

6.2 *Urban legends*

Aim: Write an urban legend and give a group presentation

Preparation: You will need to supply staplers and colored markers if you want Ss to create a booklet. Make one copy of Worksheet 6.2 for every S.

Comment: Use at the end of Unit 6, Lesson B.

Think and Plan (10 minutes)

- Ss work in groups of four. Give each S a handout and access to a stapler and markers.
- Have Ss read the project objective, “What are urban legends?” and “Egg equinox.” After eliciting answers to the *Think* questions, explain that the story is untrue. The spring equinox does not influence the ability of eggs to stand upright.
- Have groups discuss what they will need for their urban legend and presentation. Each group member chooses an urban legend to research outside of class. Explain that they can search for urban legends online.

Put together and Present (30 minutes)

- At the next class, Ss bring in their legends written in their own words and any images they found. Have groups share their legends and practice telling their stories. Set an appropriate time limit.
- Have groups take turns telling their urban legends to the class and, if applicable, showing their booklets. Stop for questions after each group. Ask Ss to discuss whether the stories are believable.
- Finally, ask the class to decide whose legend was the most interesting and told the most effectively. Discuss other urban legends they’ve heard. If possible, display the booklets around the classroom or school or make them accessible online.

Objective

Create a collection of urban legends and exchange stories.

Think

Read the definition of urban legends and the story “Egg equinox.” Does the story have most of the features of an urban legend? Do you think the story is true?

What are urban legends?

Urban legends are stories that spread rapidly by word of mouth or online. If you hear or read a story that has most of these features, it is probably an urban legend.

Urban legends:

- sound like they could be true even though most of them are not.
- are always told as if they are true.
- are usually told as if they happened to a friend of a friend.
- contain certain facts or details that seem too far-fetched to be true.
- change as they are retold, so there are often many variations of the same story.



Egg equinox

When my sister's friend was on spring break in Florida, she balanced an egg on its end, took a picture of it, and posted it on a social media site. In her comment, she wrote that she was able to do this because of the spring equinox – a day when night and day are exactly the same length. Apparently, there's something about the earth's gravity pull on this day that makes it possible to get an egg to stand upright. Later, my sister tried it, and sure enough, she was able to balance an egg, too. When my sister told me about this, I thought it was a joke at first. It took me several tries, but I was able to do it myself. Since then, I've seen this done many times, but only on either the spring or fall equinox. It's just not possible on any other day of the year.

Plan

1. In groups, brainstorm stories that you think are urban legends. Make notes about the stories you discuss. Answer as many of these questions as you can.
 - What is the urban legend about?
 - What are the details?
 - What is the source?
2. Each member of the group does research to find more urban legends and then chooses one that is interesting and easy to tell.
3. Each member of the group writes the urban legend they chose using their own words. Add images to illustrate the story.

Put together

1. Share your urban legend with your group and practice telling your story.
2. Staple the pages together to make an urban legend booklet.

Present

1. Take turns telling your urban legends to the class. Ask and answer questions.
2. Discuss whether or not you think the stories are true.
3. What other urban legends have you heard?