



IS SCIENCE TRUE?

21

Should we believe what science tells us? A philosopher of science comments on teachers' responses to this challenging question.



EDITORIAL

Eleanor Hayes
Editor-in-Chief
Science in School
editor@scienceinschool.org

Welcome to the spring issue of *Science in School*. Traditionally, spring is the season of renewal and a time to freshen things up. So while you might be thinking about decluttering your classroom, now might also be a good time to 'spring clean' your lesson plans and introduce some new activities into your teaching.

In this issue, there are plenty of fun activities to engage your students, including a colourful chemistry demonstration exploring redox reactions (page 41). In a Hollywood-themed physics lesson, students investigate whether events in the sci-fi action film *Armageddon* could really happen (page 46). We also bring you the latest article in the 'Fantastic feats' series (page 37).

For those who are keen to get planting this season, we have an activity involving growing an unusual species of dandelion (page 31). With a high proportion of rubber in its roots, this plant offers a potentially sustainable way to meet the increasing global demand for rubber. We also investigate the science behind the environmentally controversial technology known as fracking, which is used to extract shale gas from rocks deep underground (page 12).

This issue's coverage of new discoveries and developments in science includes a species of bacterium that is accelerating the decay of the *Titanic* shipwreck (page 8), and a pocket-sized DNA sequencer that was recently used to identify microbes in space (page 17). For more space-related reading, astronaut Matthias Maurer shares his story of becoming the European Space Agency's newest space recruit in this issue's scientist profile (page 26).

Finally, what do you say when a student asks whether we should believe what science tells us? We share some real responses from teachers to such challenging questions, followed by a philosopher of science's expert opinion on each response (page 21). We would love to hear what you think of these opinions – and how you deal with any similar challenges in your own classrooms.

Eleanor Hayes

Interested in submitting
your own article? See:
www.scienceinschool.org/submit-article