

# April's Infobase Visual Literacy Lab: **I Spy with My Little (Human) Eye**

I Spy with My Little (Human) Eye puts two versions of a real historical image side by side—one original, one generated by AI—and asks readers to figure out which is which. The front walks them through a set of visual clues to help them slow down and actually look: at the edges, the lighting, the textures, the details that are almost right but not quite. They make their call, explain their reasoning, and then flip it over to see if they cracked it.

## **How It Works:**

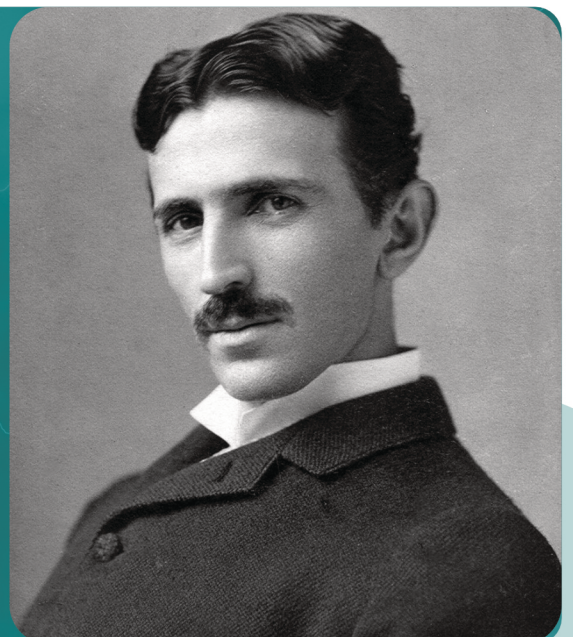
Thinkers study both images and work through the I Spy clues, circling the details that tip them off. Once they've made their call, they record their reasoning in the I Spy... Therefore I Think section—then flip it over to see if they got it right, read the real history behind the photograph, and explore the Infobase resources to dig deeper into the story.

## **Set Up:**

Print front and back and laminate them—these are meant to be grabbed, studied, and argued over. Leave them out, or keep a pile on hand for anyone who's convinced they can easily spot a fake.

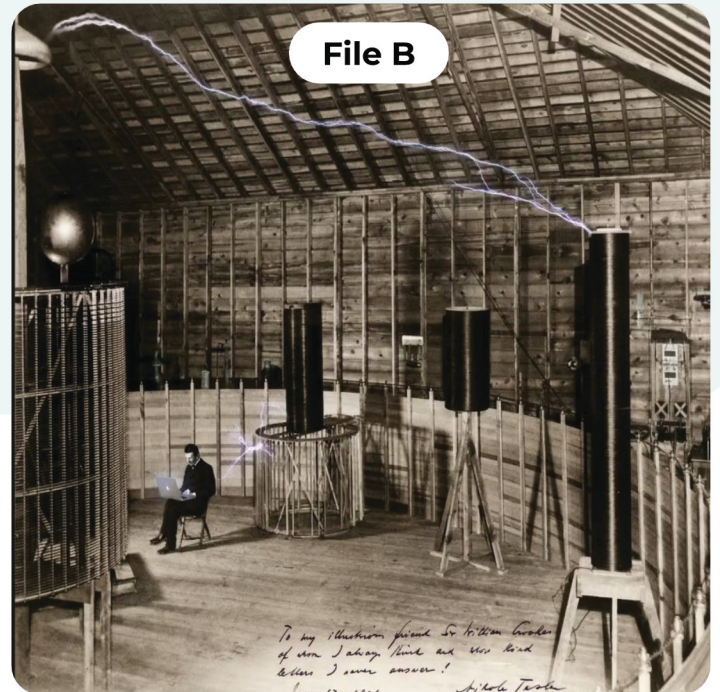
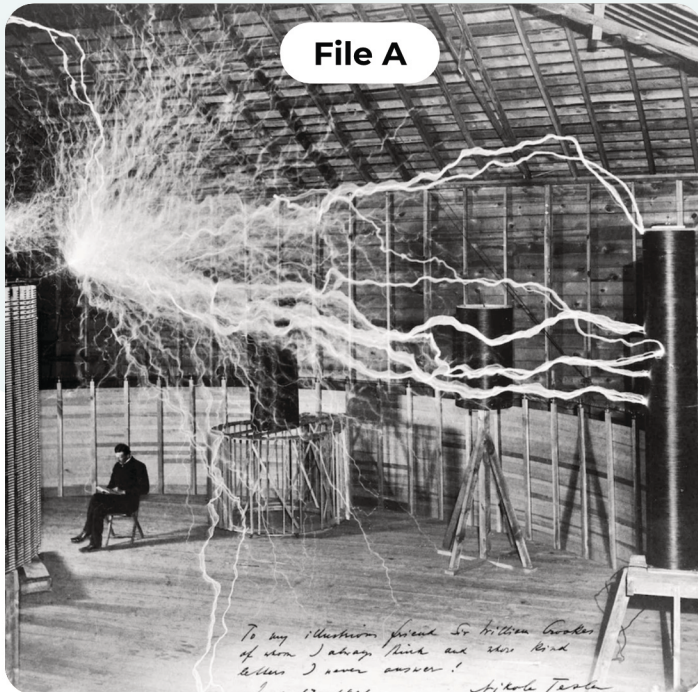
### **This Month's Hot Topic**

**Nikola Tesla in his Colorado Springs laboratory, 1899—surrounded by the artificial lightning bolts he generated himself.**







## I Spy with My Little Human Eye...A Mad Scientist at Work

Somewhere in these two images is a very convincing lie. Work through the I Spy clues below, circle the fake, and head to the *I Spy...Therefore I Think* section to explain how you figured it out.



See something suspicious? Circle it!

## I Spy... These Red Flags

-  **Time Travelers:** Does something in the image belong to a completely different era? AI doesn't always know what year it is.
-  **The Too-Perfect Detail:** Real photographs have grain, wear, imperfection. AI sometimes makes things cleaner than they ever could have been.
-  **The Fine Print:** Any text in an AI image looks like language—until you zoom in. Letters that almost make words, signs that almost make sense, handwriting that goes nowhere.
-  **Lost in the Light:** Real light follows rules. AI doesn't always get the memo—shadows fall in the wrong direction, reflections don't add up, and light seems to come from nowhere in particular.
-  **Going Overboard (or Nowhere at All):** AI tends to either crank everything up—more drama, more lightning, more intensity—or flatten it out entirely. Real moments are rarely that cinematic, or that dull.

## I Spy... Therefore I Think

You've studied the evidence, now make your call. Which image is the fake, and what gave it away?

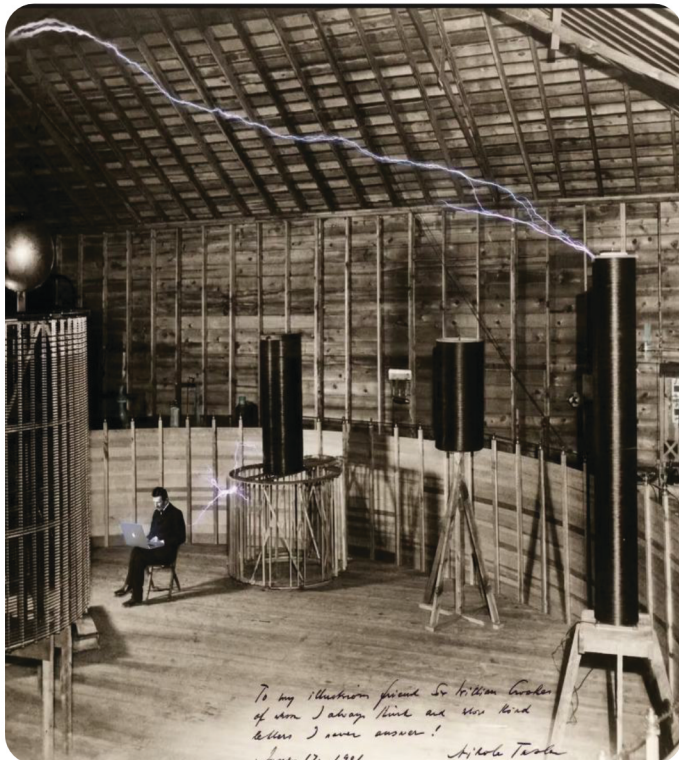
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# I Spy... The Truth

Nikola Tesla was one of the most brilliant and eccentric inventors in history—and his Colorado Springs laboratory was one of the most electric places on Earth, literally. This photograph, taken in 1899, captured Tesla sitting calmly in the middle of millions of volts of artificial lightning he generated himself. It's one of the most dramatic real photographs ever taken, which is exactly what makes this one tricky.



## Here's What a Trained Human Eye Catches

File B is the AI image. The giveaway most people catch first is Tesla holding a laptop in 1899. The text in the image holds up better than most AI-generated writing—but zoom in far enough and it starts to fall apart. The most interesting tell, though, is the lightning. The real photograph is so dramatic it almost looks fake—sparks flying in every direction, bolts that crackle and flow naturally across the frame. The AI version actually looks calmer and more believable, but that's the trap. Even toned down, it couldn't make the sparks behave like real electricity. The original looks wilder because it was.

## Keep Investigating

Nikola Tesla's story is stranger and more fascinating than any AI could dream up. Dig deeper into the man, the science, and the era using the Infobase resources below.



### The Tesla Files

In this series, a new investigation driven by declassified CIA documents suggests a secret history of bitter rivalries, government conspiracies, Cold War and WW2 spycraft, extra-terrestrial communication, and amazing achievements of a truly gifted man: Nikola Tesla.

Type the following URL into your browser's search bar: <https://bit.ly/4dd774B>

