



Introducing Lateral Reading

Good morning!

Think of any experiences you've had encountering online misinformation (finding it, seeing others post it, sharing it yourself...)

How did it make you feel?

What, if anything, did you do about it?

Lesson Context: Intro to Lateral Reading Lesson

- Students have discussed what it means for a source to be credible
- Students will be doing the Extreme Weather MEL in science class soon

Lesson Introduction

What does it mean for a source to be **credible**?

Why should we investigate whether a source is **credible** before we read it?

Today's Focus

How do we decide whether online sources are credible?

We're going to learn to do something called ***lateral reading***.

Source #0

<https://tinyurl.com/exweather1>



<https://www.climatecentral.org/news/2015-wildfire-season-sets-ominous-record-198>

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News • January 6, 2016

The 2015 Wildfire Season Set an Ominous Record



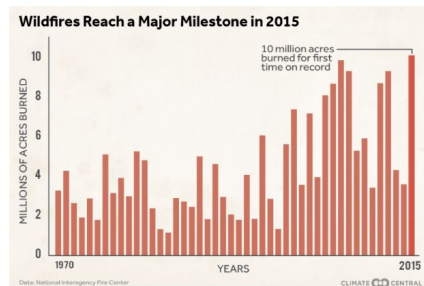
By Brian Kahn

Follow @blkahn

The U.S. as a whole may finally be feeling winter's chill, but the newly released 2015 wildfire numbers serve as a reminder of how **hot and smoky the past year** was.

The National Interagency Fire Center's numbers vividly illustrate how 2015 was a record setter. U.S. wildfires scorched 10.12 million acres.

Annual acreage burned by wildfires in the U.S. since 1970



Turn & talk:

What **steps** did I take to evaluate the source?

Why do you think we call this **lateral reading**? (hint: what does **lateral** mean?)

Source #1: Guided Practice

<https://tinyurl.com/exweather2>



CLIMATE at a GLANCE
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Climate at a Glance: U.S. Wildfires



Burning pine forest in the Western United States. Image licensed from 123RF
View this page in our printable booklet (PDF) here:
https://www.heartland.org/_template-assets/documents/Books/CaaG-2022.pdf

Key Takeaways:

- Compared to the first half of the twentieth century, the number of wildfires occurring in the United States over the past decade is lower, and the fires have been less severe.
- In years in which there has been an increase in wildfire activity during the past decade, the fires have usually involved substantially fewer acres of burnt land compared to much of the twentieth century.
- Even in the worst wildfire seasons occurring recently, wildfires typically burned one-fifth to half as much land as standard wildfire seasons during the early twentieth century.
- Drought is the key climate factor for wildfires, an important consideration because the United States has experienced relatively few droughts recently.
- Data showing greater numbers of acres lost to wildfires in previous decades were removed from an important database by a government fire agency, likely because the data did not support the claim that wildfires are becoming more frequent.

Short Summary:

Wildfires, especially in arid parts of the United States, have always been a natural part of the environment, and they likely always will. Global warming did not create wildfires. In fact, wildfires have become less frequent and less severe in recent decades. One of the key contributing factors has been that the United States has experienced fewer droughts in recent decades than in periods throughout the twentieth century.

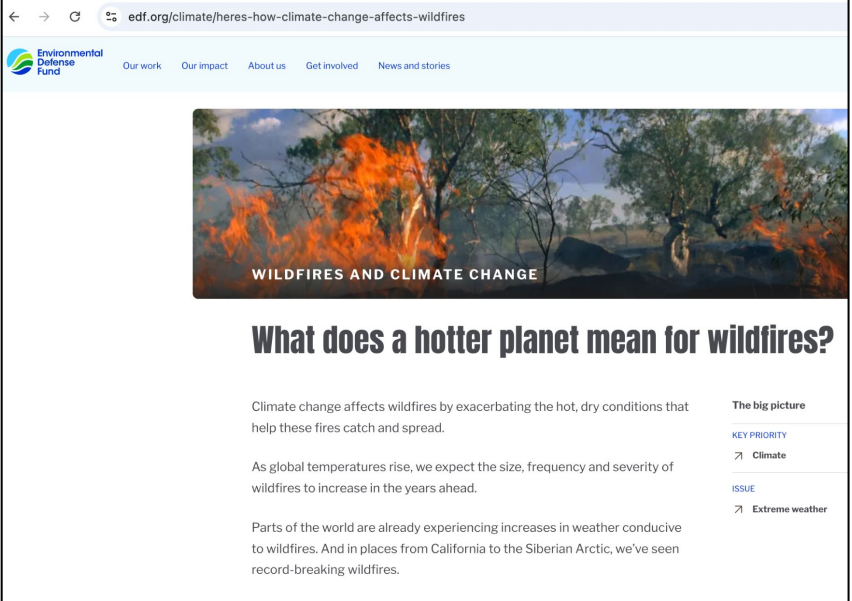
Source #1 Debrief

How credible did you decide the Heartland Institute was?



Source #2: Guided Practice

<https://tinyurl.com/exweather4>



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the EDF website. The address bar shows the URL `edf.org/climate/heres-how-climate-change-affects-wildfires`. The EDF logo is in the top left, and navigation links for 'Our work', 'Our impact', 'About us', 'Get involved', and 'News and stories' are in the top right. The main content area features a large image of a wildfire with the text 'WILDFIRES AND CLIMATE CHANGE' overlaid. Below the image is the heading 'What does a hotter planet mean for wildfires?'. The text explains that climate change exacerbates wildfires by creating hot, dry conditions and that global temperature rises will increase the size, frequency, and severity of wildfires. It also mentions that parts of the world are already experiencing record-breaking wildfires. On the right side, there is a sidebar with the heading 'The big picture' and two links: 'Climate' under 'KEY PRIORITY' and 'Extreme weather' under 'ISSUE'.

edf.org/climate/heres-how-climate-change-affects-wildfires

Environmental Defense Fund

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WILDFIRES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

What does a hotter planet mean for wildfires?

Climate change affects wildfires by exacerbating the hot, dry conditions that help these fires catch and spread.

As global temperatures rise, we expect the size, frequency and severity of wildfires to increase in the years ahead.

Parts of the world are already experiencing increases in weather conducive to wildfires. And in places from California to the Siberian Arctic, we've seen record-breaking wildfires.

The big picture

KEY PRIORITY

Climate

ISSUE

Extreme weather

Source #2 Debrief

How credible did you decide Environmental Defense Fund was?



Comparing Sources

Which source(s) would you use to learn more about wildfires?

https://www.climatecentral.org/news/2015-wildfire-season-sets-ominous-record-198:

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Wildfires Reach a Major Milestone in 2015

10 million acres burned for first time since 1990

climateataglance.com

CLIMATE at a Glance

Extreme Weather Economics and Policy Climate Change Impacts Underlying Science

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Climate at a Glance: U.S. Wildfires

Burning pine forest in the Western United States. Image licensed from 123RF. View this page in our printable booklet (PDF) here: <https://www.heartland.org/template-assets/documents/Books/CaG-2022.pdf>

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The big picture

KEY PRIORITY

- Climate

ISSUE

- Extreme weather

Reflection

Why should we read laterally before we read a source?

Debrief

- How was the lesson structured to introduce students to lateral reading?
- What did you appreciate about the lesson? What might you do differently with your students?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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