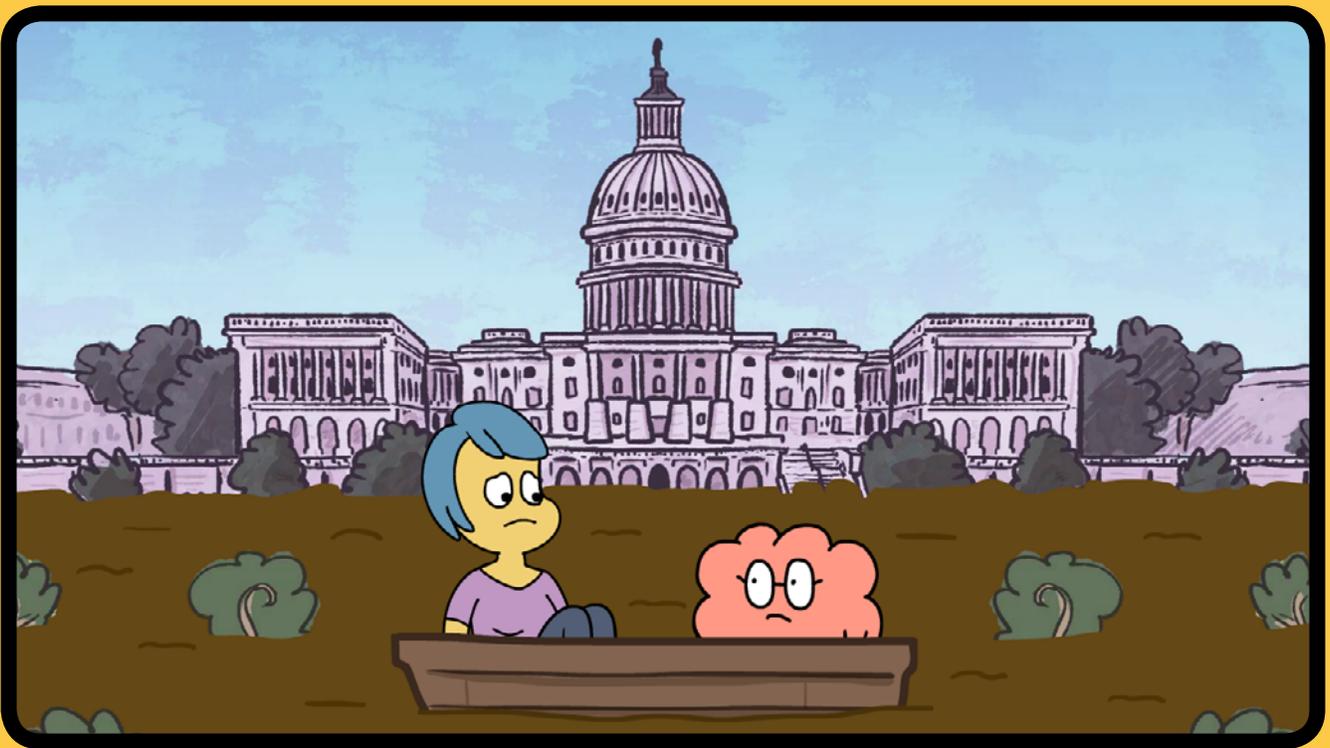
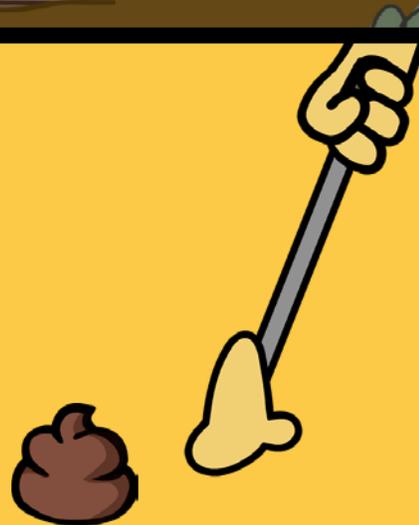


# POCKET GUIDE to POLITICAL B.S.



## WHAT EXACTLY IS B.S.?

**B.S. means "nonsense", especially as a rebuke in response to communication or actions viewed as deceptive, misleading, disingenuous, unfair, or false.**



# WHERE SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR B.S. ?

Virtually everywhere. Unfortunately, it has become a major “currency of the realm” in many societies.



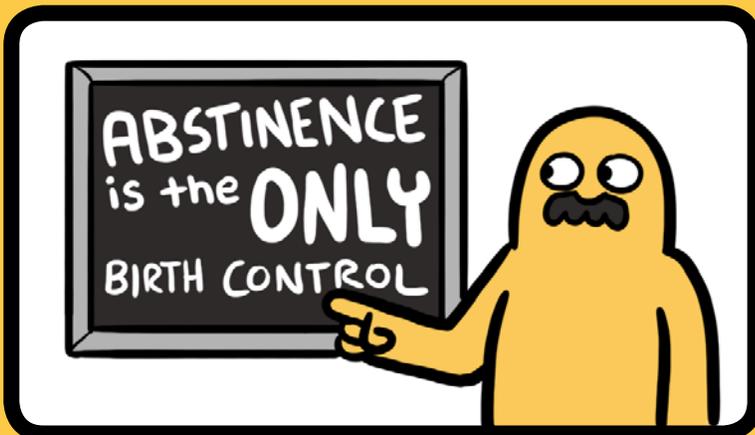
## POLITICS

- Not Directly Answering Questions
- Straight Up Lying
- Flip-Flopping or Being Purposefully Vague (saying different things to different groups of people)



## THE NEWS

- Actual Distortion of Facts
- Not Putting Events and Statements in Context
- False Equivalencies; implying that both sides of an argument are equally fact-based and well-reasoned



## SCHOOLS

- Distorting U.S. History, U.S. Govn't, and World Religion in Textbooks
- Abstinence Only Sex Education
- Creationism Rather than Evolution

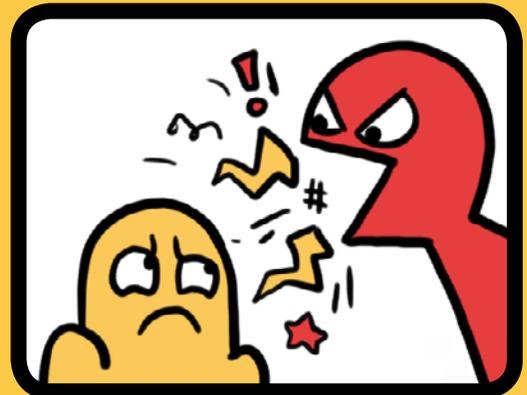
# THINGS TO LOOK FOR TO DETERMINE IF IT'S B.S.

- Use of images that distort reality
- Characterization of people rather than analysis of issues.
- Framing language in such a way so as to try to please a constituency rather than being true to the facts



- Unwillingness to tell the truth.
- Providing only an incomplete story with key pieces missing; parts that would provide necessary balance.
- Something that a 10-year old child could often see as poor thinking.

- An issue is distilled down to make it easily understandable to the public, even though the issue may not lend itself to an easy explanation.
- Use of provocative language to evoke a certain emotion
- Language or images that appeal to emotions rather than reason



## Lack of credible sources,

- If online, links do not work or are not from a credible source
- If video/ news, sources not at bottom of screen in gray
- Poorly conducted studies used as reference, or studies paid for by interest groups.

**POLITICIANS HAVE A  
"LICENSE" to CONTINUE  
TO USE B.S.**

"Trust me"

"I read about it  
on social media"

"Now is not the time to  
talk about this issue"

"You know I don't  
understand what you're  
saying, so hear me out."

"I see where you are  
coming from, but I have  
something to say"

"Mistakes  
were made."

"It will be a minor  
inconvenience."

"A lot of people  
are saying..."

"Fair and balanced"

**UNTIL CITIZENS  
DEVELOP THE SKILLS  
TO DETECT B.S.**

**THE BEST PLACE  
TO TEACH THAT WOULD  
BE IN SCHOOL**

"Let's talk about it later"

"You may not like  
it, but it will be good  
for you."

"Now I  
mean no offense,  
but..."

**"BUT WHAT ABOUT  
THIS OTHER THING?"**

"Nobody respects  
women more than me."

"I don't know  
the answer to your  
question, but I know  
this."

**BUT BECAUSE A  
MAJOR CURRENCY  
OF COMMUNICATION  
IN SCHOOLS IS  
FREQUENTLY B.S.**

"I am not influenced by the  
people who donate to my  
campaign."

"So-and-so is a real  
patriot."

"You may not  
like it, but it will be  
good for you."

"I just don't think I  
can get into it without  
offending someone."

"I want to follow the will of the people."

"Believe me."

**THIS BECOMES DIFFICULT**



Civitas is about reason and conscience. Our “mission” is to counter the ill-informed and apathetic citizen who answers the question about what is happening in the world with “I don’t know and I don’t care.” Our preference is to try to “do the work” rather than worry about fancy mission statements.

Article I of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “All human beings are...endowed with reason and conscience...” and Civitas is committed to the premise that democracy operates best when citizens act “with reason and conscience.” Our programs encourage both adolescents and adults to engage in compassionate critical thinking. We hope to reduce the rhetoric and raise the level of dialogue; thereby engaging more people in a constructive path towards fulfilling the promise of democracy. We believe that for the condition of humankind to improve, it is important for students and others to be active and responsible citizens.

Civitas sponsors a number of programs for high school and middle school students including Model United Nations, mock legislatures, mock city councils, field trips studying urban issues, guest speakers on current topics, and providing opportunities for students to meet with civic leaders who can be honest and direct.

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