

18th December 2025

Generative AI Mini Conference,
Aberystwyth University

Real, enhanced, or bullsh*t landscapes?: embedding generative AI exercises in physical geography learning activities

Stephen Tooth & Jayesh Mukherjee

Department of Geography & Earth Sciences



Gracie Anderson

6d ·

IS AI A RUNAWAY TRAIN?

Not if we don't want it to be... See more



Home



Friends



Reels



Marketplace



Notifications



Menu

a runaway train



5d

AI has been an eye opener for a Luddite like myself. I'm pursuing a MA degree in my ripe old age. I produced a ChatGPT research proposal with a broad outline of the thesis chapters, complete with downloadable primary and secondary sources, and bibliography. My supervisor, a professor, says that ChatGPT saved me 8 months of dead ends and drudgery, and it also evaluated the originality of my proposal.

Reply



2



6d

AI is part of the revolution that takes away from us the burden of routine and boring work opening up the opportunities for being more creative and following more original ideas and opportunities. It also will lead to many jobs, like truck drivers and administrative personnel, to be eliminated and the introduction of a livable sum of money for all that covers the basic needs of a family. It will give them time to spend with their families or on gardening, conservation and volunteer work.

Reply





Stephen Tooth

The way forward is obviously better education about how to use AI alongside other sources (internet and non-internet). No doubt I will start to use ChatGPT or equivalent in time to help (emphasis on help) with some tasks (e.g. writing bland text for promotional brochures, or to get acquainted with the parameters of a topic), much as I eventually did with Wikipedia. But for 'deep' academic work, there will be no substitute for my original thinking and word craft. It will be a matter of pride as much as ethics. What worries me is the number of people that won't use AI as a helpful start point but more as a gospel end point. Academics and others are going to have to make a very persuasive case that 'deep learning' - as opposed to 'shallow digital grazing' - is best achieved through drafting, reviewing, re-writing

Like Reply 3m Edited

need to place more emphasis on the learning ***process***
& student ***reflections on that process***
(e.g. awareness of, & engagement with, that process)
& less on (just) the outcomes

need to try & avoid students wittingly (or unwittingly) 'bypassing the learning process'

from a
Facebook
conversation in
early 2023

Structure of remainder of presentation

- 1) Introduction**
- 2) About ourselves**
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'old school' vs 'new(er) school'? 'slow tech adopter' vs 'rapid tech adopter'?

geomorphology

geography

geoscience

environmental science

human-environment interactions

geographical education

art-science & outreach activities

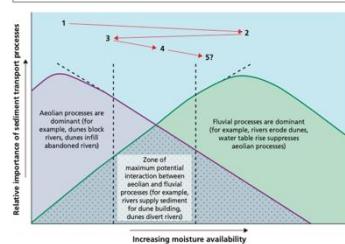
The Thar Desert in India

Landscapes transformed by human activities

Stephen Tooth,
Manudeo Singh and
Jayesh Mukherjee

This article considers how one of the world's most populous deserts is being shaped by humans

Key to changing Thar Desert environmental conditions:
1 Final stages of last glacial cycle (cooler climate, lower sea levels, weaker monsoon = more aeolian processes)
2 Following the last glacial cycle (warmer climate, rising sea levels, stronger monsoon = more fluvial processes dominance)
3 Last few centuries (warmer climate, high sea levels, weaker monsoon = more aeolian processes dominance)
4 Last two centuries (warmer climate, high sea levels, stronger monsoon and rising human impacts = aeolian and fluvial processes both active, with more interactions)
5 The future?



Source: Adapted from Ballard, I. E. and Livingston, I. (2002).
Figure 1 Aeolian and fluvial process intensity domains. The greatest potential for interaction is where neither process is dominant

22



Natural Hazards (2023) 115:2749–2754
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-022-05644-w>

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Earth observation data to strengthen flood resilience: a recent experience from the Irrawaddy River

Surajit Ghosh¹ · Jayesh Mukherjee² ·

Received: 13 July 2022 / Accepted: 24 September 2022 / Published online: 29 September 2022
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Abstract
The improvement of Earth Observation (EO) sensors and modern computational efficiency in the form of cloud analytics platform has made monitoring and interpretation of floods much more efficient. In this study, we present the recently occurred floods in the north-central section of the Irrawaddy River, inundating the adjoining farmlands on the active flood-plains along a stretch of 228 km. The amount of rainfall was observed to have gradually risen from early June 2022 captured through GPM data. Similarly, the water levels in the study stretch were observed to have increased from 98.08 m to 104.08 m (from Sentinel-3 altimetry) due to torrential rains on the northern hilly tracts of Myanmar. High-resolution Sentinel-1 SAR datasets have been used to estimate flood progression in the GEE platform. The total inundated area had risen from 196 to 989 sq. km. throughout June till the first week of July. Thus, EO data associated with accessible computing on cloud platforms help monitor flood progression, warn the community well in advance and support the development of crop insurance strategies, anticipatory actions and many more to strengthen evidence-based flood policy.

Keywords Flood · Irrawaddy River · Earth observation · GEE · Cloud computing · Sentinel-1



Geography Review February 2026

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Oxbow lake

Meanders

Lateral Migration

Scroll bars.

Changes in date with scroll bars

End of lecture



Pale channel

Sediment transportation.

Incision and aggradation.



Braided channel

River sink

Delta.

Aggradation.



Aberystwyth University Learning & Teaching Conference
July 10-12th 2017

**How successful is within-lecture (self-)assessment
of student engagement, knowledge & learning?:
experiences from some Part 2 Geography modules**

development of an earlier initiative

Stephen Tooth
Geography & Earth Sciences
set@aber.ac.uk



"In no more than 150 words, write a descriptive overview of the landforms in the image, and say how these landforms have been formed."



decontextualised images

ChatGPT (thinking mode)

Microsoft Co-Pilot

Gemini (2.5 Pro)



The image shows an area dominated by sand dunes, which could be classified as linear or perhaps parabolic. The dunes trend from lower left towards top right, generally becoming more distinct (i.e. taller and wider) along their length, and some linear dunes merge downwind in y-junctions. The dunes have formed by aeolian processes. In many places, agricultural fields have encroached on the dunefields. Bedrock crops out among the dunes on the right. River landforms are not present but a pan has developed near the bottom centre of the image, possibly owing to a combination of local sediment reworking by runoff and wind deflation. The pan probably serves as a topographic low, so local runoff appears to be in the opposite direction to the dominant direction of sand movement on the dunes. Grey colouration of soils in and around the pan probably reflect salinity developed under conditions of net water deficit."

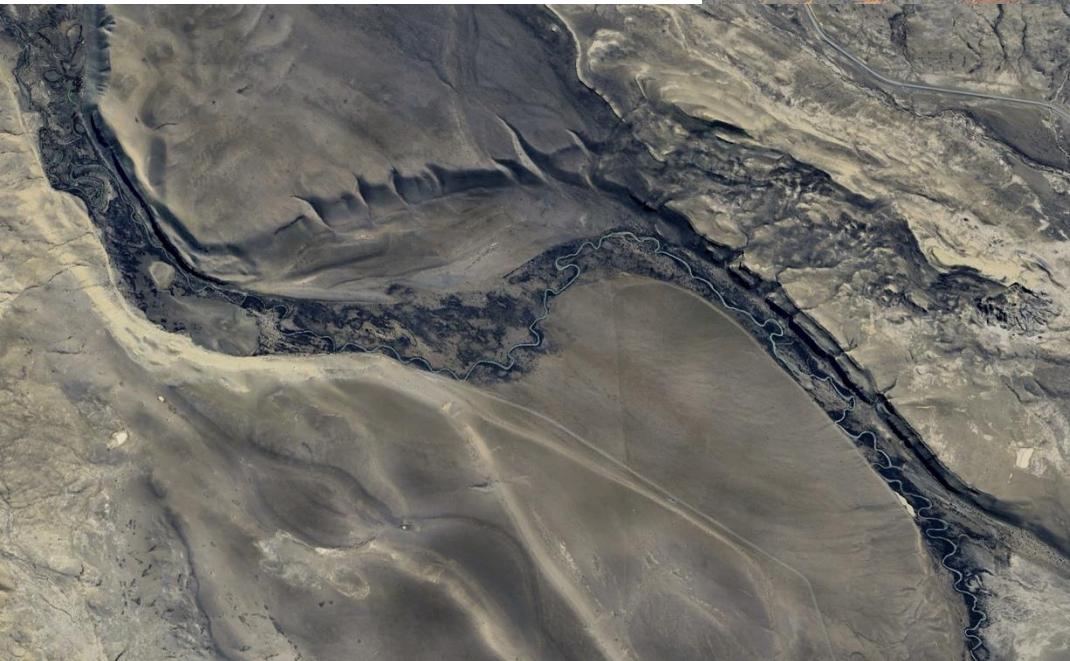
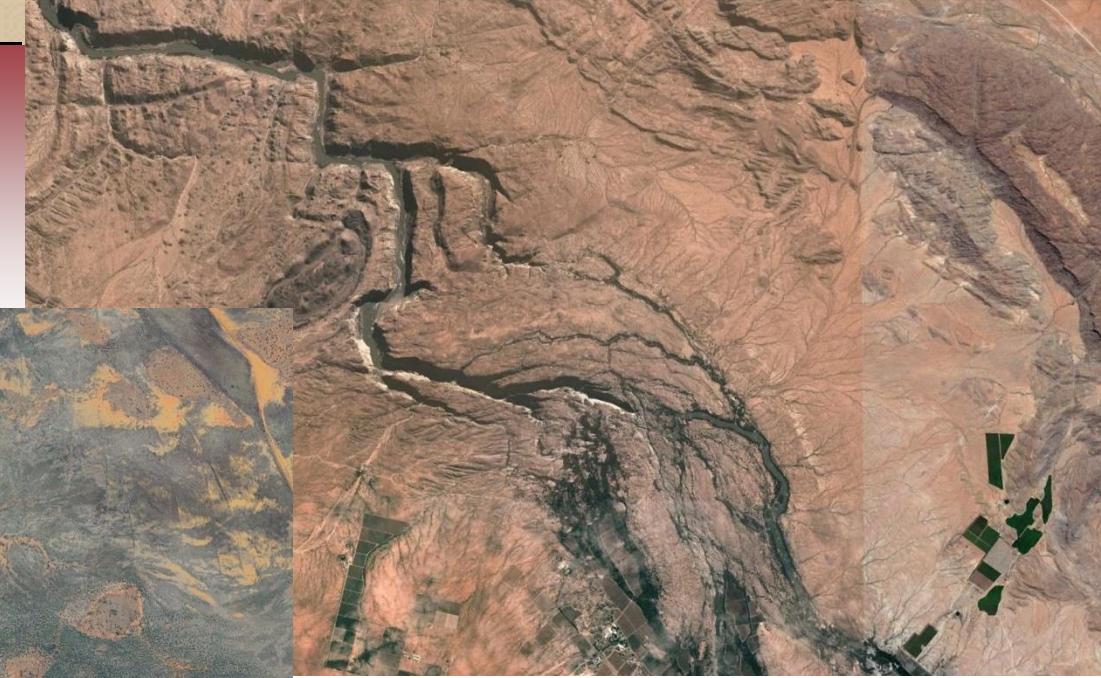
VS.

"In no more than 150 words, write a descriptive overview of the landforms in the image, and say how these landforms have been formed."

"A pale, branching network of ephemeral channels dominates the scene, radiating downhill into a darker, irregular playa or salt pan at the lower-left. The channels are wide, shallow and multi-threaded — a braided/distributary pattern with numerous braid bars and starved meander loops — and feed a broad depositional apron where flow slows and sediments spread into a fan-like body. Lighter, lacy channel fills and pale sediment tongues show repeated overbank deposition; the central playa's dark surface and concentric lobes mark fine-grained muds and evaporite crusts in a closed basin."

"These landforms formed by episodic, high-energy runoff in an arid setting: infrequent flash floods carry abundant coarse sediment down slope, forcing streams to split and rework channels (braiding) and drop load as velocity falls (alluvial-fan and overbank deposits). Continued evaporation in the basin concentrates salts, producing the playa surface."

"In no more than 150 words, write a descriptive overview of the landforms in the image, and say how these landforms have been formed."



decontextualised images
ChatGPT (normal mode)
ChatGPT (deep research mode)
ChatGPT (thinking mode)

"In no more than 150 words, write a descriptive overview of the landforms in the image, and say how these landforms have been formed."



ChatGPT (normal mode)

The image shows a desert landscape shaped by prominent fluvial processes. Deep, winding canyons and entrenched meanders cut through the arid terrain, indicating long-term river incision into resistant bedrock. These features suggest episodic but powerful water flow, likely from flash floods or ancient river systems that once carried greater discharge. The dark, sinuous channels reveal areas of concentrated erosion, while the adjacent flat valley floors show deposition of finer sediments. The steep canyon walls and terraces mark periods of downcutting followed by stability or lateral erosion. Overall, these landforms were formed by sustained fluvial erosion, guided by tectonic uplift and intermittent flow in a dry climate.

?

evidence?

?

?

long-term climate change
(contradicts what is
said above)

possible student exercises/assessments?

- 'fact check' some text written by ChatGPT
- provide additional (comparative?) case studies or examples
- retrofit references to the text
- identify missing process-form linkages in the text
- write a short caption to accompany an image in a field guide or on an information sign board
- use ChatGPT to re-write text for different audiences (e.g. primary schoolchildren vs adult laypersons vs government ministers)
- + ?

 **Mark Fonstad**
Thanks for everyone's thoughts and ideas on this subject. I think I can safely say "We're just at the beginning."
[Like](#) [Reply](#) 1d  2

 **[REDACTED]**
I've been using it in my geomorphology class and it's been a great tool. I have students generate answers to the knowledge assessment questions in Bierman and Montgomery's textbook and then write if the answer is sufficient (and if so add in another detail from the text) insufficient (and if so tell me why) or wrong(explain what is wrong about it)
So far most answers have been insufficient. First one we tried was about how erosion causes uplift and the students were quick to deem the answer insufficient. While it focused on isostatic rebound it did not discuss the underlying physics of density differences and buoyancy. The students love finding what the bot missed
[Like](#) [Reply](#) 19h  4

 **[REDACTED]** **[REDACTED]** I love this because it also makes them less likely to trust it/rely on it themselves.
[Like](#) [Reply](#) 17h 

 **Mark Fonstad**
Great idea. 
[Like](#) [Reply](#) 16h

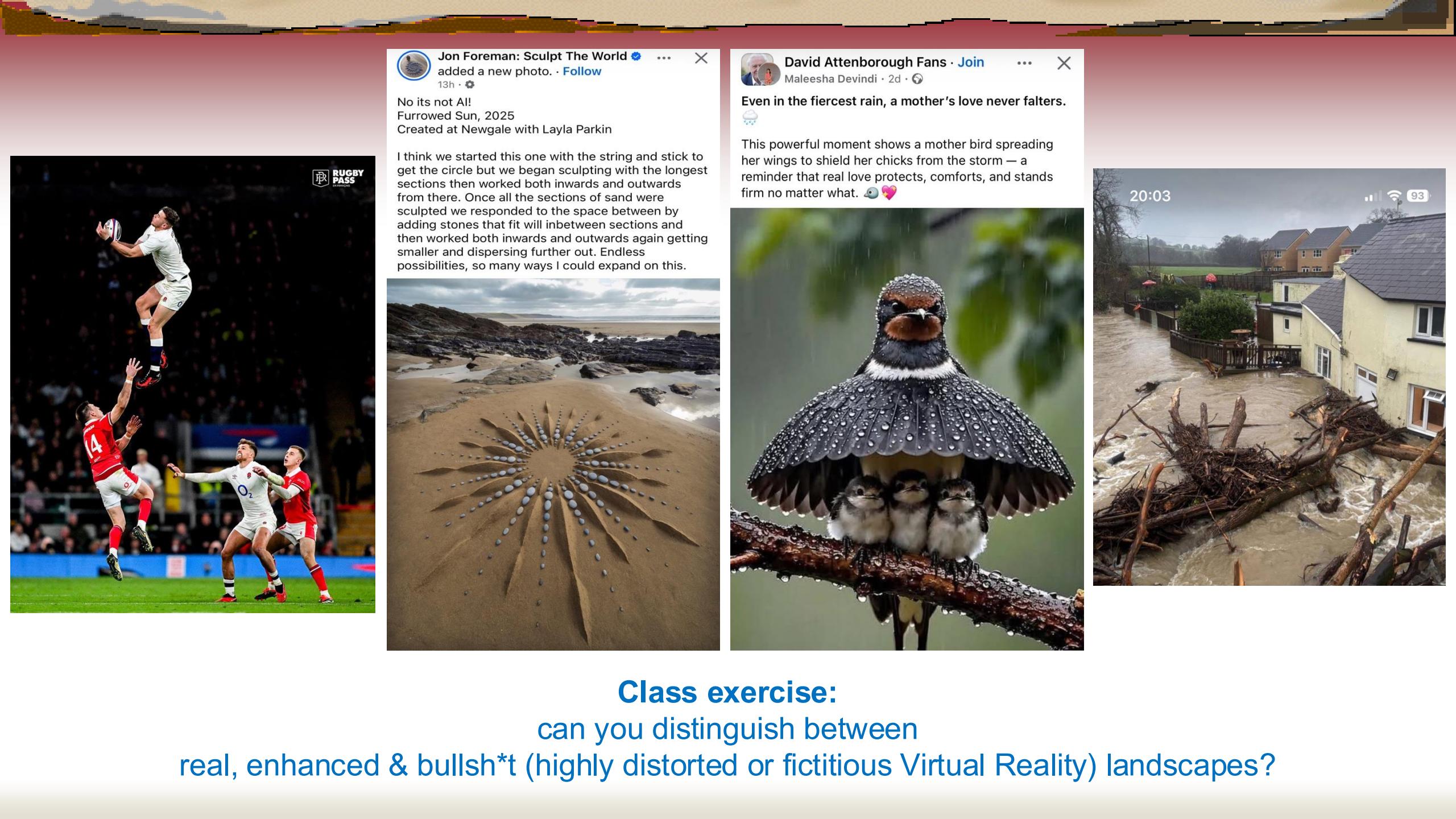
 Write a reply... 

 <https://www.npr.org/.../chatgpt-ai-education-cheating...>

 **NPR.ORG**
'Everybody is cheating': Why this teacher has adopted an open ChatGPT policy 

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Jon Foreman: Sculpt The World ... X
added a new photo. · [Follow](#)
13h ·

No its not AI!
Furrowed Sun, 2025
Created at Newgale with Layla Parkin

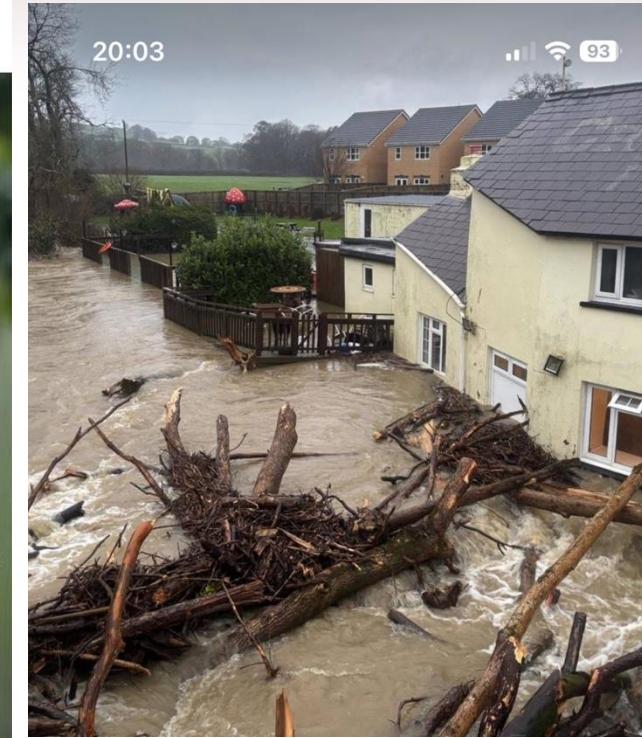
I think we started this one with the string and stick to get the circle but we began sculpting with the longest sections then worked both inwards and outwards from there. Once all the sections of sand were sculpted we responded to the space between by adding stones that fit will inbetween sections and then worked both inwards and outwards again getting smaller and dispersing further out. Endless possibilities, so many ways I could expand on this.

David Attenborough Fans · [Join](#) ... X
Maleesha Devindi · 2d ·

Even in the fiercest rain, a mother's love never falters.



This powerful moment shows a mother bird spreading her wings to shield her chicks from the storm — a reminder that real love protects, comforts, and stands firm no matter what.



Class exercise:
can you distinguish between
real, enhanced & bullsh*t (highly distorted or fictitious Virtual Reality) landscapes?



Incredible planet · [Follow](#)

4d ·

...

X

Elephant foot glacier, Greenland.



Like



3.6K

48 comments 195 shares



Comment



Send



Share



The Africa We Don't See on Tv ✅ ... X

added a new photo. · [Follow](#)

3d ·

This is the Kalahari Namibia

Photo by Solly Levi Photography



100

5 shares



11h · 

Zambezi River, Africa

...

 Like

 Comment

 Send

 Share

  5



beentee24 

 beentee24 · Original au...

Tugela Falls is the tallest waterfall in So... [more](#)

...

UP NEXT: In our backyard...  ... 

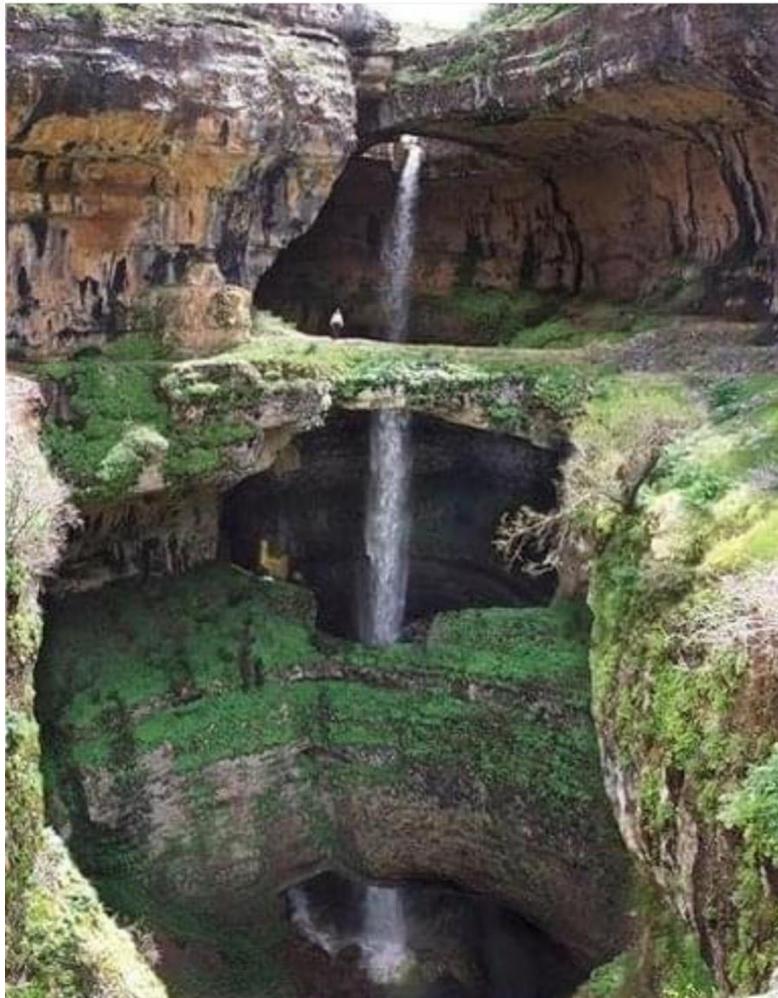


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2 d ·

The Baatara gorge sinkhole in Lebanon is a triple waterfall that drops 255 meters (837 ft) into the Baatara Pothole, a cave of Jurassic limestone.

More details/photos: <http://bit.ly/3kjNtdT>



You and 623 others 7 comments 60 shares



Art of Nature · Follow

7h · ⚙

...

Monument Valley in Arizona 😮 😍



Send a gift

1.2K

29

211





Digital Reality · [Follow](#)

13 Jul · [Globe icon](#)

...

X

This is Namibia, where the desert meets the ocean.



5.7k

58 comments 242 shares





Geo Lens · Follow

1d · 🌎

...



What an oasis in Libya looks like.



Send a gift

1.6K

62 comments 141 shares

White Pocket is located in Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in Northern Arizona near the Utah border (14)



Home



Video



Friends



Marketplace



Notifications



Menu



Incredible planet · [Follow](#)

4d ·

...

X

Elephant foot glacier, Greenland.



3.6K

48 comments 195 shares

Like

Comment

Send

Share

real



The Africa We Don't See on Tv ✅

...



added a new photo. · [Follow](#)

3d ·

This is the Kalahari Namibia

Photo by Solly Levi Photography



100

5 shares

real



Like

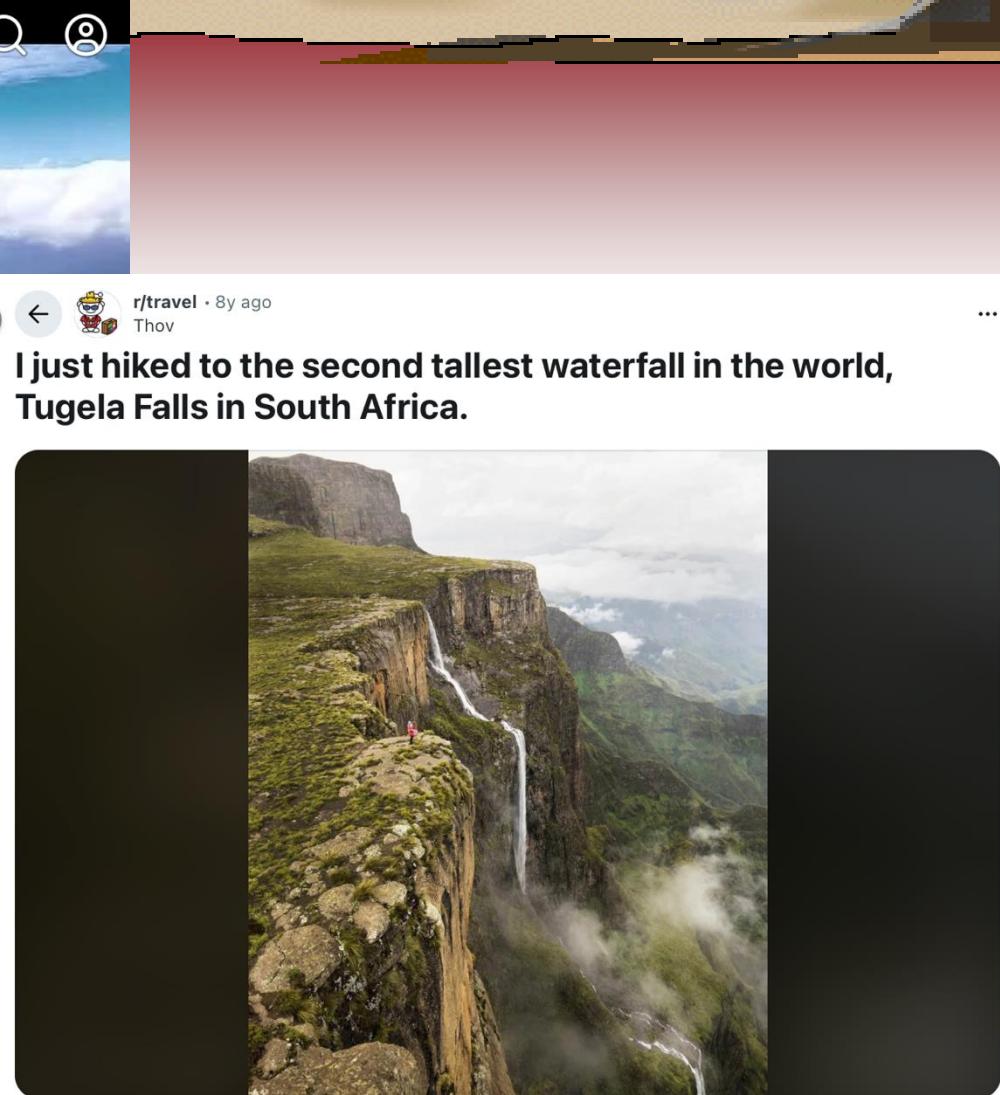
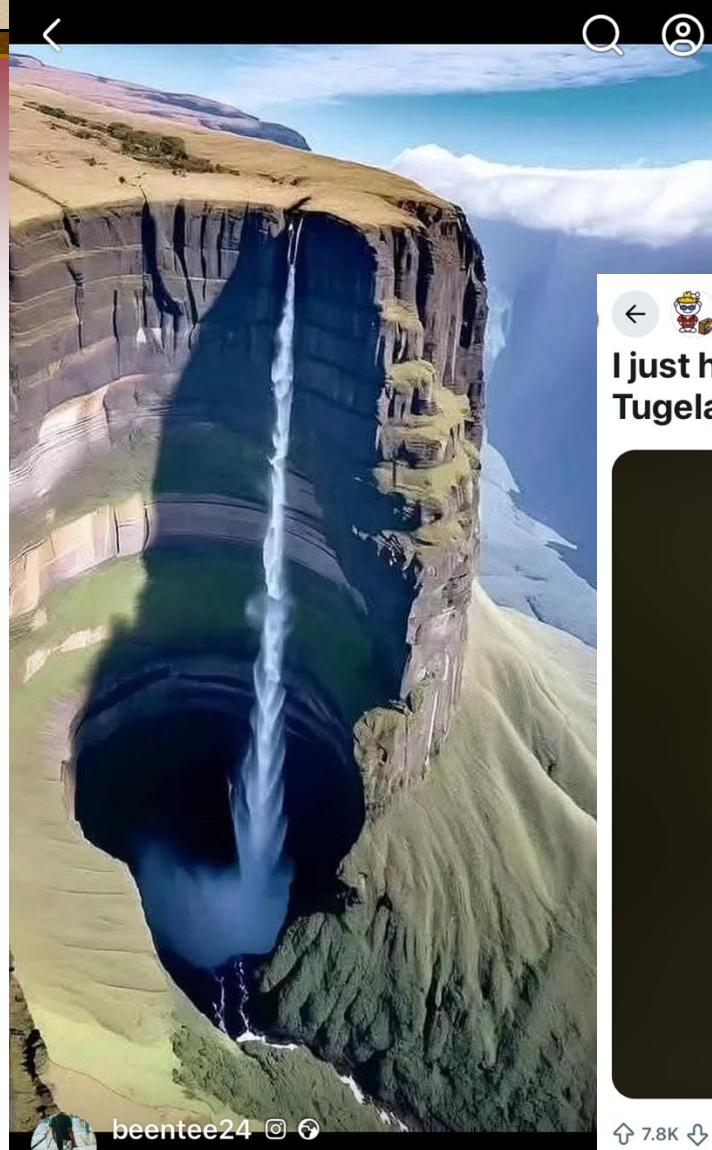
Comment

Send

Share

5





UP NEXT: In our backyard.... ...

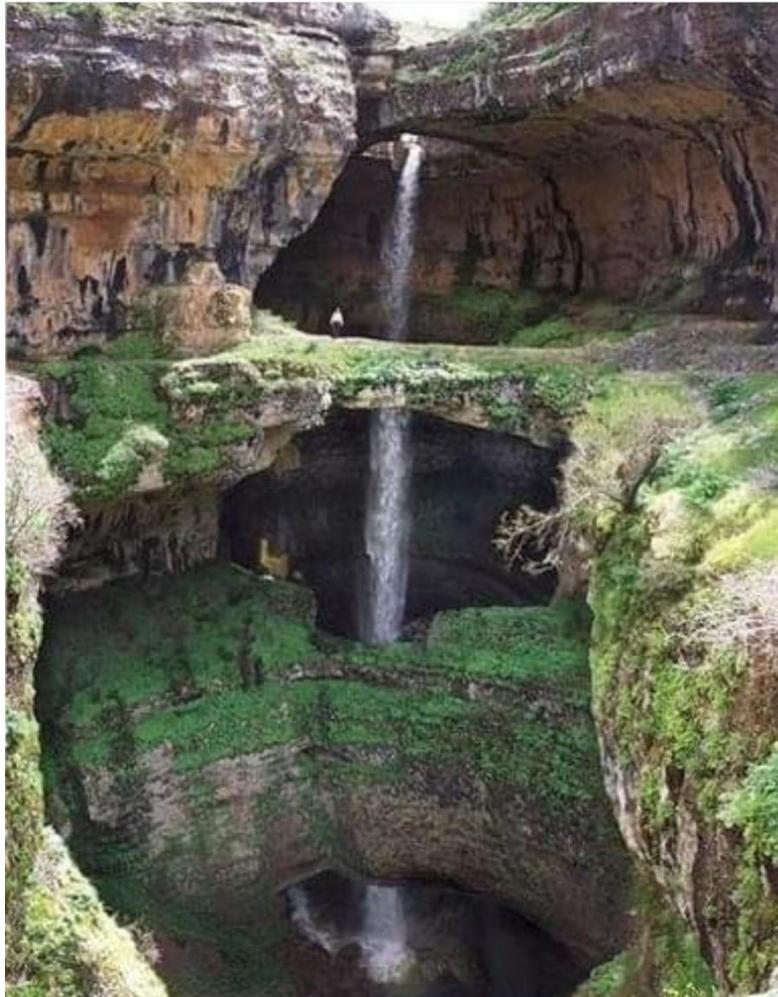


Follow

2 d ·

The Baatara gorge sinkhole in Lebanon is a triple waterfall that drops 255 meters (837 ft) into the Baatara Pothole, a cave of Jurassic limestone.

More details/photos: <http://bit.ly/3kjNtdT>



real



You and 623 others

7 comments

60 shares



real place,
enhanced
image



Digital Reality · [Follow](#)

13 Jul · [Edit](#)

This is Namibia, where the desert meets the ocean.



1.1k 5.7k

58 comments 242 shares

not sure
.... real
(possibly
distorted
by camera
angle)?



Our Planet Daily · Follow

4d · 🌎

...

Egypt Nile River



Like

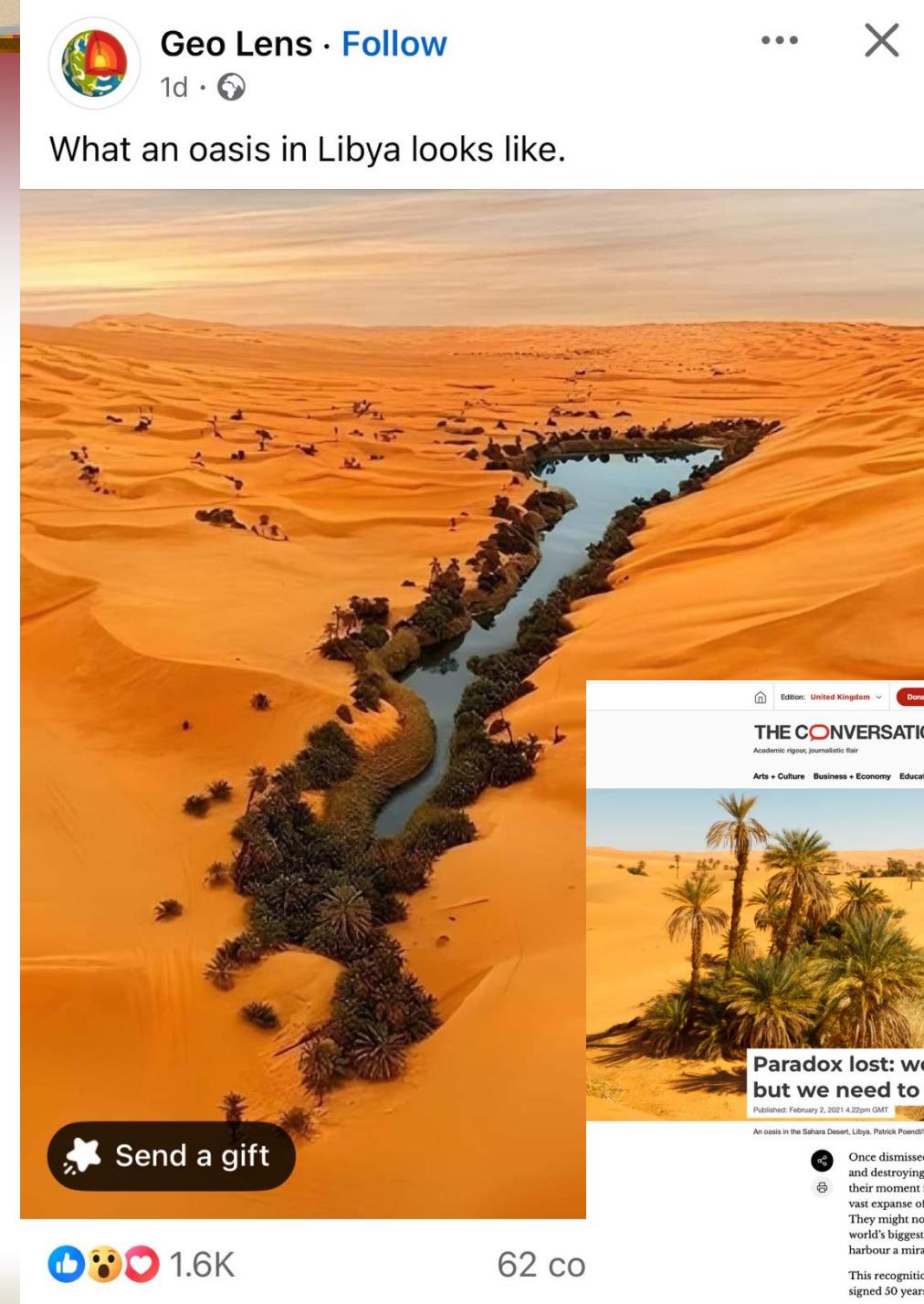
Comment

Send

Share

1.1K

real (Ubari sand sea)



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Paradox lost: wetlands can form in deserts, but we need to find and protect them

Published: February 2, 2021 4:22pm GMT

An oasis in the Sahara Desert, Libya. Patrick Poendl/Shutterstock

 Once dismissed as dank and bug-infested backwaters – good only for draining and destroying to make farmland – the world's wetlands may finally be having their moment in the sun. In the UK, the government is expected to nominate a vast expanse of blanket bogs in the far north of Scotland as a [world heritage site](#). They might not sound attractive to some people, but these bogs are among the world's biggest stores of carbon, they provide abundant freshwater and they harbour a miraculous array of wildlife.

 This recognition that wetlands are worth protecting has its roots in an agreement signed 50 years ago, on February 2 1971 in Ramsar, Iran. The Ramsar Convention

Authors

 Stephen Tooth
Professor of Physical Geography, Aberystwyth University

 Payton Liseley
Assistant Professor of Geosciences, Midwestern State University

 Timothy J. Rupp
Senior Lecturer in Environmental Sciences, Macquarie University

White Pocket is located in Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in Northern Arizona near the Utah border (14)



Home



Video



Friends



Marketplace



Notifications



Menu

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Commentary:

In Search of Australia's Highest Waterfalls

M.C.G. MABIN

Wollomombi Falls in northeast New South Wales and Wallaman Falls in northeast Queensland have for many years vied for the title of Australia's greatest single drop waterfall. Recently, however, that rank has been passed to Ellenborough Falls in northeast New South Wales (Australian Geographic, 1998; AUSLIG, 1999). This paper examines the various claims, and suggests the most likely candidate for the title.

Significance of waterfalls

Geographical interest in waterfalls waned after Davisian style geomorphology lost favour. However, since Young's (1985) review of waterfall types and processes, interest has been revived, particularly with regard to waterfalls in Australia. Bishop and Goldrick (1992) and Goldrick and Bishop (1995) address the significance of falls as knick points in stream long profiles. Nott (1996) discusses the palaeoclimatic significance of waterfall plunge pools. Weissel and Seidl (1997) consider falls in the context of escarpment erosion, and Nott *et al.* (1996) examine the significance of waterfalls in the denudation of highlands. In Australia, most high waterfalls are associated with the Great Escarpment (Ollier, 1982), which is perhaps the continent's most significant single

landform. Thus the waterfalls that plunge over it are worthy of attention, particularly as these are sites where the Escarpment is most rapidly evolving.

Waterfalls are also awe-inspiring natural wonders. With the many possible permutations of height, width, number of leaps, volume and seasonality of water flow, there are many opportunities for the superlatives that help to make these features worth seeing. However, there can only be one waterfall that has the greatest vertical drop, and it should be possible to make a definitive claim.

Defining a waterfall

Part of the problem of establishing which is the highest waterfall revolves around the definition of a waterfall. Rapid, cascade, cataract and waterfall are all terms used to describe steep, fast-flowing sections of watercourses. However, usage of the terms is quite variable, often overlapping, and the concepts may include ideas other than steepness alone. What really is a waterfall, and if a steep watercourse is not a waterfall, what should it be called?

The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Physical Geography tersely describes a waterfall as 'A stream that falls from a height' (Goudie, 1994, 553). The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* includes the concept of abrupt steepening of the channel (Lustig, 1988, 898–902), and *The Encyclopedia of Geomorphology* allows for a very steep or vertical fall in the river course (Ford, 1968,

Dr Mark Mabin is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Tropical Environment Studies and Geography, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland 4811, Australia.

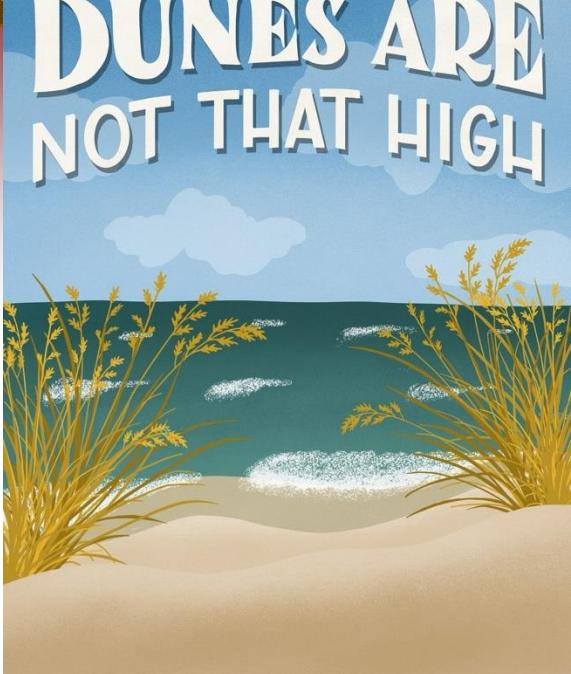
Australian Geographical Studies • March 2000 • 38(1):85–90

Conclusion

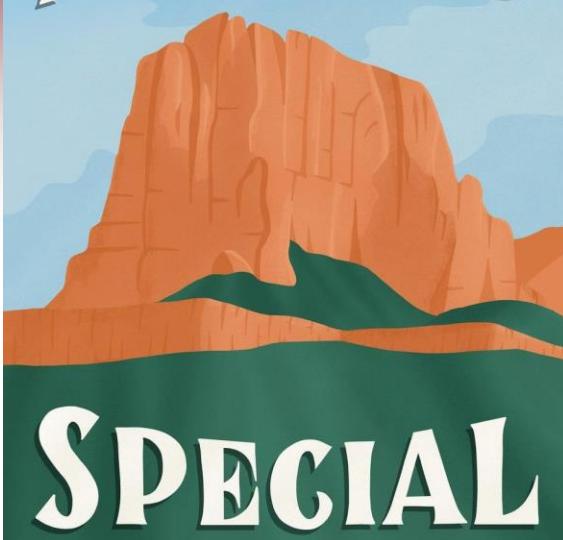
Waterfalls are important geomorphological features that are rightly receiving renewed interest from geomorphologists. As natural wonders they can be spectacular for many reasons, but there will only be one that has the highest continuous drop. Examination of the published heights of many of Australia's waterfalls shows that there is considerable reason to doubt many of the claims as the heights are often far in excess of what is possible from topographic data, and the term waterfall appears to have been used rather loosely. A waterfall should have a clearly marked top where the stream drops abruptly over a lip to descend continuously a near-vertical rock face and end in a clearly defined base. Using this definition, Wallaman Falls are clearly the highest known falls in Australia, with

3100 ft = 948 m? (combined total drop of its five distinct free-leaping falls)

DUNES ARE
NOT THAT HIGH



NOTHING



SUBSTANDARD

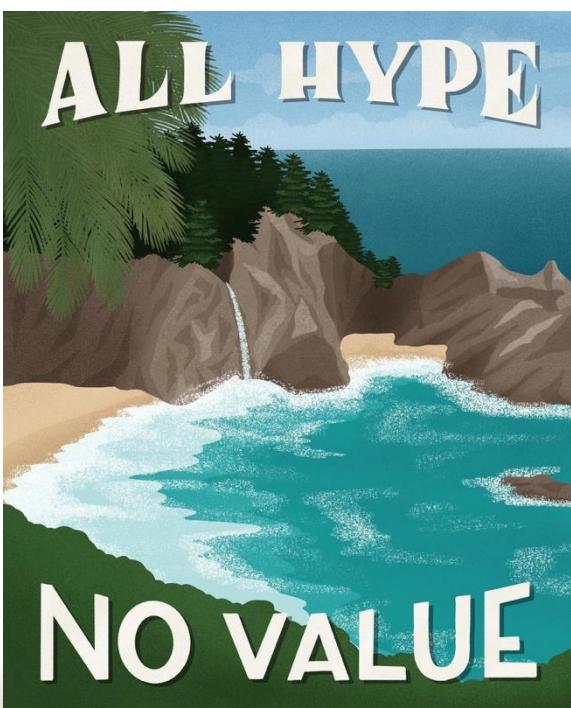


THE ONLY THING BAD
ABOUT THESE LANDS



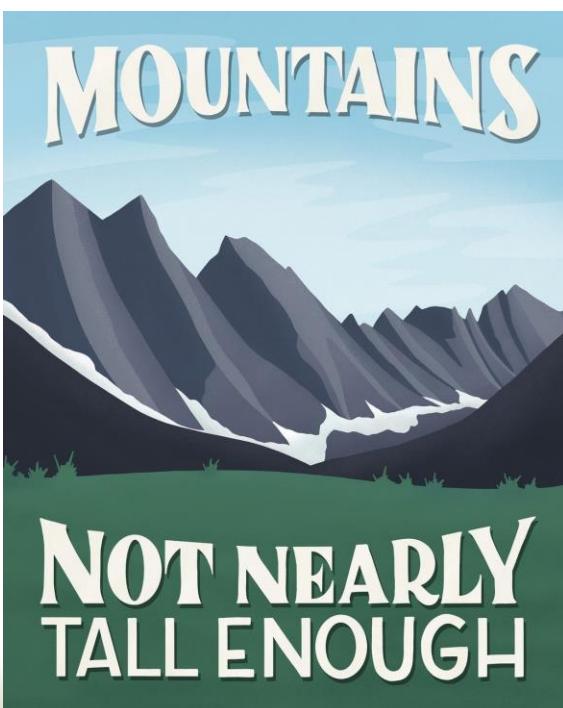
IS THE
ENTIRE EXPERIENCE

ALL HYPE

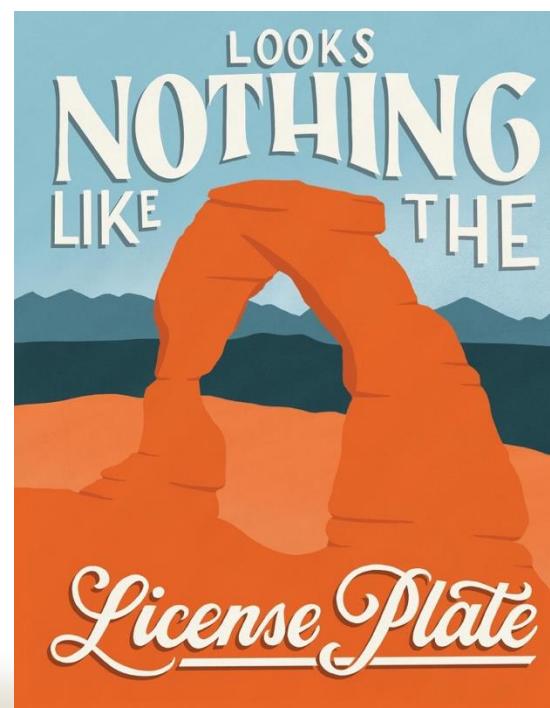


NO VALUE

MOUNTAINS



NOT NEARLY
TALL ENOUGH



License Plate

artist Amber Share
started making
"Subpar Parks"
images after reading
1-Star US National
Park Reviews on
pages such as Yelp,
TripAdvisor, & Google



20:03 93

in Search

Home My Network Jobs



In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene (2024) an AI-generated image spread across social media of a girl holding a puppy.

When the Flood Images Are Fake but the Consequences Are Real

 Dr Andrew Rochford 
Medical Scientist, Doctor, Healthtech Founder, Author, TV Host and currently CEO at Aspen Medical Indonesia

September 28, 2025

Two Floods, One Disaster

Every storm now brings two floods: torrents of water and torrents of misinformation. During the monsoon rains that submerged communities in India and Pakistan in August 2025, social media brimmed with dramatic videos of trains vanishing under rivers, vans swept away, and clouds bursting like bombs. Many viewers shared and donated in good faith, assuming they were witnessing real rescue scenes.

Few realised they were watching an elaborate collage of AI-generated clips and recycled footage.

“Every storm now brings two floods: torrents of water & torrents of misinformation.”

... misrepresentation or misattribution of disasters ... slowing of information flow ... heightened panic about current conditions

... first responders waste precious resources investigating fictional emergencies ...

... solicitation of donations & funds that never reach those who are actually in need ...

scepticism delays action ...
donors grow wary of giving to relief efforts, especially if compassion ends up being weaponised

NEWS

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BBC Verify

Verified video and satellite data shows impact of deadly Gaza floods

12 December 2025



Summary

- We're using **verified video** and **specialist satellite data** to see the extent of flooding in southern Gaza that the Hamas-run government media office says has killed at least 12 people

- Our verification team has **checked out a fire at an industrial site in Russia** - reports have said a munitions factory was set ablaze

- BBC Question Time discussed whether one in three children in Glasgow have English as a second language - **we've looked at the data**

- We use open-source intelligence, satellite imagery, fact-checking and data analysis to help report complex stories

- This feed is where we post our work throughout the day

- Get in touch with us by following this link**

Live Reporting

Edited by Rob Corp

17:12 12 December

Claims of a record UK flu season and winter floods in Gaza



Thomas Copeland
BBC Verify Live journalist

We've verified footage from across the Gaza Strip where the Hamas-run government media office says at least 12 people have been killed in flooding.

We also used **radar analysis to measure the extent of the floods**, which followed a severe winter storm, and **debunked fake videos made with AI** that try to exploit the tragedy.

If you've followed our coverage of the civil war in Sudan, **you'll recognise this paramilitary commander who was identified by BBC Verify killing unarmed captives**. This morning the UK government announced they are sanctioning Al-Fateh Abdullah Idris. **Here's what you need to know**.

Plus, social media is full of viral videos claiming this year's UK flu season has hit harder than ever. **Watch this video to find out what's really going on**.

BBC Verify Live will be back on Monday but our verification and eyewitness teams are on duty across the weekend.

If you want to see more of BBC Verify's videos and catch up with our investigations and analysis **head to our pages on the BBC News website**.



Thomas Copeland
BBC Verify Live journalist

I've reported before on this page about AI-generated videos that claim to show real victims of the conflicts in Gaza and Sudan.

The accounts behind these videos will try to maximise engagement by posting about new developments that might emotionally resonate with people. Although we're seeing AI videos now about the flooding in Gaza we have also **verified genuine footage of what is happening there**.

One video in particular has spread widely across social media platforms. It claims to show a group of children in a tent as murky floodwater rises under them.

We've tracked the video back to a TikTok account where it has gathered more than 10 million views. TikTok has added an "AI-generated" label to this and many other videos posted by the account.

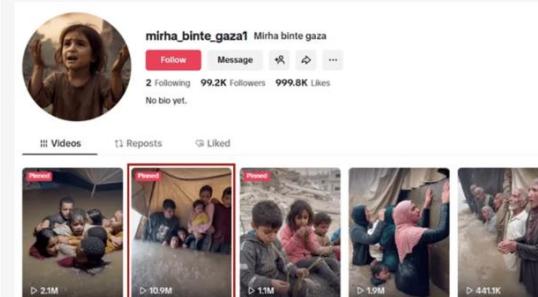


Image source: TikTok

14:39 12 December

Video captures dramatic landslide in Philippines

Shruti Menon
BBC Verify senior journalist



00:21
Video captures dramatic landslide in Philippines

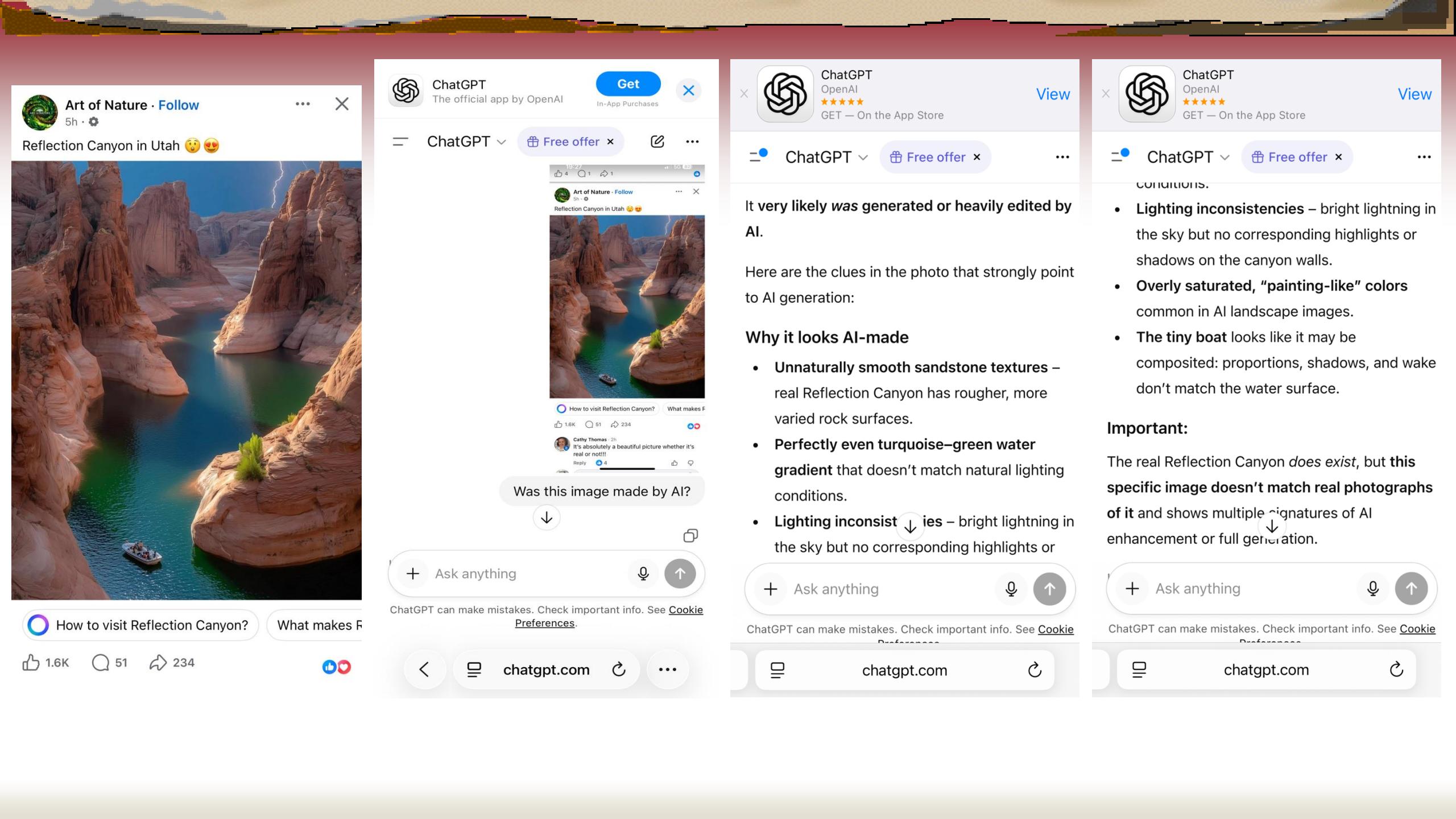
A landslide in Talisay city in the Cebu province of Philippines was caught on camera showing a portion of a hillside collapsing onto a road, sending rocks and mud downward with force as motorists - some missing the fall by a few seconds - hurriedly turn around and leave the area.

Using Google Street View, I confirmed that the video was filmed on Cebu-Toledo Wharf road by matching distinctive road markings, vegetation patterns and nearby structures.

Images from the satellite firm Planet Labs from 10 and 12 December show the same curved road segment and a newly exposed patch of earth. This suggests there has been recent ground disturbance in the area where the landslide happened.

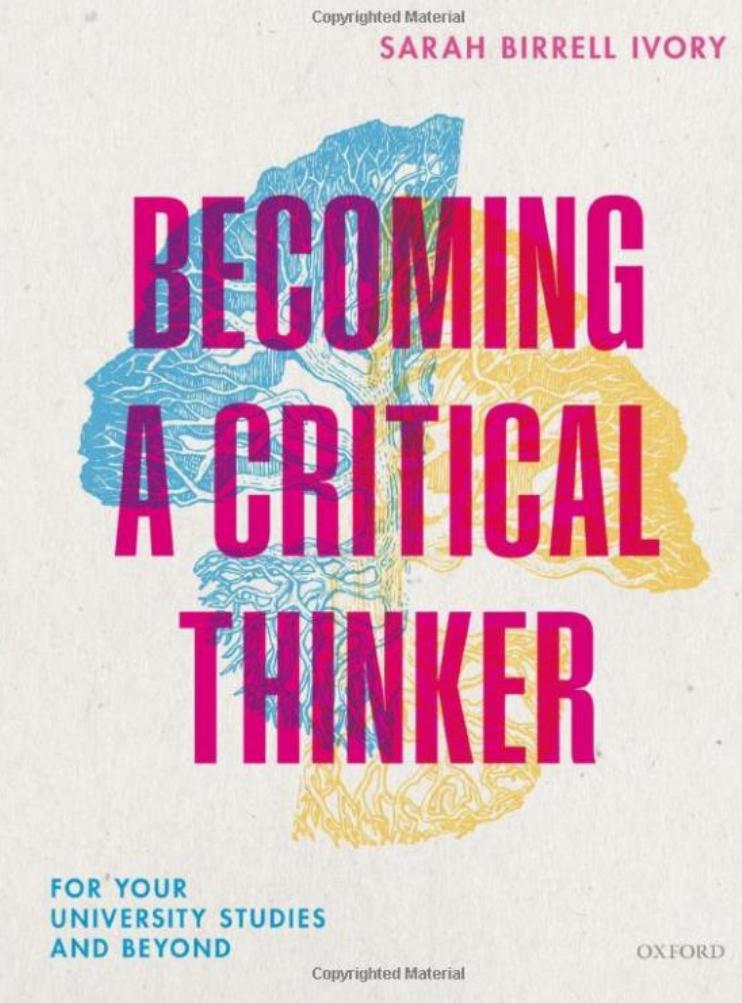
Reverse-image searching three freeze-frames suggests the video is new. No-one is reported to have died in the incident.

As AI video generators improve we are seeing fewer obvious red flags like these, but they can still be seen in output from accounts that are prioritising the number of videos posted over their individual quality.



AN A-Z OF CREATIVE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Sylvia Ashton
and Rachel Stone



the dangers of AI for some learning & teaching activities are obvious ...
but AI is here to stay

... so can we use AI creatively to enhance movement down the learning pyramid & develop higher level cognitive skills?
how can we best develop critical thinking using AI ('critical AI literacy')?

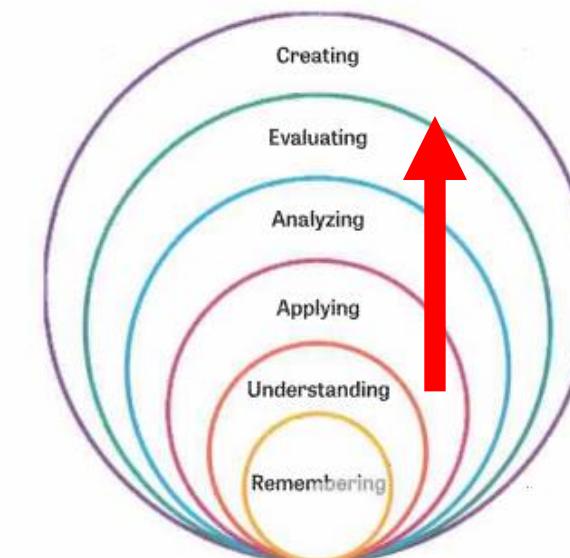
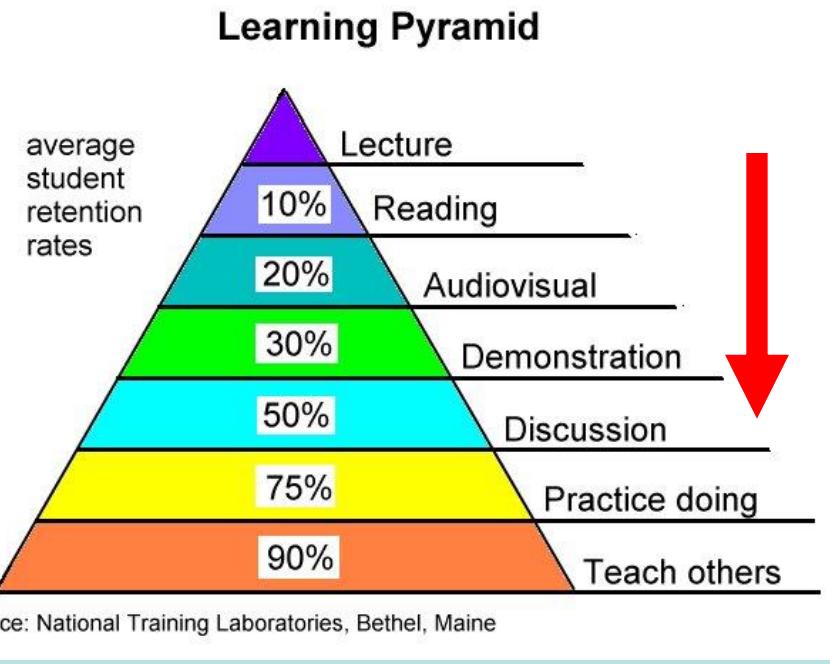


FIGURE 2.4 Bloom's Revised Taxonomy
Source: David R. Krathwohl
(2002) 'A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview', *Theory Into Practice*, 41:4, 212-18

*see recent QAA guidance ...

facts & examples
(= remembering)

processes & forms
(= understanding/applying/analysing)

interpretation & significance
(= evaluating/creating)

can these lessons apply to other subjects/disciplines?

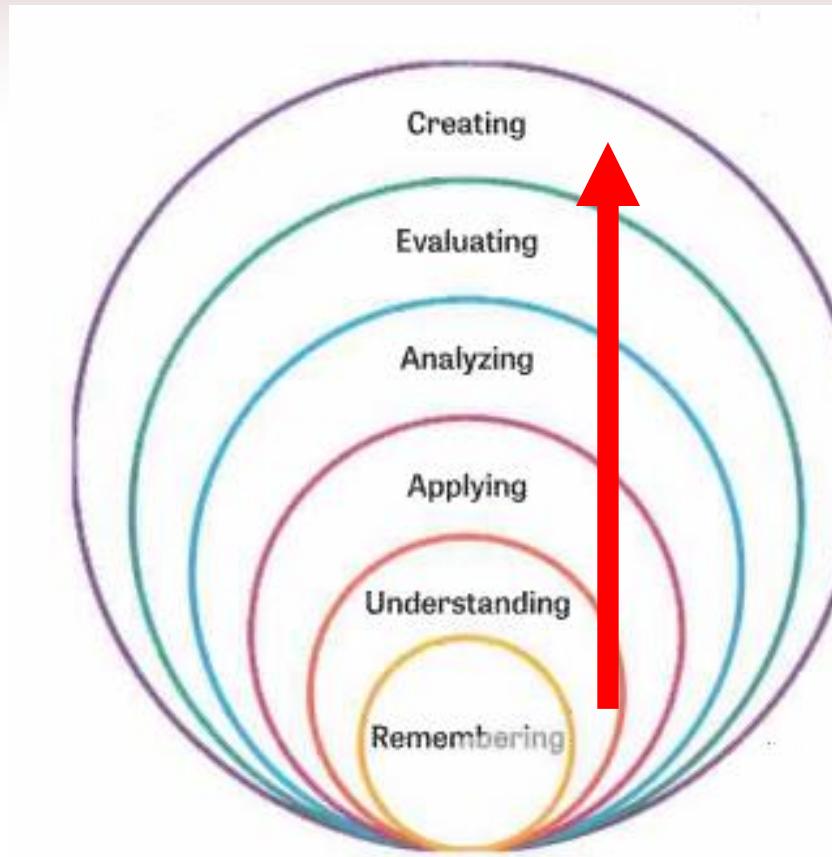
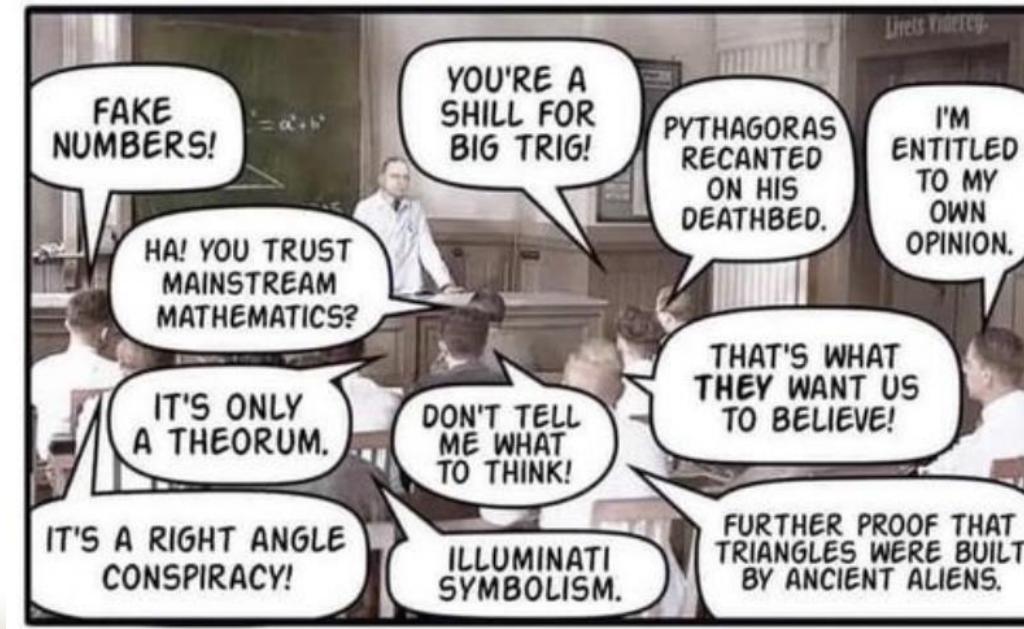
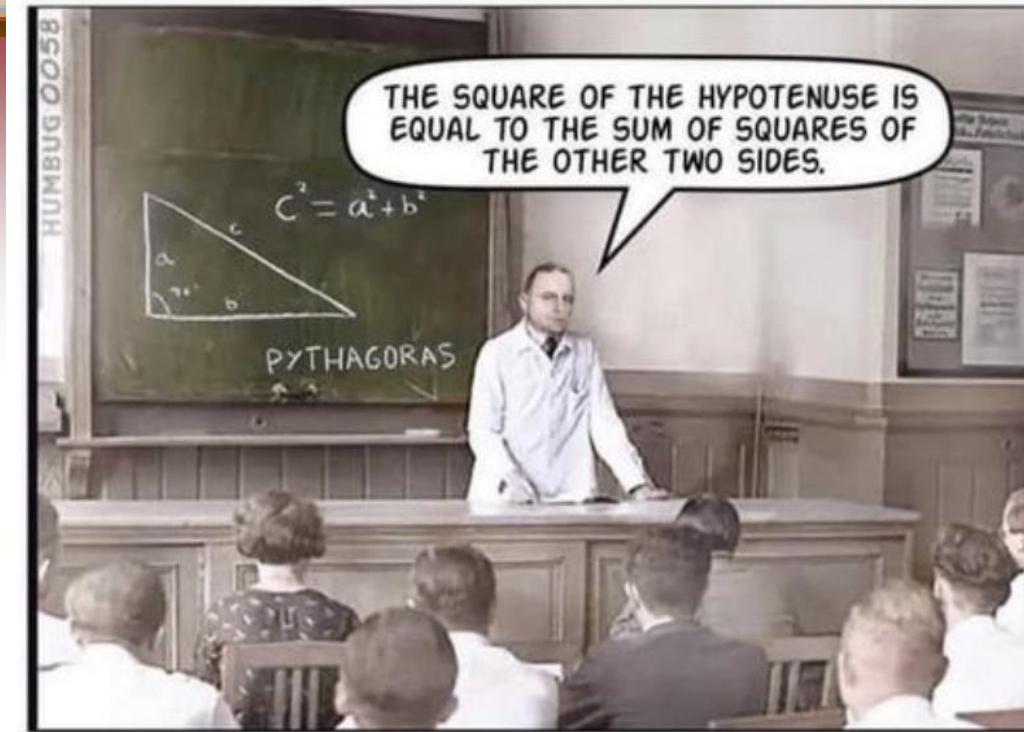


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we are at a critical juncture regarding the relative volumes of reliable information, misinformation & disinformation



Questions?
Comments?
Ideas?

set@aber.ac.uk
jam169@aber.ac.uk