and to admit what they still do not know.

Question: The facilities page shows no active alerts but was last updated Monday. What should Jordy's note say is still unknown?

Your answer

Still unknown: ____, because ____.

Still unknown: whether the courtyard flooded today, because an empty page last updated Monday morning cannot confirm or rule out a Wednesday flood.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

 Short on time: 6 min. Read the NIST paragraph. Skip In the news.

Say this

"A clue can start a question. Can it end one? Look at the hand and the score." — Neither settles the question. Both are clues.

"The RTDNA code says journalism acknowledges missing information. What is missing here?" — Wait for the first post and a dated photo.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the RTDNA code as a law.

Listen for: "The crew could get in legal trouble." **Then:** Say: "The RTDNA code is guidance for news staff. It is not a law."

Support

- Preview the In the news sources. Do not show images of real people in distress, even to debunk them.

Stretch

- Use the SPJ row: what can the crew truthfully say about where the image came from?

Heat check

Low.

Real source | NPR | May 22, 2023

A realistic fake image spread fast and briefly moved markets before officials confirmed nothing happened.

Real source | CNN | May 22, 2023

A blue check was not proof: accounts that looked trustworthy still shared an image with no real source.

[illegible]

Sort the evidence

On your own Sort each piece of evidence under the claim it bears on and fill in each box. About 6 minutes.

Two claims are in play: the flood and the image. Sort each piece of evidence under the claim it actually bears on. What would settle either one?

Evidence	Claim 1 The courtyard flooded today.	Claim 2 The image was generated by AI.
1 The image shows water in a courtyard, with no date or source	Supports	Neither
2 Facilities alerts page at 3:10 p.m.: no active alerts	Challenges	Neither
3 Secondhand report of water near the library	Supports	Neither
4 An odd hand and a 12% detector score	Neither	Leaves open

Still open

- The image’s earliest source and date

Whose perspective is missing?

Whose view is missing from these documents? What would you ask them?

The view that is missing is _____. I would ask _____.

The original poster’s view is missing. I would ask where the file came from, when it was made or taken, and whether they have the original.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.
Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Two claims are in play: the flood, and how the image was made. Sort each clue under the claim it bears on.” — Model the hand together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students put the detector score under the flood claim. **Listen for:** “Low score, so the flood happened.” **Then:** Ask whether the tool looked at the courtyard. It looked only at the file.

Support

- Let students write F for the flood claim or M for how it was made before writing sentences.

Heat check

Low.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Jordy should do, explain why and fix the two marked phrases. About 5 minutes.

The recap goes out at six. What should Jordy do about the courtyard image?

- ☐ A Post the image with a question: “Is the courtyard flooded?”
- ☐ B Say the image is fake, because the hand looks wrong.
- ☒ C Leave the image out, report what the crew checked and say the flood is not confirmed.

Why I chose it

➤ C. A spreads the image even with a question mark. B turns a clue into a verdict, and the image could be a real photo from another day.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Heads up everyone!! ① The courtyard flooded today so don't go over there. Some people are saying the picture is AI because the hand looks weird but I ran it through a detector and it said 12% AI so it's basically real. My roommate also said her friend saw water near the library earlier, so that pretty much confirms it. Stay safe and ② tell your friends, we don't want anyone getting hurt or ruining their shoes lol. We'll post more if we hear anything else about it.

Rewrite each marked phrase so it says only what the evidence supports.

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ An image says the courtyard flooded today. We can't confirm that yet.

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ If you have a dated photo or the original post, send it to Jordy.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

“The recap goes out at six. What should Jordy do about the image?” — Vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose B because the hand looks wrong. **Listen for:** “Look at the fingers, it's obviously fake.”

Then: Ask whether the image could be a real photo from another day. The hand cannot rule that out.

📖 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🌡 Heat check

■□□ Low.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: About the courtyard flood image going around: we can't confirm it yet. We couldn't find who posted it first, and the campus alerts page shows no active alerts, though its last update was Monday. A detector gave a low score, but detectors make mistakes and can't tell us whether the event happened. So we're not sharing the image as news. If you're on campus now, check the official alert page before changing plans. We'll update here by 6 p.m. Thanks for checking before sharing. If you have a dated photo or an original post, send it to Jordy.

Grades 11–12

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 12 minutes.

Build a verification and risk plan for the crew’s accounts: steps before posting any image, and a correction plan if one proves false.

Use: NIST synthetic-content overview, Adobe’s labeled Firefly examples and case materials.

You’ll make: Plan, 400–500 words

Time: 60 minutes

- 1 Reread Evidence A to D. Sort each check by the question it answers: how made, or what happened.
- 2 Read the NIST summary in the key idea. Note one limit for each approach.
- 3 Fill in the planner, including a risk statement.
- 4 Write the Check and decide section and the Post and correct section on the Your draft page.
- 5 Add a correction plan for an image that proves false.
- 6 Finish the plan, 400 to 500 words, on lined paper or in the online workspace.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Which checks answer which question

🔍 How was it made? The hand, the detector score, any provenance data.
Did it happen? The first post’s date and place, the alerts page, a dated firsthand photo.

Case 20 | Your task | Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

✂ Short on time: 12 min.

💬 Say this

“Which checks answer “is it generated?” and which answer “did the event happen?” — Draw two columns on the board.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: The plan relies on one detector. **Listen for:** “We’ll run everything through a checker.” **Then:** Ask what NIST says about each approach. Each has limits.

📄 Support

- Plan template: check, decide, post, correct
- Glossary: provenance, watermark, content credentials
- Plan template: check, decide, post, correct.

🔗 Stretch

- Explain which checks answer “is it generated?” and which answer “did the event happen?”

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

📋 Standards

Common Core: RI.11-12.1; W.11-12.2; W.11-12.5; SL.11-12.1.c; SL.11-12.1.d.

C3 Framework: D3.2.9-12; D3.3.9-12; D4.3.9-12.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Your task, continued

The limits NIST describes

- Provenance data can be missing. Labels can be stripped or forged.

Detectors get it wrong both ways. No single approach settles it.

Risk statement, prepared in advance

If an image we share proves false, we will ____.

➤ If an image we share proves false, we will say so in the same place, remove it and explain what we missed.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 403.

Key Answer key

A strong response:

- Distinguishes authenticity from event claims
- Represents NIST's limits accurately
- Includes a correction and risk statement
- Feasible for a small team

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

Check and decide

🔍 **Check.** Before we post any image as news, one person traces it to the earliest post and records the date and place. A second person looks for corroboration, such as an official alert or a dated firsthand photo. We treat odd details and detector scores as reasons to look closer, not as proof. NIST describes provenance data, labels, watermarks and detection, and says each has technical limits. So no single tool decides for us. Decide. We ask two separate questions. How was the image made? Did the event happen? The courtyard image shows why. Its hand looks odd and a detector gave it 12%, but neither tells us whether the courtyard flooded.

Post and correct

🔍 **Post.** When a claim is unconfirmed, we post a verification note instead of the image. The note says what we checked, what we found, what is still open and when we will update. For the courtyard, that means naming the alerts page and its Monday update. Correct. If an image we shared proves false, we say so in the same place we posted it. We remove the image and explain what we missed. Our risk statement is ready in advance, so nobody writes it in a panic. The plan costs time: a real alert could reach followers later.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

✂ Short on time: 25 min.

💬 Say this

“Your plan will fail someday. What does the crew say when it does?” — Ask for the risk statement in one sentence.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: The plan is too heavy for a small team.

Listen for: “Every post needs three sources and a meeting.”

Then: Ask who does each step and how long it lasts.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Separates authenticity from the event claim.
2. Represents NIST’s limits accurately.
3. Includes a risk statement before it is needed.
4. Weighs the cost of missing a real alert.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions, mark your level in each rubric row and write one change you made. About 6 minutes.

Does your plan separate how an image was made from whether the event happened? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Does it describe NIST's limits accurately? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Does it include a correction plan and a risk statement? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Could a small team follow it? ☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Treats the image as proof.	☐ Cites a detector or a detail as a verdict.	☐ Checks the earliest source and an independent record.	☐ Checks several sources and names what each can't show.
Reasoning	☐ Declares real or fake with no basis.	☐ Hedges without explaining why.	☐ Matches confidence to evidence.	☐ Separates authenticity of the file from truth of the event.
Audience & purpose	☐ Urges spreading.	☐ Warns without guidance.	☐ Gives followers a safe next step.	☐ Gives a next step, a follow-up time and a way to contribute evidence.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

 Short on time: 3 min. Students answer the Check your work questions only.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one removed verdict or one added source.

Watch for

Misconception: Revisions only soften words. **Listen for:** “I changed fake to probably fake.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Replace the verdict with what was checked.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The plan is scored for the authenticity-versus-event distinction, accurate use of NIST's stated limits, a correction and risk statement and feasibility for a small team.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Checks the earliest source and an independent record.
- **Reasoning:** Matches confidence to evidence.
- **Audience & purpose:** Gives followers a safe next step.
- **Revision:** Replaces the verdict with a verification note.

How your work is scored, continued

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Softens words only.	☐ Replaces the verdict with a verification note.	☐ Explains how each change protects followers and credibility.

One change I made after feedback

I changed ___ because ___.

✎

I removed a step that trusted a detector score, because detectors get it wrong both ways and cannot confirm an event.

Notes

This page continues page 406. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 406.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames. About 8 minutes.

1 What would you need beyond the image to support the caption's claim?

➤ The earliest post, its date and place, and an independent record, such as an alert or a dated firsthand photo.

2 Do you agree with Jordy's choice to leave the image out of the recap, and why?

➤ Yes. The image would do the persuading, whatever the caption says. A note can report the checks without spreading the claim.

3 Who could be harmed if the crew called a real photo fake?

➤ The photographer, whose honest photo is called a lie, and people who skip a real warning. The crew's credibility also suffers.

4 The alerts page shows nothing new since Monday. Does that prove the courtyard did not flood?

➤ No. Silence from a page last updated Monday morning cannot rule out a Wednesday flood. It only means no alert was posted.

My take

My claim: ____.

➤ The crew should post a verification note that keeps the flood claim open and leaves the image out.

Case 20 | Questions to discuss

| Grades 11–12 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 2 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

💬 Say this

“Answer with a detail from a document, not a feeling about the image.” — Ask for one answer per question.

🔗 Stretch

- Compare the crew's note with the RumorGuard check on the Helene image. What does each say is known and unknown?
- Going further: List every place the crew could look for the first post of the courtyard image. For each one, write what it could prove and what it could not.
- Going further: Write two captions that say the flood is not confirmed. Which one makes the image feel more trustworthy than it is? Name who could be hurt if the crew gets this wrong.
- Going further: Write two short notices that tell followers the flood is not confirmed. Ask two readers what each notice lets them conclude. Rewrite any line that made them more certain than the evidence allows.
- Going further: Before you repost an image as news, find where it first appeared. Check an official or independent source for the event. If you cannot confirm it, say so or do not share it. If you help run a club account, suggest a “check before posting” rule.
- Compare how two news organizations describe their image-verification process
- Research what content credentials record and what they cannot show

My take, continued

The best evidence is ____, because ____.

👉 The missing provenance, because with no first post or date, the image cannot show today's courtyard.

Someone who disagrees might say ____.

👉 The low detector score means the image is real, so the crew should warn people.

The limit of the evidence is ____.

👉 The alerts page was last updated Monday, so its silence proves little.

I would change my mind if ____.

👉 The facilities office posted a same-day alert about the courtyard.

Notes

This page continues page 408.

Heat check

■ ■ □ **Question 3: Medium.** Students may bring up real disaster images or people they know who lived through a disaster.

Cool-down: Keep to the courtyard case. Do not show or search for images of real people in distress.

Talk about this case at home

Case 20: Can the crew post this image as true?

In this case, a realistic image in a group chat claims that a campus courtyard flooded today. Your student checked where the image came from and wrote a short note that says what is known and what is not.

Questions to talk about

- 1 What would you check before you share a picture of breaking news?
- 2 Where does your town or school post official alerts?
- 3 Why can saying you are not sure yet be better than guessing?

Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.



See the case online.

Case 20 | Talk about this case at home | Grades 11–12 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

💬 Say this

“Read this page at home with someone you trust.” —
Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.