

FPES

FLORIDA PRESS
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES INC.

FPESNIE.ORG



2020

Newspaper in Education Week

Proclamation

Rob Tuckers, Mayor

WHEREAS, reading improves vocabulary, writing skills and knowledge and it is essential for the public education system to provide every child with the opportunity to learn, and every child should be able to read, write, and think clearly and to be able to communicate effectively;

WHEREAS, by using newspapers, students learn to read and write and to use the English language and to become better readers and writers and to become better communicators and to become better citizens;

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education (NIE) is an international program that encourages the use of the daily newspaper as an instructional classroom and the newspaper as a living textbook for students in all grades and as a resource for students and parents; and

WHEREAS, students who begin using the newspaper in their classrooms are more likely to become better readers and writers and to become better communicators and to become better citizens;

WHEREAS, in addition to the newspaper, the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program has several other activities, including the use of the newspaper as a living textbook for students in all grades and as a resource for students and parents; and

WHEREAS, to more the City of St. Petersburg, the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program has several other activities, including the use of the newspaper as a living textbook for students in all grades and as a resource for students and parents; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rob Tuckers, Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 4-8, 2020 as

"NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION WEEK"

in the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, and encourage all students, parents and teachers to read the newspaper daily in school and at home to enhance and enrich their lives.

Rob Tuckers, Mayor

The District School Board of Pasco County

Proclamation Respecting Newspaper in Education Week

WHEREAS, research tells us that the best way to help children discover the joy of reading and become lifelong readers is to involve them in reading early and often; and

WHEREAS, helping a child learn and love to read is the ultimate goal to improve students' chances for success in school and beyond; and

WHEREAS, research shows that students who learn using the newspaper as an educational resource are more likely to become lifelong readers and informed and engaged citizens; and

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education is an international program that encourages the use of the daily newspaper as a living textbook for students from primary through adult education levels; and

WHEREAS, for more than forty years, the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program has served Hillsborough County educators, students and families by providing classroom newspapers, companion materials and instructional supports; and

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education Week is commemorated and celebrated annually during the first full school week in March;

THEREFORE, WE IT RESOLVED that the Hillsborough County School Board is pleased to commemorate Newspaper in Education Week 2020 and encourage students to read the newspaper daily in school and at home to enhance and enrich their lives.

ADOPTED this 19th day of February, 2020.

Tamara Schneider
School Board Chair

Jeff Eskin
Superintendent

CITY OF CLEARWATER

Proclamation

WHEREAS, research shows that one of the best ways to help children discover the joy of reading and become lifelong readers is to involve them in reading early and often; and

WHEREAS, children who are good readers improve their chances for success in school and become better informed and more engaged citizens; and

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education is an international program that encourages the use of the daily newspaper as a living textbook for students from primary through adult education levels; and

WHEREAS, for more than forty years, the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program has served educators, students and families by providing classroom newspapers, companion materials and instructional supports;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE N. CRETECOS, Mayor of the City of Clearwater, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 4-8, 2020 as

"NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION WEEK"

in Clearwater.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand hereon on this 7th day of March 2020, the 100th year of the incorporation of the City of Clearwater.

George N. Cretecos
Mayor

Proclamation

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG

Rick Khremson, Mayor

WHEREAS, research tells us that the best way to help children discover the joy of reading and become lifelong readers is to involve them in reading early and often; and

WHEREAS, helping a child learn and love to read is the ultimate goal to improve students' chances for success in school and beyond; and

WHEREAS, research shows that students who learn using the newspaper as an educational resource are more likely to become lifelong readers and informed and engaged citizens; and

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education is an international program that encourages the use of the daily newspaper as a living textbook for students from primary through adult education levels; and

WHEREAS, for more than forty years, the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program has served educators, students and families by providing classroom newspapers, companion materials and instructional supports; and

WHEREAS, Newspaper in Education Week is commemorated and celebrated annually during the first full school week in March;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick Khremson, Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 4-8, 2020 as

"NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION WEEK 2020"

in the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, and encourage all students, parents and teachers to read the newspaper daily in school and at home to enhance and enrich their lives.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand hereon on this 7th day of March 2020, the 100th year of the incorporation of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida.

Rick Khremson
Mayor

PROCLAMATION

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Tamara Schneider
School Board Chair

Jeff Eskin
Superintendent

Celebrating Newspaper in Education Week

By Jodi Pushkin, *President Florida Press Educational Services*

Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) is proud to commemorate Newspaper in Education Week 2019 and encourages teachers, parents and students to read the newspaper daily in school and at home to enrich their lives. FPES and its member Newspaper in Education programs join the American Press Institute in commemorating and celebrating Newspaper in Education Week the first full school week in March.

This annual event is a fantastic opportunity for publishers and marketing, news, circulation and advertising directors to learn the importance of Newspaper in Education (NIE) programs, too.

Reading every day is imperative for all people, especially children. Reading increases vocabulary, writing skills and knowledge of the world around us. What better way to increase knowledge about the world than by reading the local newspaper?

Did you know that more than 60 percent of people with high exposure to newspapers in childhood are regular readers of newspapers as adults, according to a study conducted for the News Media Alliance, former Newspaper Association of America Foundation? That percentage is significant because statistically people who read the newspaper daily are more engaged citizens. Engaged citizens participate in their communities by voting and practicing good citizenship.

The goal of NIE programs is to create a generation of critical readers, engaged citizens and consumers. John F. Kennedy said, "Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. The human mind is our fundamental resource." The goal of NIE is to engage and develop that resource.

The No. 1 reason to use newspapers in education at school and at home is the newspaper provides readers with a living textbook. The newspaper is an opportunity and a resource for students to practice higher-order comprehension skills. It is the job of NIE programs across the Florida to not only provide that resource, but also to encourage active teacher and student engagement of resource.

Using newspapers as a teaching tool can improve reading skills and student performance on standardized tests. In addition, reading the newspaper at school and home helps young people learn about the world around them.

Teachers utilize newspaper activities to promote learning, support Florida Standard benchmarks and expectations, plus have fun interpreting photos, advertisements, cartoons and headlines. Newspapers add dynamic dimensions to all subjects, from Language Arts to business to science and everything in between.

NIE programs around Florida partner local businesses and government organizations to promote community engagement, awareness and encourage real-world education lessons that combine educational marketing goals of the businesses with the needs of the schools.

To learn more about Florida's NIE programs, visit the Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) Web site at **fpesnie.org**.

Jodi Pushkin, the President of Florida Press Educational Services, is the manager for the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program. Pushkin holds an M.A. in English Education and a B.A. in writing and literature. She has worked in NIE since 2000. Pushkin is a former high school teacher. In addition to her work with NIE, Pushkin is an adjunct instructor at Saint Leo University and Hillsborough Community College. Contact Pushkin via e-mail at **jpushkin@tampabay.com**.

Florida Standards

The Florida Department of Education defines that the Florida Standards provide a robust set of goals for every grade. Emphasizing analytical thinking rather than rote memorization, the Florida Standards will prepare our students for success in college, career and life. The Florida Standards will reflect the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.

Building on the foundation of success that has made Florida a national model, The Florida Standards provide a clear set of goals for every student, parent, and teacher.

For more information on Florida Standards, go to the CPALMS website. CPALMS is the State of Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions: cpalms.org.

The activities in this packet applies to the following Florida Standards for grades three through twelve.

Language Arts: LAFS.312.RI.1.1; LAFS.312.RI.1.2; LAFS.312.RI.1.3; LAFS.312.RI.2.4; LAFS.312.RI.2.5; LAFS.312.RI.2.6; LAFS.312.RI.3.7; LAFS.312.L.1.1; LAFS.312.L.1.2; LAFS.312.L.2.3; LAFS.312.L.3.4; LAFS.312.L.3.5; LAFS.312.L.3.6; LAFS.312.R.1.1; LAFS.312.R.1.2; LAFS.312.R.1.3; LAFS.312.R.2.4; LAFS.312.R.2.5; LAFS.312.R.2.6; LAFS.312.R.3.7; LAFS.312.R.3.8; LAFS.312.R.3.9; LAFS.312.R.4.10; LAFS.312.SL.1.1 LAFS.312.SL.1.2; LAFS.312.SL.1.3; LAFS.312.SL.2.4; LAFS.312.SL.2.5; LAFS.312.SL.2.6; LAFS.312.W.1.1; LAFS.312.W.1.2; LAFS.312.W.1.3; LAFS.312.W.2.4; LAFS.312.W.2.5; LAFS.312.W.2.6; LAFS.312.W.3.7; LAFS.312.W.3.8; LAFS.312.W.3.9; LAFS.312.W.4.10

Newspaper in Education

The Newspaper in Education (NIE) program is a cooperative effort between schools and local newspapers to promote the use of newspapers in print and electronic form as educational resources. Our educational resources fall into the category of informational text.

Informational text is a type of nonfiction text. The primary purpose of informational text is to convey information about the natural or social world. Florida NIE programs provide schools with class sets of informational text in the form of the daily newspaper and original curriculum. NIE teaching materials cover a variety of subjects and are consistent with Florida's education standards.

Florida Press Educational Services, Inc. (FPES) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization of newspaper professionals that promotes literacy, particularly for young people. FPES members consist of daily and weekly newspapers throughout the state of Florida. Through its member newspapers, FPES serves educators, students and families in all 67 Florida counties. For more information about FPES, visit fpesnie.org, or email ktower@fpress.com or jpushkin@tampabay.com. Follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/nie_fpes](https://twitter.com/nie_fpes).

Enhancing your curriculum; Engaging your students

According to Scholastic magazine, “Informational text is a type of nonfiction — a very important type. Nonfiction includes any text that is factual. (Or, by some definitions, any type of literature that is factual, which would exclude texts such as menus and street signs.) Informational text differs from other types of nonfiction in purpose, features, and format.”

The newspaper is the ultimate form of informational text. The newspaper meets these specific characteristics. It is a logical resource for information about the natural, social and political world. The newspaper conveys information about the natural or social world. The articles are written from someone who knows information to someone who doesn't. The newspaper has specialized features such as headings and technical vocabulary.

Using the newspaper in your classroom and NIE curriculum on a regular basis helps students develop daily reading habits that they will carry through their lives.

Newspapers provide a vital link to the real world for students who too often do not realize the value of their academic programs. The study of today's critical issues, events and people helps students understand the past and see a role for themselves in their future world.

Informational Text and the Newspaper

Characteristics of Informational Text	Newspaper Elements
1. Conveys information about the natural or social world.	<p>Newspaper content provides information about the real world of the reader.</p> <p>International, national, state and local people and events are the subjects of news and feature stories every day.</p> <p>Anything that touches the lives of readers can be found in the newspaper, from weather reports, to stock prices, to community problems and solutions, to national decisions that affect the country and the world.</p>
2. Is written <i>from</i> someone who knows the information <i>to</i> someone who doesn't know the information.	<p>Newspapers see themselves as primary resources for many different kinds of information.</p> <p>News is gathered and written by professional journalists who operate under clear codes of ethics.</p> <p>Photographs and art elements are developed by professional photographers and artists.</p> <p>Advertising is created by professionals with degrees and backgrounds in business and marketing.</p> <p>Newspapers hold all of their employees to high standards of performance.</p>
3. Uses navigational aids such as indexes, page numbers and headings.	<p>The newspaper contains a variety of navigational aids to help readers quickly find information they are seeking.</p> <p>Newspapers are usually divided into specific sections – such as news, business, lifestyle and sports.</p> <p>Many times, the section has its own “front page.”</p> <p>Newspapers identify each page with a <i>folio line</i> which gives the name of the newspaper, the date, the section and the page number.</p> <p>Newspapers may include newspaper or section content previews with front page elements, such as “in this section” boxes which provide information about stories inside the section.</p> <p>The classified advertising section of the newspaper has its own index to help readers locate information quickly.</p>

4. Uses graphic devices such as diagrams, tables, charts and maps.	<p>The newspaper uses graphic devices wherever an editor thinks that information can best be provided in a visual format.</p> <p>News stories are often accompanied by locator maps, data charts and tables.</p> <p>Feature stories and how-to columns use diagrams and tables.</p> <p>Sports stories are accompanied by box scores in tables and data charts providing information about an individual or team performance.</p> <p>The weather page is usually dominated by national and/or regional maps with icons indicating specific weather predictions.</p>
5. Uses realistic illustrations or photographs and captions.	<p>The newspaper has a staff of professional photographers and artists who provide visual support for news and feature stories. Editors realize that photos and illustrations are efficient ways to transmit information.</p> <p>Newspaper photographers take photos of local and regional events; sometimes, photos accompany stories and sometimes, the photos and captions (called cutlines) are stand-alone features.</p> <p>Wire photos are used to provide information about national and international news events.</p> <p>Newspaper artists provide illustrations to add information and impact to news stories and features.</p>
6. May have comparative/contrastive structures.	<p>Newspapers provide many examples of comparative/contrastive text structures.</p> <p>The editorial and op-ed pages of the newspaper provide text in which different points of view are presented and debated. Many newspapers have regular science features, which often use comparison and contrast.</p>
7. May have classificatory structures.	<p>The newspaper categorizes its content in ways to make information easily accessible to readers.</p> <p>The newspaper categorizes news and features by topics.</p> <p>The newspaper has an index on page one which directs readers to appropriate information.</p> <p>The classified ad section categorizes ads by function.</p> <p>Within each ad category, information is usually arranged in a particular order. For example, autos might be listed by brand name and year.</p>

Fiction and Informational Text: Reader Expectations

Fiction Expectations	Informational Text Expectations
<p>The work is untrue; it may be fantasy, historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, science fiction or any other genre, but it is not true.</p>	<p>The work is true and accurate; that truth is provided by the author.</p>
<p>The work contains specific elements: plot, characters, setting, conflict, resolution and theme.</p>	<p>You can choose to read only a part of the text.</p> <p>You have the option of starting at the front, back or middle of the text.</p>
<p>The first line is the "gateway" to the text.</p>	<p>Visual elements are present to help you access information. They can be read for meaning whether or not they are accompanied by words (photographs, illustrations, diagrams, maps, graphs, timelines).</p>
<p>You start reading at the beginning of the work and continue straight through until the end.</p>	<p>Running text may be interrupted by visual elements, so you don't always start at the top and go to the bottom; you don't always read left-to-right.</p>
<p>You begin reading at the top of each page and travel to the bottom.</p>	<p>Visual elements may be read bottom-to-top, right-to-left, in a circular fashion, etc., depending on the design of the publication.</p>
<p>Your eyes move left-to-right.</p>	<p>Captions under visual elements may repeat information from the text, contain new information, or describe how you should process the visual.</p>
<p>You can put the work down and pick it up later at the same point.</p>	<p>You judge the quality of the work on its content, accuracy and the extent to which it meets your needs.</p>
<p>You judge the quality of the work on the development of the plot, theme and characters and the extent to which it entertains or engages you.</p>	

Read “The Power of Active Citizenship”

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

abandoned _____

grievances _____

empowered _____

authoritarian _____

stalwart _____

lobby _____

1. What is the main point of the article? _____

2. What is active journalism? _____

3. What is active citizenship _____

4. What actions were taken by students? _____

5. What is the purpose of civics education? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- Look through the newspaper for examples of people participating in active citizenship? What actions are they taking? How and why are they doing it?

The Power of Active Citizenship

A Renewed Focus on Teaching Civics Education

By Bob Graham, Randi Weingarten



At the end of the day, the students at my school felt one shared experience—our politicians abandoned us by failing to keep guns out of schools. But this time, my classmates and I are going to hold them to account. This time we are going to pressure them to take action.

–Cameron Kasky, a junior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School

Earlier this year, a horrific tragedy unfolded at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Broward County, Florida. On February 14, a former student walked into the school with an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle and murdered 17 students and staff in the deadliest high school shooting in American history. Only the 2012 mass killing at Sandy Hook Elementary School, with a toll of 26 young children and adult staff, resulted in a greater loss of life in a K–12 school. Since the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, 187,000 students have experienced gun violence at their schools, and active shooter drills are now commonplace.

We were devastated by the needless loss of life and anguished that yet another mass school shooting had taken place while commonsense gun safety legislation to protect America’s students and educators lingered in Congress and many state legislatures. Yet we were heartened by what came next. Because, rather than allowing themselves to be further victimized, the students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas began to take matters into their own hands, meeting and networking on social media, speaking to the media, participating in vigils, organizing walkouts and demonstrations, establishing coalitions with others who share their outrage and goals, and traveling to Tallahassee and Washington, D.C., to lobby on behalf of meaningful gun safety laws.

In other words, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas students have been acting as informed and activated citizens, utilizing their constitutional rights to assemble and speak freely, and they have learned competencies to petition the government for the redress of their grievances.

It is notable that Florida, like most states, stopped teaching civics—the study of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy—in the 1960s, only to restore it by legislative action in 2010, with citizenship instruction making its way back into schools around 2011. (For more on each state’s civics education requirements, see [“A Look at Civics Education in the United States \(//www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/shapiro_brown\)”](http://www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/shapiro_brown) in this issue.) Thus, these Marjory Stoneman Douglas students were among the first wave of students in Florida public schools to be taught civics in nearly four

decades. For many of them, their civics education started in middle school and continued through a 12th-grade Advanced Placement government course where the teacher, Jeff Foster, espoused a simple mantra: “‘If you don’t participate, you can’t complain about things.’ I tell them in order to make a difference in the country, you need to participate. Unfortunately, we had this event happen [at Marjory Stoneman Douglas], and now it’s in live action.” Evidently, the education provided at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School served these courageous students well: they credit their teachers with introducing them to the civic knowledge and skills they have been using so effectively. Indeed, before the shooting, some students had just had this debate on guns in Foster’s class.

The fact that these students feel empowered to take a stand on their own behalf is a testament to the value of educating young people on their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a democracy, as well as teaching them how to exercise the power of active citizenship.



An Antidote to Authoritarianism

The events in Florida are taking place at a time when democracy itself is confronting serious threats,* both in the United States and internationally. In October 2017, the Albert Shanker Institute brought together leading scholars and democracy activists from across the globe to discuss these challenges.¹ They are many: growing economic inequality, intense political polarization, government dysfunctionality and paralysis, the decline of civil society institutions such as organized

religion and organized labor, attacks on science and factual knowledge, and the emergence of movements of racial, religious, and nativist intolerance. The conference's participants, who included Han Dongfang, a leader of the independent unions in the 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy protests, and Mac Maharaj, a leader of the antiapartheid struggle who had been a prison mate of Nelson Mandela, agreed that the future of democracy cannot be taken for granted but must be actively promoted and secured by confronting these challenges. That is our work as citizens.

Education for citizenship is the first, essential part of securing the future of American democracy. (For more on the importance of civics education in preserving our republic, see "[The Need for Civics Education \(//www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/weingarten_snyder_allen\)](http://www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/weingarten_snyder_allen)," in this issue.) This is not because—as some have incorrectly suggested—popular support for democracy is flagging or because today's youth are less committed to democratic governance than previous generations. In fact, the best evidence indicates that support for democracy has increased modestly and American youth are more stalwart in their support for democracy than those who are older.² Rather, it is because openness to authoritarian rule is greatest among those who are disaffected and disengaged from politics, and who are under the sway of prejudice toward fellow citizens of different backgrounds. When a person lacks a sense of his or her own power as a citizen, experiences a problem that dysfunctional democratic institutions have been unable to solve, and has little experience in working constructively with other citizens on common goals, he or she is more likely to give up on democracy and turn to a "strongman" to solve his or her problems. Education is a powerful antidote to this authoritarian temptation, because it can impart that needed sense of civic efficacy and common cause. We know from national and international studies that increases in educational attainment are highly correlated with increases in civic participation and support for democracy.³ So the more education we provide to Americans—and the better we make that education—the healthier our democracy will be.

To be most effective, civics education must be resonant and relevant. Any serious effort to ensure that young people are fully educated about the values, processes, and institutions of democracy depends on accomplished and experienced teachers who both know their subjects

well and actively engage students in their learning. Research both here and abroad confirms that those students who understand democracy best—and who participate most actively in civic life as adults—are those whose teachers know their material and dare to run classes that involve students in civic work and in discussions of controversial subjects.

Civics instruction should be “bottom up.” We need to teach students to interact directly with their government and make government respond to their concerns. The Marjory Stoneman Douglas students have done this, but it shouldn’t take a shooting for students to become civically engaged. Civic engagement should begin close to home. It is more important to teach students how to seek effective action from their school board or persuade their city commission to place a stop sign on the corner than it is for them to know that there are 435 members of the House of Representatives. This concept of bottom-up civic engagement is what the book *America, the Owner’s Manual: You Can Fight City Hall—and Win* is all about (see “[Teaching Civic Engagement \(//www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/graham-sb\)](http://www.aft.org/ae/summer2018/graham-sb)” in this issue).

Teaching civics should be more than just understanding the structures and functions of government. In an era of “fake news”[†] and Internet conspiracy theories, it is crucial that students learn how to gather and evaluate sources of information, and then use evidence from that information to develop and support their ideas and advocacy positions.[‡] No polity can make wise decisions if its citizens do not know how to separate fact from opinion, and how to gather and weigh relevant evidence. Education for democracy shapes attitudes, values, and actions—it creates the foundations for a culture of democracy, not just an understanding of what it is. It takes time and long-term funding. It requires new forms of professional training.

Citizenship education at its best is a unification of foundational knowledge with civic values and key competencies. Together, these elements represent action civics. One of the biggest roadblocks to participatory democracy is the perception that everyday Americans can’t influence government policy, and that only the privileged and special interests can command the levers of power or change bureaucracies. But if students can actually identify a problem in their school or community that is important to them, consider the options to solve that problem, marshal evidence in support of their selected

solution, identify which public decision-maker can make a difference and how he or she might be persuaded to take action, determine the best time and conditions to pursue a decision, attract allies to an expanding coalition of support, devise a plan to engage both traditional and new media, and propose credible fiscal solutions for challenges requiring public funding—then students can both move the needle toward success for the problem at hand and gain the confidence and experience necessary for a lifetime of action civics.

The active-citizenship approach we encourage focuses on five key principles for teaching action civics:

Help students recognize challenges or opportunities in their school, community, state, or nation that can be addressed through effective citizenship;

Instruct students on the competencies required for civic success (i.e., the skills of effective citizenship);

Provide students with foundational knowledge of democratic institutions and processes while teaching citizenship skills (e.g., exploring federalism to identify which level of government can resolve the challenge a student has selected);

Instill in students the dispositions of democratic citizenship, such as respect for fellow citizens of different races, religions, classes, and sexualities, and tolerance for different political viewpoints; and

Encourage students to utilize their newly learned skills, knowledge, and values to address the challenge or opportunity they have identified.⁴

We must provide students with the opportunity to acquire the above-described citizenship skills. Civics is not an accumulation of dry facts and abstract ideas. As with any endeavor that we wish to perform well, it must be practiced. You don't learn to play the piano by reading a textbook about the piano or even memorizing famous scores. You don't learn to make persuasive oral arguments by studying the science of speech or even watching great speeches. You learn to play the piano by playing the piano. You learn to make persuasive oral arguments by practicing such arguments. And you learn the skills of civics—the habits and attitudes of democracy—by engaging in civic activities.

America needs a “crash course” in civics. More important, we need to instill an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens into our collective experience. Perhaps the need has grown so acute because civics education, like other areas of social studies, has been pushed to the back burner in American schools, a victim of the single-minded focus on English language arts and mathematics wrought by our recent national obsession with standardized testing. But, in a very real sense, the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School have proven the vibrancy and strength of American democracy. Despite the horror of their circumstances, they fell back on an education that provided them with the knowledge and skills to demand change from local, state, and national elected leaders. It is up to us to see that their citizenship education experience is provided to all American students.

Bob Graham is a former U.S. senator and governor of Florida. The author of four books, including America, the Owner’s Manual: You Can Fight City Hall—and Win, he currently leads efforts to encourage citizen engagement and train students to become future leaders through the Bob Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida. Randi Weingarten is the president of the American Federation of Teachers. Highlights from her career include serving as the president of the United Federation of Teachers, as an AFT vice president, and as a history teacher at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn’s Crown Heights.

*For more on these threats, see “Hope in Dark Times” and “History and Tyranny” in the [Summer 2017 issue \(//www.aft.org/ae/summer2017\)](http://www.aft.org/ae/summer2017) of *American Educator*. (back to the article)

†For more on the proliferation of fake news and the importance of civic reasoning in a social media environment, see “[The Challenge That’s Bigger Than Fake News \(//www.aft.org/ae/fall2017/mcgrew_ortega_breakstone_wineburg\)](http://www.aft.org/ae/fall2017/mcgrew_ortega_breakstone_wineburg)” in the Fall 2017 issue of *American Educator*. (back to the article)

‡For more on developing arguments and teaching evidence-based writing, see “[For the Sake of Argument](#)”

Read “Democracy depends on a free press”

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

absolute _____

democracy _____

preserving _____

diligent _____

citizenry _____

ratified _____

1. What is the main point of the article? _____

2. Why does the government have three branches? _____

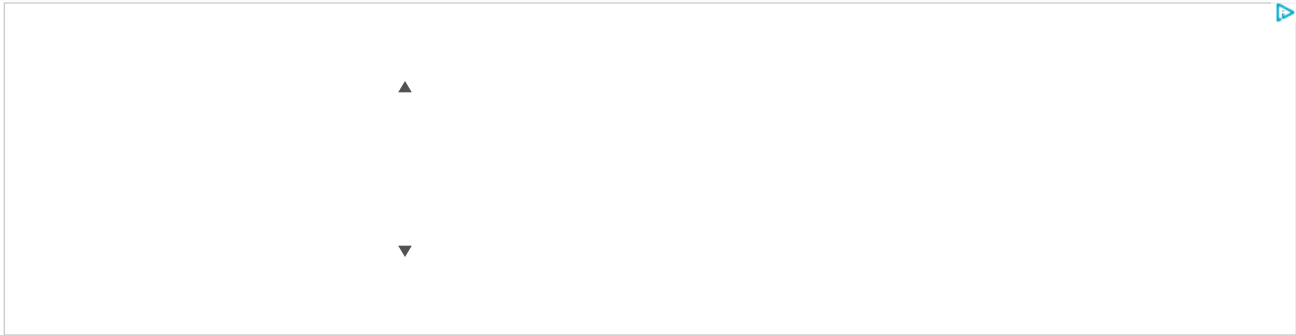
3. What is the meaning of Thomas Jefferson’s quote _____

4. Why is the free flow of information so important? _____

5. Why would democracy suffer without a free press? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- Research the First Amendment. Search recent editions of the newspaper for articles that relate to this amendment. On a piece of paper, write down the main ideas and facts of the article. Write down what you have learned about your community based on this article. Share what you have learned with your class.



SPEAK UP

Democracy depends on a free press



SEPTEMBER 16, 2013 05:52 PM, UPDATED SEPTEMBER 16, 2013 04:53 PM

In the summer of 1787, the nation's most influential lawyers, generals and politicians gathered in Philadelphia with a single purpose: To create

a government that was ruled by the people instead of one that ruled them. **O DER REPRI**

The first words of the Constitution underscored this principle: "We, the people, of the United States of America . . ."

To protect the people's power, our Founding Fathers carefully divided the government into three branches. With this system, no one person or governmental branch could ever rule with absolute authority.

The checks and balances provide a framework for the government. However, the cornerstone of our democracy is the unique privilege and responsibility of every citizen to be engaged through voting, public offices, representation in Congress and myriad other ways.

For a society to be responsible and powerful, it must be informed. Our free press, protected by the first constitutional amendment, plays a critical role in ensuring that every American has constant access to important and trustworthy news.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them."

As he emphasized, this free flow of information to the public is essential to preserving our American democracy. In addition to educating and reporting, the press serves as the public's independent watchdog, charged with keeping governments, businesses and other organizations in check.

What other institution has the power to talk to key leaders, inspire social change and uncover corruption, while analyzing and providing context for major global events? Thanks to diligent reporting, citizens are empowered to take a stance on critical issues, enact change and demand the best from their leaders.



Recent headlines have demonstrated that we can't take the power of the press for granted. After it was revealed this summer that the government secretly obtained AP phone records and the email content of Fox News reporter James Rosen, while also ruling that New York Times reporter James Risen must disclose his confidential sources, it became clear that confidential sources and the integrity of the newsgathering process must also be specifically protected.

Without a free press that can defend its sources, American democracy will suffer. The Newspaper Association of America applauded the vote last week by the Senate Judiciary Committee to approve the Free Flow of Information Act for vote in the Senate. This bill represents a critical step in preserving the public's right to know while still ensuring effective law enforcement.

While we celebrate this, we know that news organizations and the government itself comprise only a piece of the equation. To have a strong democracy and educated citizenry, it is up to you to take advantage of your opportunities to be engaged. It is up to you to stay informed by reading newspapers, visiting their websites or accessing their news apps, and up to you to show up at the polls on Nov. 5.

The Constitution was ratified on Sept. 17, a day that we continue to commemorate every year as the birth of our uniquely American government. There is no better way to honor our Constitution and our founding fathers than by exercising our individual right to be informed.

CAROLINE LITTLE, CEO OF THE NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Read “The value of freedom of press”

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

abridging _____

ensorship _____

adversarial _____

inefficiency _____

profit _____

values _____

1. Identify the who, what, why, where points of the article. _____
2. Identify the main points the author is making in this article. _____

3. In his article, Yang writes, people have “widely accessible news and innumerable information at our fingertips.” List as many news and information sources as you can. _____

4. In your opinion, which of the reasons the author provides, do you think is the most significant for young people. Why? _____

5. Why does the author describe the freedom of the press as being “crucial?” _____

Newspaper Connection:

- In his article, Hanhee Yang writes, “However, as many people, such as presidents and CEOs, want to deliver their message unfiltered, journalists also want to express their perspectives of the world. As Ken Auletta, a New York writer stated, ‘The press is performing a necessary, adversarial function.’ Though, oftentimes, people in power don't like to be asked questions, the proper role of the press, is to ask questions to those in power.” Look for examples of these ideas in the newspaper. Find examples of articles depicting any part of this quote and create a chart and/or infographic listing the actions and ideals represented in those articles. Share what you have found and learned with your class.



High school essay winner: The value of freedom of press

OPINION

Hanhee Yang Published 8:32 a.m. ET March 16, 2018 | Updated 1:00 p.m. ET March 16, 2018



(Photo 11: Kinfay Moroti/news-press.com)

"Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press..." The First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees the freedom of press. Freedom of press is the liberty to obtain and publish information openly without fear of government censorship or punishment.

Especially in the modern era of widely accessible news and innumerable information at our fingertips, freedom of press is a highly valued liberty that citizens should be aware of and know the reason why it was given to us as Americans. Our founding fathers accorded freedom of press such a prominent placement in our Constitution because it represented the inherent values and liberties that the United States was founded on. This freedom remains so crucial to preserving our system of government because the press acts as a fundamental check upon society and the government.

The founders of the United States, important political figures such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, all gave prominent positions to the freedom of press. The anti-British press was one of the core reasons the thirteen British colonies broke away from Great Britain to practice their own rights, interests, and faiths. The press would become a huge motivating factor in creating a more perfect union where the direction of the country would be shifted by the influences of the people's ideas. Thomas Paine's radical pamphlet, *Common Sense* and Paul Revere's drawing of the Boston Massacre are examples of influential political propaganda that revolutionized the opinions of America against Britain.

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The liberties that are secured in the Constitution could not have been fully expressed without the freedom of press. As Franklin D. Roosevelt said “Freedom of conscience, of education, or speech, of assembly are among the very fundamentals of democracy and all of them would be nullified should freedom of the press ever be successfully challenged.”

The freedom of press remains so crucial to preserving our system of government because the press acts as a fundamental check upon society and government. The founders of the United States wanted freedom of press as just another tool in the toolbox to question the power of the three branches of government. The problem of the freedom of press is sometimes its inefficiency of transferring “correct” information due to business interests of boosting profit through stories of entertainment, conflict or fake news.

However, as many people, such as presidents and CEOs, want to deliver their message unfiltered, journalists also want to express their perspectives of the world. As Ken Auletta, a New York writer stated, “The press is performing a necessary, adversarial function.” Though, oftentimes, people in power don’t like to be asked questions, the proper role of the press, is to ask questions to those in power.

In short, especially in today’s world of a media-disparaging government and shifting political agendas, it’s important to look back on the constitutional values of America and maintain a balanced system of government in the U.S. by analyzing and questioning authoritative figures through the press.

Hanhee Yang is a junior at Cape Coral High School.

Read “Six questions that will tell you what media to trust”

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

trustworthy _____

news _____

opinion _____

advocacy _____

partisan _____

skeptical _____

proximity _____

witness _____

hypothesis _____

Write a reaction blog to this article include the following ideas:

- What is the main idea of this article?
- Briefly outline the main points the writer is discussing, in your own words.
- Which point do you find the most useful? Why?
- What new information did you learn?

Newspaper Connection:

- Put the information you have just read into action. Find a story in each of the following sections of the newspaper: local, opinion and sports. Next look for two different news stories on two different news websites. Also find a news article on a blog or social media site. Evaluate each article based on the points you have read in Tom Rosenstiel’s article. Create a chart showing the information for each key point. Share what you have learned with your class.

Six questions that will tell you what media to trust

PUBLISHED 10/22/13 3:55 PM

UPDATED 10/23/13 11:37 AM

TOM ROSENSTIEL

You may encounter media today from any number of sources, from traditional news sources to social media to email.

How do you know what to trust?

Ask these six questions and they will unlock whether something is trustworthy.

It's easier than you think. They will make you a more critical thinker and save you from being misled. (These come from the book "Blur: How to Know What to Believe in the Age of Information Overload" by myself and Bill Kovach).

1. Type: What kind of content is this?

Recognize first what kind of content you're looking at.

Is it a news story? Or is it an opinion piece? Is it an ad or what some people call native advertising produced by a company? Is it a reaction to someone else's content?

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Knowing what you are looking at is the first step to figuring out what you can believe.

”

Part of knowing what you're looking at involves knowing who produced the content. Is it a news organization? Or is it a publication that is sponsored by a think tank, or a political group or a corporation? (If the story or graphic you're looking at came in a tweet or through a friend, look at the name of the organization, not just the name of the author. If you don't know the organization, look it up online.)

Another thing to know is where the organization gets its money. If it's a non-profit or an advocacy group, where did that money come from? If that isn't clear, that's a problem.

Does the content have an obvious political slant? There are a lot of new partisan sources for news now. Sometimes it's hard to tell from any single story whether the source is political. One way to identify partisan or political leaning is to see whether all the stories seem to point in a particular ideological direction, or would tend to reinforce the views of one party. If they do, that is a tip off that the site really has a political viewpoint. It's easy to recognize. Scan the stories quickly. You will know it when you see it, even if each story itself seems fairly straightforward.

Knowing what you are looking at is the first step to figuring out what you can believe.

2. Source: Who and what are the sources cited and why should I believe them?

News content usually cites sources for the information provided. These are the people quoted, or the documents or reports or data being referred to.

As you read, listen or watch a piece of content, note who is being cited. If it's text, print it out and circle the sources. Is it a police official? A politician? What party? If it's research, what organization produced it and what background if any is offered about them?

A major part of understanding sources is recognizing the level of knowledge that someone might have—or how close it is to being first hand. There are lots of different kinds of sources.

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The key question is, how do they know? If it's not clear, you should be more skeptical.

”

Sourceless News: Some news is actually “sourceless.” If the president says something on television or in public, the account may cite no source at all. It was a public event for all to see.

The Journalist As Witness: The journalist or author could also be an eyewitness. In that case, the account may make it clear the author saw it but cite no one else.

Credentialed Experts: In some cases, the author or journalist may have such obvious expertise or credentials that they are a credentialed author/source. Doctors who are also reporters (such as Dr. Nancy Schneiderman on NBC News or Sanjay Gupta on CNN) are examples. An opinion column written by Nobel prize-winning economist Paul Krugman is another example.

Proximity of Knowledge: When we move to content that cites other sources, one question is how close is the source to the event. In other words, how well would they know what they are talking about? Are they a first-hand eyewitness? Or is it second-hand? In courtroom trials, only things that people saw for themselves are usually permissible as testimony. If they are an official source, such as police spokesperson, they are likely second- or third-hand witnesses, but they may be basing what they say on multiple first hand witnesses.

The key question is, how do they know? If it's not clear, you should be more skeptical.

Distance in Time: Time is also a factor. Research shows the more time that has passed since an event, the more faulty memory is. Police investigators know this well. So ask yourself: how far in the past did this event occur before the witness was asked to recall it?

If the source is a document (a study, or data), ask the same question: Who produced it and what background do you have on how the study was done and what other studies that group might have produced? There is no such thing as knowing too much about a source.

Then there are outside experts who might be asked to comment based on their experience. Just because they are called an expert doesn't mean they necessarily know a lot about this situation. Do they have a lot of experience with this kind of event? Have they done any research on this particular situation?

The source could also be anonymous (journalists using sources without naming them, because that person could get in trouble). If so, what background is offered about how this source would know what he or she is talking about and why you should believe them? And why were they allowed to remain anonymous? Sometimes journalists simply fail to identify the source for some statistic or assertion to save time or because they forget.

Once you have identified who the sources are, ask one other thing: Do they have a bias?

If so, that doesn't necessarily mean what they have to say isn't reliable. Think about whether they are a witness to facts or are just describing their opinion. They may be the perfect authority. But this also leads to the next question you should ask

3. Evidence: What's the evidence and how was it vetted?

Evidence is closely related to but slightly different than source.

Evidence is the proof that the sources offer for what they know. It overlaps with how close someone is to an event. But even highly credentialed sources may begin to speculate sometimes. They may be guessing.

So, first, identify the evidence that any source is offering. Circle it. Write it down. Do it as an exercise a couple times. It becomes easy to recognize.

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Trust the material that offers more evidence, is more specific and more transparent about the proof being offered.

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Is the evidence a document? Was it something the source saw as an eyewitness? Is it hearsay, or second-hand? Or are they speculating about someone’s motives or what they might have done?

Next, what if anything did the author do to verify this evidence? Did they check with a lot of sources? Do these sources disagree? Can you see how they vetted the evidence?

If the report is specific, that helps. If it says “scientists agree,” that isn’t all that specific. But if it says they interviewed 15 scientists and they all agreed, you have a better idea of how much authority there is. If they say scientists examined 10 years of peer-reviewed scholarly research, more than 10,000 pieces of research, that is even more evidence.

Look for signs of a method—a method of verification. If you can see how the author or reporter checked or corroborated the evidence—if the method is explicit—that is a sign of more credible work.

Looking for these signs—and identifying what evidence a story contains—isn’t as hard as it might sound. You simply need to start looking for it. And once you do, you will trust the material that offers more evidence, is more specific and more transparent about the proof being offered.

4. Interpretation: Is the main point of the piece proven by the evidence?

Most media content offers a thesis, or main point, of some kind.

The one exception might be a straightforward account of a breaking news event. Most other stories, however, are built around an idea, a trend, or even some angle on a news event. Even content that isn't narrative usually has a thesis or a point. For instance, most charts point you to a conclusion — like the number of people with jobs in America is going down or baseball salaries are going up.

So the fourth step in knowing whether something is reliable is to ask whether this main point makes sense, and whether the conclusions are supported by the evidence offered.

In other words, think about what conclusions are being drawn. Do they follow logically from what has been cited? Sometimes this is a matter of some conclusions making sense but others going too far. Are too many conclusions being drawn from evidence that doesn't support all of them?

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We should expect enough evidence to prove the case. We shouldn't just take someone's word. The more evidence the better.

”

One concept to keep in mind here is people may wrongly assume that because two events occurred the first one must have caused the second one. In fact, it could be a coincidence. Or the second event could have been caused by something else. This is a common mistake that people make from looking at data.

One way to test conclusions is ask if the same evidence might be used to draw a different interpretation. In science, there is a concept for this called the null hypothesis. It refers to the idea that whatever hypothesis a scientist is trying to test, one should also examine the possibility that there is another explanation.

Here's an example of the null hypothesis. If research shows that younger people are more inclined to use social media than older people, someone might think that they use social media because they are young. If that were the case, then logically, they would stop when they become old. But that is probably wrong. It might be they use social media more because they understand it better, and they will keep using it as they get older. That would be the null hypothesis.

When looking at media content, it means asking whether there might be a different conclusion to draw from the evidence in the story or content than the one presented.

To see if a story or segment or other form of media content lives up to its thesis, there are some simple indicators.

- First, *we should expect enough evidence to prove the case*. We shouldn't just take someone's word. The more evidence the better.
- Second, *we should expect that the other side(s) are given a good hearing*. Ask yourself this: are alternative views given the chance to make their best argument. If the alternative views are weakly presented, be skeptical.
- Third, *what is unknown, unanswered, unclear, should be acknowledged*. Usually, news is simply the best obtainable version of events at the moment. Tomorrow we will know more. The best accounts admit this, and help us even more by acknowledging where the weak spots are.
- Fourth, *the best news providers and publishers let us know when new information comes along* that contradicts or fills in what was thought before. These publishers feel responsibility for giving misinformation or partial information that may have left a wrong impression. They show that sense of responsibility by letting know when a better view has come along.

All of these are signs that the publisher is mindful of the null hypothesis, or that an alternative thesis might be as good or a better explanation. The man the police suspected initially might have been innocent. The conventional wisdom that in the long run the vote in Congress would hurt the Republican party was wrong.

Look for signs, in other words, that the author is skeptical and open minded.

5. Completeness: What's missing?

Most content should lead to more questions. An important step in being a critical, questioning consumer is to ask yourself what you don't understand about a subject. Look back at the piece. Did you miss something? Or was it not there?

If there was important information missing from the story, that is a problem. If something was explained so poorly that it wasn't clear, that's also a problem.

If something was missing and the story explained why—this couldn't be answered yet—that is a good thing.

The point of any news content is not just to tell you something. It should be to create understanding and also to help you to react or take action. So sometimes what might be missing from a story or segment or piece of content is what you can do about it.

6. Knowledge: Am I learning every day what I need?

This last, sixth question is less about checking one story than checking yourself to see if you are spending your media time well. It's almost like calorie counting.

Think about what media you consumed yesterday. What did you learn about? What did you read about? It can be hard to remember. But try. Jot down what you consumed for a couple days. You might be surprised. It also might not have been done in a conventional way. Maybe it came through social media. Or conversation. It's still consuming news.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself to see if you are learning what you think you should

- What are some things you hear people talking about that you wished you understood better? Where could you go to learn?
- Could I explain this situation to someone?
- Look at top stories on a website or a newspaper front page? How many of them are you familiar with? Do you think you should understand them?

This process of critical thinking about media is something we all do. When you decide what to click on, what to read, and when you lose interest and stop reading, you are making critical decisions about what matters and what you trust or what you don't understand. These six questions are the same ones that editors and producers in the media world use to edit stories and make up web pages.

In the age when we are all both editors and consumers, we all need to know them.

Read “Confusion about what’s news and what’s opinion is a big problem, but journalists can help solve it”

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

distinction _____

opinion _____

distinguish _____

news _____

clarity _____

template _____

inconsistency _____

transparency _____

dispel _____

Write a reaction blog to this article include the following ideas:

- What is the main idea of this article?
- What is the Kevin Loker’s argument?
- Loker uses the rhetorical methods of logos and pathos to support his argument. Provide an example of each.
- Do you agree or disagree with the points Loker is making in his article? Be sure to support your ideas with specific examples.

Newspaper Connection:

- In his article, Kevin Loker notes that 27 percent of people are unfamiliar with the difference between an editorial and news story and 28 percent did not know the difference between a reporter and a columnist. “In an accompanying survey we did of journalists, 74 percent thought most people misunderstand the difference between news and opinion content. Look up the words “reporter,” “columnist” and “journalism”. What are the similarities and differences between these three occupations. Look through the newspaper for a news story and an editorial. Also find an article written by a columnist. Answer the following questions about each article:
 - What is the main idea?
 - Is this a news or opinion article? Why?
 - Is the article written by a reporter or columnist? How do you know?
 - Is the article based on facts? What evidence is provided?
 - What is missing from the article?

Share what you have learned with your class.

Confusion about what's news and what's opinion is a big problem, but journalists can help solve it

PUBLISHED 09/19/18 1:25 PM

UPDATED 09/19/18 3:02 PM

KEVIN LOKER

People often don't know whether the content they see is news or opinion, according to our recent pair of Media Insight Project surveys.

In one survey, we asked people how easy or difficult it was to see the distinctions between news and opinion in media. Just over half of Americans say it's easy to distinguish news from opinion in news media in general.

This stat alone suggests there's an issue.

Only 43 percent of people said they could easily sort news from opinion in online-only news or social media. 

But we were also curious if people had an easier time sorting news from opinion in *certain* media. It appears that's true. People were more likely to feel like they had a handle on what's news and what's opinion with local TV news, which usually contains no formal commentary, and also their self-identified preferred news source.

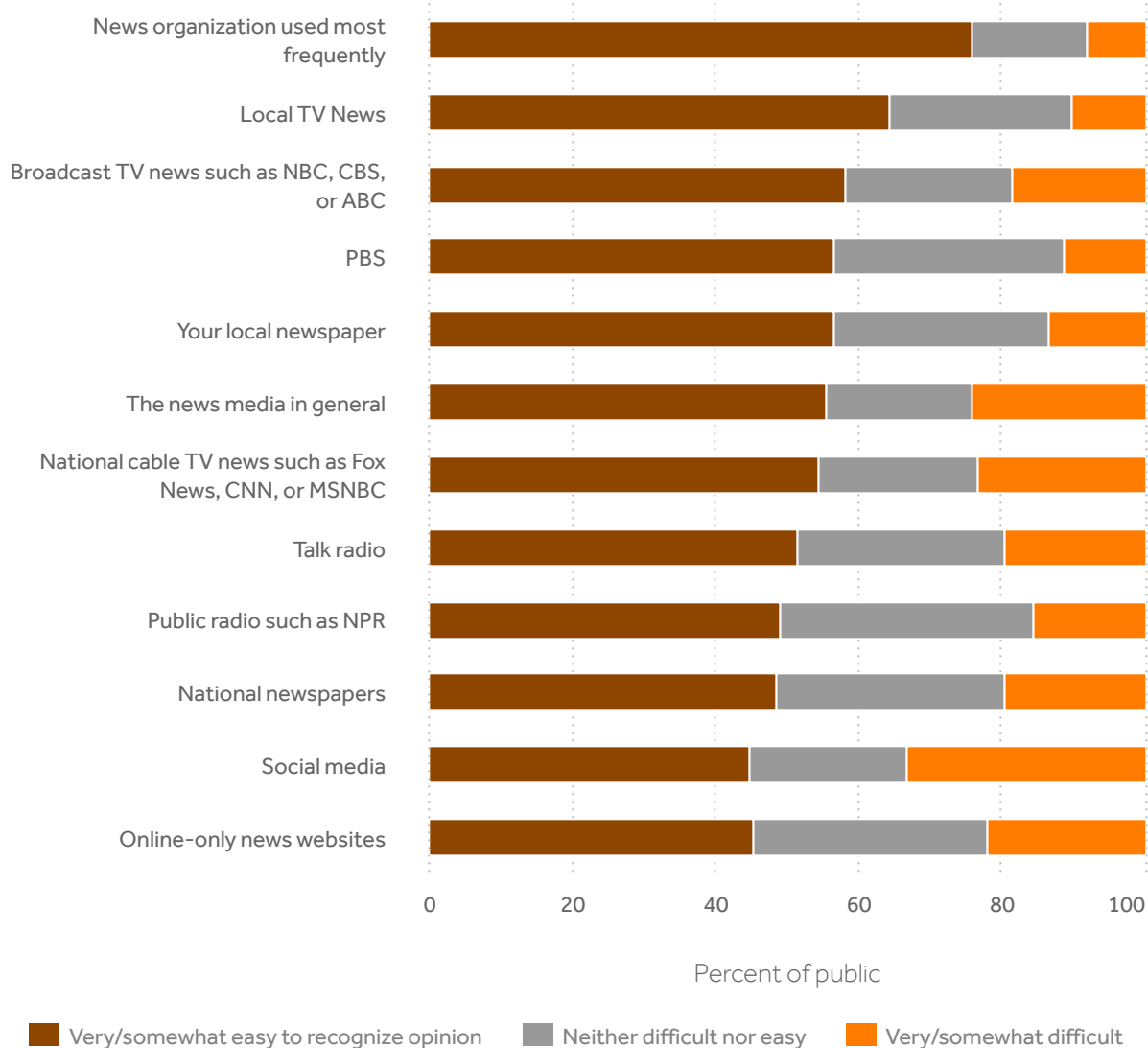
Notably, the types of media where people expressed the least clarity were digital news sites and social media.

Only 43 percent of people said they could easily sort news from opinion on these news websites or social platforms, which are likely where the most frequent mixing of different kinds of content occurs.¹ These digital environments tend to present all forms of content identically. For example, all links shared on Facebook look the same. All content on a given

identically. For example, all links shared on Facebook look the same. All content on a given news website tends to follow one template.

DATA CHART

The public says distinguishing news from opinion is easiest with their preferred news source



Data Source: Question: "Many news organizations produce opinion content as well as report the news. How easy or difficult is it for you to tell the difference between the opinion content and news reporting in each of the following?"

Question: "Now thinking about news you see on social platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, how easy or difficult is it for you to tell the difference between opinion content and news reporting?"

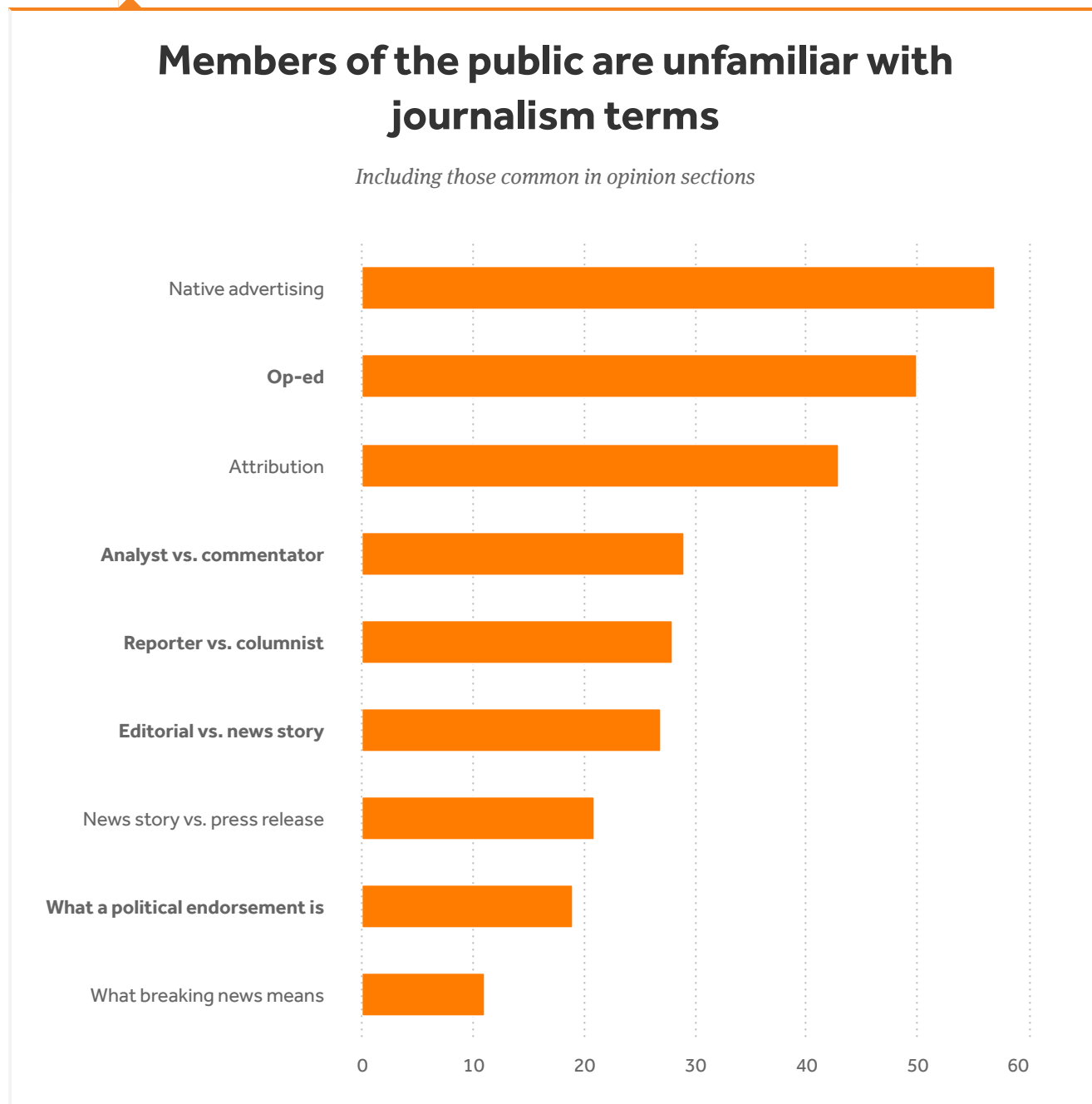
Study: "Americans and the News Media," 2018.

MEDIA INSIGHT PROJECT

But even if a news publisher took some care to label their opinion content as such, many people still may not understand what that means.

Fully half of the U.S. public is unfamiliar with the term “op-ed,” and nearly three in 10 said they were unfamiliar with the difference between an editorial and news story (27 percent) or a reporter and columnist (28 percent). When it comes to opinion and punditry on TV, 29 percent of people don’t know the difference between an analyst and a commentator.² This suggests journalists not only need to provide labels, but define them as well.³

DATA CHART



Data Source: Question: “Next is a list of different terms or concepts that sometimes appear in journalism and media but may or may not be familiar to most people. How familiar are you with each term or concept?”

Question: “Next is a list of different terms or concepts that sometimes appear in journalism and media. For each one, please rate how well you think most Americans understand the difference between the terms or the meaning of the concept.”

Study: "Americans and the News Media," 2018.

Moreover, many people think they're seeing opinionated content under the guise of news reporting.

We asked people how much opinion creeps into news reports. Many people said that news reporting they see seems closer to commentary than just the facts (42 percent), or it contains too much analysis (17 percent).⁴

Notably, most people also said that opinion isn't as useful as news reporting. People were far more likely to say news is most useful when it mostly reports facts with some background or analysis (63 percent). Only 5 percent said commentary or opinion is most useful.

That means people want news with *some* context or background — more than just facts — but many think what they're seeing has veered *too much* toward opinion. This finding, coupled with the fact that people have a hard time making distinctions, is another indicator of a problem.

74 percent of journalists think most people misunderstand the difference between news and opinion content.

Notably, journalists understand that these issues exist.

In an accompanying survey we did of journalists, 74 percent thought most people misunderstand the difference between news and opinion content. And about 4 in 5 journalists (79 percent) thought that distinguishing news from opinion would help address misinformation problems.

Tying all this together, much of the public expresses difficulty with this topic, and much of the press intuited it. News organization leaders and journalists across the industry need to take action.

We at the American Press Institute are among many people thinking through how news organizations can better dispel confusion around news and opinion content.

News organizations such as the Toronto Star and the Coloradoan have taken steps to make

News organizations such as the Toronto Star and the Coloradoan have taken steps to make these distinctions more clear.

The Duke Reporters Lab has studied inconsistency in labeling, and its researchers have offered suggestions of how to improve labeling in your own news organization.

Labelling the “type of work” is one of the “Trust Indicators” that The Trust Project suggests news organizations use to build trust. (The indicators also function as structured data that tech platforms can use in content algorithms.)

The News Co/Lab at Arizona State University — which has found similar levels of difficulty among U.S. public in sorting news from opinion — highlights best practices that include transparency around news organization processes.

And Trusting News, which provides hands-on help to newsrooms who want to earn audiences’ trust, has guided newsrooms in developing ways to explain what is opinion content and why they publish it.

Going forward, our data and experience suggest news organizations would benefit from steps like the following:

- **Provide explanation and analysis in news coverage, but know some readers perceive a creep toward punditry.** Readers want background and context, but many people think reporting veers more toward commentary than it should. It is important to mind the difference between explaining the facts and injecting opinions.
- **Make clearer distinctions between the content types you publish.** In the digital environment, pages and experiences should be designed so people can quickly tell if what they’re reading is news, opinion or analysis. This should be clear on the page and also on the social media channels in which so many people encounter news.
- **Explain the purpose of your opinion content and editorials.** Many readers aren’t familiar with these terms, and news organizations’ reasons for publishing opinion content might not be clear to readers. Explain why you publish opinions or editorials — and consider whether your reasons for doing so should evolve — so that readers understand your goals.
- **Identify possible new opportunities for your opinion sections.** In thinking about your reasons for publishing opinion content, you may find other ways you can serve those goals. Beyond publishing columnists’ viewpoints, how might your opinion sections lift up diverse community voices? Moreover, how might your news

sections lift up diverse community voices? Moreover, how might your news organization facilitate dialogue about differences in your community?

1. Younger generations were generally more confident than older generations in sorting news from opinion on digital-only news sites and social media (e.g. 52 percent of adults under 30 said it's very or at least somewhat easy to make the distinction on social media, compared to just 34 percent of adults 60 and older). Yet younger generations also were less likely than older generations to say they could sort news from opinion in legacy media like TV and newspapers. Instead, the level of ease was about the same for younger adults across all media types. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say it's easier to make these distinctions in nearly all media types we asked about. ↵
2. Young people had less understanding of these terms than older adults, though older adults also had difficulty with some terms. For example, older adults are significantly more likely to report being very or completely familiar with the term "op-ed," but still only 36 percent of those 60 and up understand the term (compared to 21 percent of those under 30). Even newspapers subscribers had difficulty with the term "op-ed," though not as much as non-subscribers. ↵
3. A recent survey by the Knight Foundation and Gallup found most Americans agree that "most news media don't do a good job of letting people know what is fact and what is opinion." ↵
4. Perhaps opinion does creep into news reports, or the confusion about what is news or opinion contributes to this perception. Factors we didn't explore might contribute, too. For example, the Pew Research Center recently explored people's ability to identify factual statements versus opinion statements, finding that people can't always accurately make the distinction. ↵

Read the article by Rusty Cunningham

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

journalism _____

watchdog _____

theme _____

corruption _____

tributary _____

malfeasance _____

1. What is the main point of "Your Journalism has never been more important?" _____

2. Why are journalists trained to “keep their distance?” _____

3. Name five things a journalist does. _____

4. Why do journalists ask questions? _____

5. Ultimately, what does a journalist search for? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- Rusty Cunningham’s job is to inform the citizens in his communities. Look through the newspaper for examples of people working with others to share information and seek the truth. What group of people are they working for? How and why are they doing it?

Your journalism has never been more important



By Rusty Cunningham
Executive Editor
La Crosse Tribune/River Valley Media Group
La Crosse, Wis.

Not every U.S. president has agreed with Jefferson about the importance of journalism, of course.

Canadian journalists battle for press freedoms every day, too.

But as journalists, we share a passion, a mission, a quest.

We search for the truth as watchdogs of the people elected and appointed to serve our citizenry.

As journalists, we're trained to keep a professional distance, to make sure we don't become part of the story.

But while we're not the story as reporters, the importance of our work, our craft is very much the story – especially as President Trump calls journalists the “enemy of the American people.”

Our theme is right on the mark: “Journalism matters. NOW more than ever.”

While we're not the story, the need for our journalism has never been more important to the people and communities we serve.

It has never been more important for journalists to ask questions, scour public records and investigate malfeasance.

It has never been more important for journalists to expose corruption, challenge assumptions and shine a light on sexual misconduct.

As journalists along the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, we've asked in recent months what chemicals were contained in a 10-million-gallon spill floating down a tributary. We've asked about a drastic increase in overdose deaths. We've asked why no criminal charges were filed in a boating accident in which two people died.

You have your own stories to tell about the questions you ask and the journalism you produce.

Make no mistake: Your journalism matters.

It's crucial that we continue to reinforce the importance of our role in society.

And we're not just watchdogs. Our journalism encourages our readers with positive stories that truly reflect the flavor of our communities.

Rest assured, your journalism has never been more important.

Read the article by Matt Geiger

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

mantra _____

referendum _____

obituaries _____

inhabit _____

gelatinous _____

flourish _____

1. What is the main point of "Community journalism matters because communities matter?" _____

2. List at least three types of things weekly newspapers cover. _____

3. Why are community newspapers important? _____

4. Why does journalism matter now more than ever? _____

5. Why does community journalism matter now more than ever? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- Search recent editions of the newspaper for a community news article. On a piece of paper, write down the main ideas and facts of the article. Write down what you have learned about your community based on this article. Share what you have learned with your class.
- Create a class weekly newspaper. As a class, develop your own newspaper reporting on the activities of the past week or two. Have students write about school events or other things that might interest them. Assign each student to a specific task including, photographer, cartoonist, reporter, editor, printer, carrier (distribution), etc.

Community journalism matters because communities matter



By Matt Geiger
Executive Editor
News Publishing Co.
Black Earth, WI

“*Everything* in this newspaper is important to someone.”

It’s become something of a mantra for me, in recent years.

Weekly community newspapers are eclectic, to say the least. We publish photos of ribbons being cut at bakeries, and donations being dropped off at local food pantries. We print the school honor roll, the court report, and in-depth stories on decisions made by planning commissions and town boards. Sometimes we cover murders, abuse, and horrific car crashes, and when we do our community journalists often experience these tragedies as both reporters and neighbors — as both professionals and human beings. We cover the referendum that will determine whether a new school is built and our readers’ taxes will rise. We publish birth announcements, obituaries, and the various things that, when wedged between those two book ends, make up the lives that make up our communities.

I’ve learned more than I ever wanted to know about sewage, in order to cover the approval and construction of a new treatment plant. I interviewed a survivor of the Iran hostage crisis about what it’s like to be held prisoner in a foreign land while the world looks on. I’ve interviewed grandmothers about their favorite holiday recipes. Perhaps most importantly, I’ve interviewed little kids about what they want to be when they grow up, and what type of world they hope to inhabit.

I’ve even eaten *lutefisk* — a type of gelatinous Scandinavian fish that is usually only consumed as part of a dare — in the warm hum of a local church’s kitchen. (I even liked it, which I think qualifies as a kind of small-town gonzo journalism.)

People sometimes ask me why community newspapers are important. My reply is always the same. It’s because *everything* in those pages is important to someone. Maybe the ribbon cutting isn’t flashy enough to go viral, and the Thanksgiving turkey recipe is not going to change culinary trends across the nation. But these things, these small things in communities across the county and across the world, are what give meaning and purpose to all of our lives.

The ribbon cutting is the culmination of a childhood dream. The donations at the food pantry will allow a family to gather around their table without worrying if there is enough to fill each plate. The honor roll goes on the fridge, of course, because it’s a reminder to a young student that she can flourish when she applies herself. The birth announcement marks the proudest, greatest moment of a mother and father’s life together. The face looking out from the obituary is one that a wife, and children, and grandchildren, will never kiss again. The new school being paid for with the referendum is where a young student might develop an interest in science, growing up and developing a treatment for cancer or Alzheimer’s, allowing millions of people to live a little longer, and have their faces kissed by those who love them a few more times.

Journalism matters, now more than ever, because people matter. Community journalism matters, now more than ever, because roughly half the world’s population lives in small communities, and in the pages of their newspapers, they see themselves and the ones they love.

Read the article by Dave Zweifel

Vocabulary – write a brief definition for the following words and phrases:

investigation _____

proliferation _____

investigation _____

pollution _____

democracy _____

hinder _____

1. What is the main point of "Journalism matters because democracy matters?" _____

2. What was the result of the investigation into the state-operated home for aged military veterans? _____

3. What caused governmental agencies and citizens have since come together to act regarding the community's stormwater runoff problem? _____

4. Why did the Founding Fathers create the First Amendment? _____

5. Why are democracy and journalism inseparable? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- The author writes, "Journalism exists to keep the people informed." Look for examples of this statement in the newspaper. Find examples of articles that keep people informed and create a chart and/or infographic listing the importance of those articles to the community. Share what you have found and learned with your class.

Journalism matters because democracy matters



By Dave Zweifel
Editor Emeritus
The Capital Times
Madison, Wis.

An in-depth newspaper investigation revealed that a state-operated home for aged military veterans was providing sub-standard care and that taxpayer money that was to go to improve the home was spent elsewhere. The result was the replacement of the state's veterans secretary and numerous corrections at the home.

Another investigation explored the increase of neighborhood violence and the proliferation of firearms that awakened community groups and law enforcement to explore ways to address the problems and find solutions before it becomes even worse.

Yet another series of newspaper stories documented the impact of stormwater runoff on the area's highly-used lakes, complete with proposals on how the environmental damage can be corrected before pollution becomes even worse. Governmental agencies and citizens have since come together to act.

These are recent examples from just one community, Madison, Wisconsin, that are regularly repeated at newspapers, television news outlets and other media throughout the land — all examples of why journalism matters as much today as it has throughout history.

But it's not just the investigative pieces that seek to right a wrong. It's journalism that chronicles the school board meeting, the arguments about whether a city needs a tax increase, the reasons why a water main needs to be replaced, the achievements of the high school scholars, the heroics or, perhaps, the agonies of the sports team, or the story of a neighborhood volunteer who helps make life better for someone in need.

The founding fathers decided more than 200 years ago that if democracy was to function as they intended, there had to be a means to keep tabs on the people's governments. They adopted the First Amendment to make sure those governments couldn't hinder the people's right to know or silence the opinions that might not please those in power.

Journalism exists to keep the people informed. It exists to spread knowledge and, yes, it exists to provide viewpoints from many different perspectives, to provide the fuel that people in a democracy need to take part in their governments.

Journalism matters because democracy matters. The two are inseparable.

The following chart and questions are from the Library of Congress Cartoon Analysis Guide. Have your students use this chart and the questions to interpret the cartoons.

Cartoon Analysis Guide

Use this guide to identify the persuasive techniques used in political cartoons.

Cartoonists' Persuasive Techniques

Symbolism	<p>Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.</p> <p>After you identify the symbols in a cartoon, think about what the cartoonist means each symbol to stand for.</p>
Exaggeration	<p>Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or exaggerate, the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point.</p> <p>When you study a cartoon, look for any characteristics that seem overdone or overblown. (Facial characteristics and clothing are some of the most commonly exaggerated characteristics.) Then, try to decide what point the cartoonist was trying to make by exaggerating them.</p>
Labeling	<p>Cartoonists often label objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.</p> <p>Watch out for the different labels that appear in a cartoon, and ask yourself why the cartoonist chose to label that particular person or object. Does the label make the meaning of the object more clear?</p>
Analogy	<p>An analogy is a comparison between two unlike things. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.</p> <p>After you've studied a cartoon for a while, try to decide what the cartoon's main analogy is. What two situations does the cartoon compare? Once you understand the main analogy, decide if this comparison makes the cartoonist's point more clear to you.</p>
Irony	<p>Irony is the difference between the ways things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue.</p> <p>When you look at a cartoon, see if you can find any irony in the situation the cartoon depicts. If you can, think about what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Does the irony help the cartoonist express his or her opinion more effectively?</p>

Once you've identified the **persuasive techniques** that the cartoonist used, ask yourself these questions:

What issue is this political cartoon about?

What do you think is the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?

What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?

Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?

What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

SUNSHINE WEEK

Spotlighting government secrecy

Talking points

Sunshine Week is a national initiative to open a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. It's about the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why.

1. What is the Freedom of Information Act that Etta Hulme's cartoon refers to?
2. Some people don't think your privacy should be a big concern. Why are there rules to keep the government from spying on you?
3. Explain why it's important to know what your government is doing? Who can best inform you about what your government is doing?



Etta Hulme / Fort Worth Star-Telegram



Tom Toles / Washington Post: Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper and other resources. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed. Find news stories about the issues addressed by the cartoons. Determine the point of view of the cartoonist and explain why you agree or disagree with the opinion expressed.

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

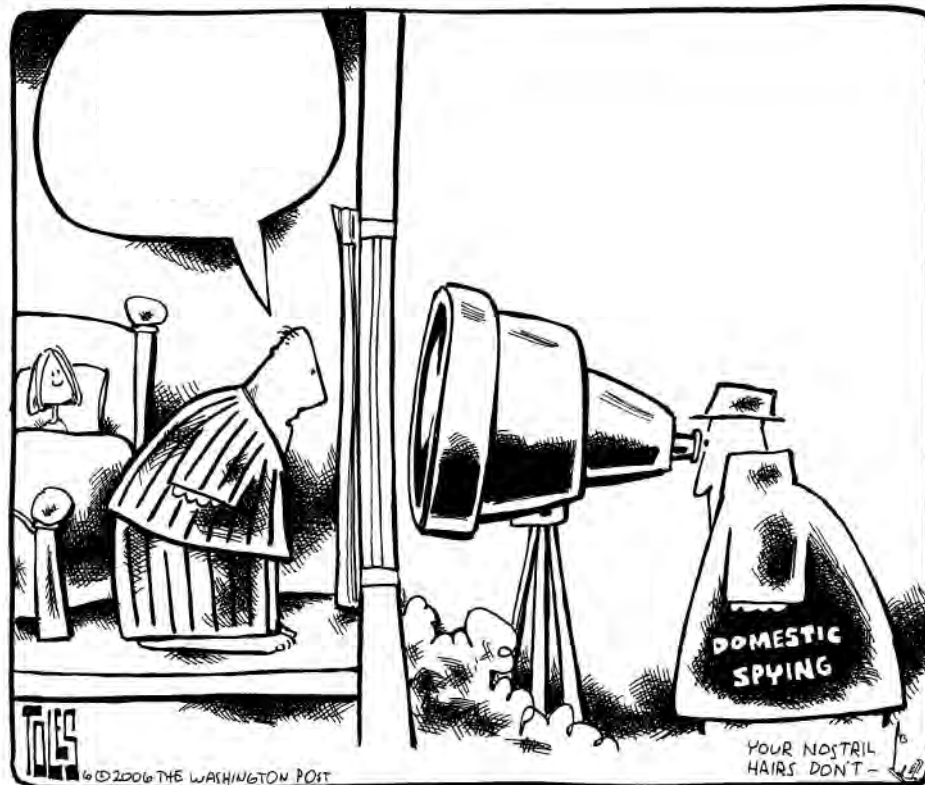
More by Tom Toles
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/opinion/tolestom/archive/>

More by Etta Hulme
<http://www.star-telegram.com/news/editorial/cartoons/>

More Sunshine Week resources online
<http://www.sunshineweek.org/>

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Tom Toles / Washington Post: Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

There is no wrong answer, so just have fun and be creative!

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Drawing attention to government secrecy



Courtesy Etta Hulme / Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Sunshine Week

Sunshine Week is a national initiative to open a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information.

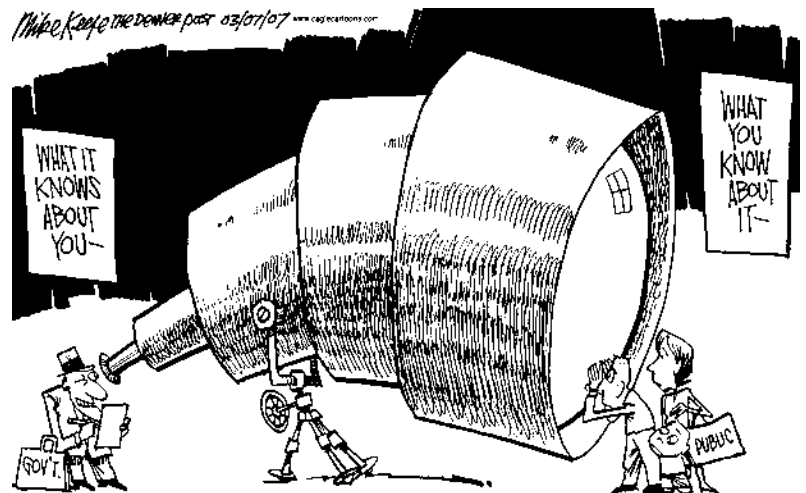
Though spearheaded by journalists, Sunshine Week is about the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why.

Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in their government at all levels, and to give them access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger.

-- From Sunshine Week:
Your right to know
<http://www.sunshineweek.org>

Talking points

1. How do you answer the question Etta Hulme poses in her cartoon: "Is open government a threat to tyranny or to democracy?" Why do dictators find it necessary to keep their government actions secret and limit access to information? Why is it so hard sometimes to get information from our own government?
2. Mike Keefe's cartoon points out the government knows a lot more about you than you know about the government and that fact should make you uncomfortable. A free press is essential to keeping the public informed about what the government is doing. How do cartoonists fit in?
3. The Freedom of Information Act is a critical tool in a journalist's arsenal. Do some research and explain what FOIA is and why it's so important to shine the light on government secrecy.



Courtesy Mike Keefe / Denver Post via <http://Cagle.com>

Additional resources

Association of American
Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

More by Etta Hulme
<http://www.star-telegram.com/205/index.html>

More by Mike Keefe
<http://www.denverpost.com/keefe>

More Sunshine Week Resources: <http://www.sunshineweek.org> | <http://www.spj.org/sunshineweek.asp>

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

Sunshine Week

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-- From Sunshine Week:
Your right to know
<http://www.sunshineweek.org>



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette



Courtesy Signe Wilkinson / Philadelphia Daily News

Additional resources

More by Joe Heller
<http://www.cagle.com/politicalcartoons/PCcartoons/heller.asp>

More by Signe Wilkinson
<http://www.philly.com/dailynews/opinion/signe/>

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

Shine the light on your government

Talking points

1. Joe Heller's cartoon turns the tables on the government. If the government wants to know everything about us through the census questions, why can't we demand to know more about what the government is doing? Is Heller saying the census is a bad thing?
2. Who is the census taker in Heller's cartoon? Why is he wearing sunglasses? (Hint, look at the newspaper the citizen is holding.)
3. The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that the government may not ban political spending by corporations in candidate elections. Signe Wilkinson's cartoon shows what may result. Can you explain the cartoon? What's the danger according to the cartoon?

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette

Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

There is no wrong answer, so just have fun and be creative!

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

Between the Lines

Sunshine Week is a national initiative to open a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Though spearheaded by journalists, Sunshine Week is about the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why.

Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in their government at all levels, and to give them access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger.

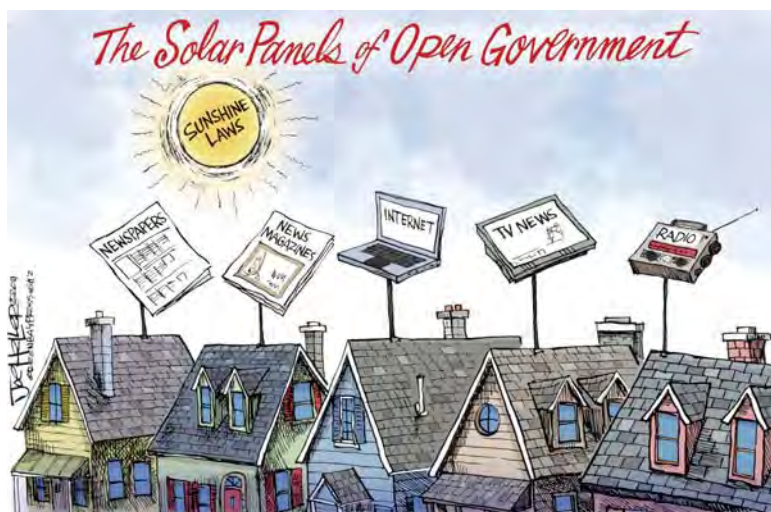
This year Sunshine week is March 13-19.

-- From Sunshine Week:
Your right to know
<http://www.sunshineweek.org>



"WHEN YOU'RE DONE THERE, DON'T FORGET TO TAKE THAT CORNERSTONE OF DEMOCRACY WITH YOU."

Courtesy Jeff Parker / Florida Today



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette

Additional resources

More by Joe Heller

<http://www.cagle.com/politicalcartoons/PCcartoons/heller.asp>

Jeff Parker

<http://www.cagle.com/politicalcartoons/PCcartoons/parker.asp/>

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

Sunshine Week: A bright idea

Talking points

1. "What you don't know won't hurt you." What's wrong with that statement? Explain why cartoonist Jeff Parker points to "The People's Right to Know" as the cornerstone of democracy.
2. Joe Heller's cartoon shows a variety of ways to spread the word about your government. List the news sources he shows in order of importance. Which can you trust more than the others?
3. How might the tools listed in Joe Heller's cartoon have affected the recent uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya?

Cartoons for the Classroom



Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Courtesy Jeff Parker / Florida Today

Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

There is no wrong answer, so just have fun and be creative!

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Courtesy Ben Sargent / Austin-American Statesman

Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and fill in your own caption. It can be funny or serious.
There is no wrong answer, so just have fun and be creative!

Try out different captions
Write your rough drafts here
before filling in the top.

Going beyond the text – Logical fallacies

Analyzing Advertisements

Every day, we are inundated with print and television advertisements. Many of them claim the facts speak for themselves, but the facts that are presented can be debatable. Oftentimes, advertisements are filled with logical fallacies. A logical fallacy is an error in reasoning. This is different from a factual error, which is simply being wrong about the facts. To be more specific, a fallacy is an "argument" in which the premises given for the conclusion do not provide the needed degree of support.

A study of advertising might begin with a review of the techniques of persuasion and/or editorial organization. Look for some advertisements in the newspapers that use at least one of the following logical fallacies. Explain how and why the appeal is being used.

- **Hasty generalization:** This is a conclusion based on insufficient or biased evidence. In other words, you are rushing to a conclusion before you have all the relevant facts.
- **Ad Hominem:** This is an attack on the character of a person rather than his or her opinions or arguments.
- **Bandwagon:** A fallacy in which a threat of rejection by one's peers (or peer pressure) is substituted for evidence in an "argument."
- **Circular argument:** This is where a claim is restated rather than actually proving it.
- **Either/or:** This is a conclusion that oversimplifies the argument by reducing it to only two sides or choices.
- **Non-sequitur:** This fallacy occurs when the conclusion does not follow the premise.
- **Red herring:** This is a diversionary tactic that avoids the key issues, often by avoiding opposing arguments rather than addressing them.
- **Post hoc, ergo propter hoc:** This fallacy is committed when it is concluded that one event causes another simply because the proposed cause occurred before the proposed effect.

Going beyond the text – PolitiFact FL

PolitiFact Florida is a partnership of PolitiFact and the *Tampa Bay Times* to help you find the truth in politics. Every day, reporters and researchers examine statements by Florida elected officials and candidates and anyone else who speaks up on matters of public importance. The reporters research their statements and then rate the accuracy on the Truth-O-Meter:

TRUE – The statement is accurate and there’s nothing significant missing.

MOSTLY TRUE – The statement is accurate but needs clarification or additional information.

HALF TRUE – The statement is partially accurate but leaves out important details or takes things out of context.

MOSTLY FALSE – The statement contains an element of truth but ignores critical facts that would give a different impression.

FALSE – The statement is not accurate.

PANTS ON FIRE – The statement is not accurate and makes a ridiculous claim.

For more details, see [the Principles of PolitiFact and the Truth-O-Meter](#).

Going beyond the text

Fact checking

Look at the latest fact checking information on the Florida Governor, senators or congressional representatives. Make a chart showing what the claim made is and what the determination from PolitiFact is for each elected official. Be sure to include who made the claim. Keep a chart for each candidate.

Going Beyond the Text

- Newspaper articles, cartoons, photos and advertisements are a consistent source of informational text. Reading the newspaper at home and at school is a great way to increase critical thinking skills and prepare for the Florida Standards. Are you familiar with the structure of a newspaper? The best way to acquaint yourself with a newspaper is by looking at the index, which is like a table of contents. According to the index, what pages are the following found on: classified ads, sports, editorials, local news, weather and the crossword puzzle? Where would you most likely find articles focused on health or politics? Would these articles be in more than one section of the newspaper? Why?
- The newspaper is broken up into sections. Write down each section of the newspaper on a piece of paper. Select a photo from each section of the newspaper that you think is interesting. Study the photo carefully and create sensory images that describe some of the ideas you are reminded of by looking at the photo. It may help you to imagine being on the scene when the photo was taken. Describe the images you see. If you were on the scene what would you hear? What would you smell? Describe as many points as you can. Compare what you wrote to what your classmates described. Did everyone see, hear and smell the same things?
- Stories about sports or entertainment events in newspapers usually recap the most important events that occurred during the game, or at the concert, play or festival. For the reader who wants a good review, the newspaper relates the main idea in a descriptive manner. A reader can usually find the main idea of the story in the lead sentence or paragraph. The remaining paragraphs usually provide other details or highlights of the event. Choose a story about an event recap from your newspaper and identify the main elements of the story. These elements should be answers to the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, why).
- A headline in the newspaper often gives a general idea of what the news story that accompanies it will be about. Headlines usually provide factual information. Select two headlines from your newspaper. On the top of one side of a piece of paper, write down the first headline. On the top of the other side of the paper, write down the second headline. Below each headline, write details that you find in the accompanying story that support the idea communicated by the headline.

- Look up the words “hero” and “celebrity” in a dictionary. Once you know the dictionary definition (denotation), discuss with your class what the connotations of these words are. Look through the newspaper to identify people who you would consider to be heroes and others who you would define as celebrities. List the names of these people and the newspaper section in which you found their names or pictures. Be sure to note why you categorized each person the way you did.

- Conflict is something that is inevitable in real life. It happens every day: at home, at school, in the neighborhood, in the world. Conflict is represented in all sections of the newspapers, as well. Look through the newspaper to find examples of conflict. Determine the types of conflicts and possible solutions for each incident that you find. For each conflict, determine what techniques could have been done to avoid the conflict.

- The comic strips in the newspaper often reflect real life. We can be pleased with this because there is much honesty that can be found among the characters in various comic strips. Read through the comic strips in the newspaper. As you read, look for examples of honesty or truthfulness in each character’s speech and actions. Write a brief paragraph about the comic strip and the qualities you have discovered in the character or characters. Share your thoughts with your classmates.

- Knowing the difference between fact and opinion is very important, especially when it comes to information about your community and world. Oftentimes, leaders try to influence young people by providing propaganda or false information to persuade the young people to join their side in an argument, cause or for an event. Look through the news sections of the newspaper. Select a few articles of interest and evaluate those articles for facts and opinions. Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. Label one side Fact and the other Opinion. List statements in each category and discuss with your family and class why these statements fall into that category. Think about the content of the articles and the information on your chart. Thinking about the idea that facts can be persuasive, write an essay or blog post discussing the ideas you have read about and learned.

- Evaluating advertisements is an important skill. One of the biggest advertisers is the diet industry. The diet industry is big business in the United States. Why does the diet industry tend to make big promises about quick results? Television commercials, radio spots, newspaper ads ... the focus is always on losing weight quickly without any effort. The Purdue Online Writing Lab defines fallacies as “common errors in reasoning that will undermine the logic of your argument. Fallacies can be either illegitimate arguments or irrelevant points, and are often identified because they lack evidence that supports their claim.” Research the types of logical fallacies. Then find an ad or article in the newspaper that focuses on a diet or diet product. Apply your new knowledge to the information in the ad and analyze the points presented. Create a chart or infographic with the information you have read and learned about. Share your information with your class.

- Science plays an increasingly important role in our lives. Science stories today involve more than news of the latest invention or medical advance. Every science issue has implications on many levels: personal, social, economic, political, religious and ethical. There are multiple sides to every science story. Technological advances, for example, may increase communication but may also raise questions of privacy rights. Stem cell research may hold the answers to many devastating medical conditions, but it raises religious questions as well. Science stories are found on national news pages as well as in special science news pages. Many newspapers dedicate a weekly section to science.
 - Find an article about a recent science breakthrough or advance.
 - List the benefits of the advance.
 - List any negative consequences of that breakthrough.
 - Putting these ideas together, write a fully-developed paragraph discuss the fact that every new scientific advance has consequences people may not have considered. Share what you have learned with your class.

- Your local newspaper’s mission is to serve your community. When there is a situation that requires community action, the newspaper reports on the problem and all the different individuals and groups that have an interest in the problem. People who are affected by a situation are often called “stakeholders.”
 - Read news stories about a problem or concern in your community.
 - Identify the different stakeholders who are proposing different solutions to the problem.
 - Collect the information and write it down on a piece of paper.
 - Then develop a solution of your own. What solution would you propose that is different from any of those proposed by the stakeholders?
 - Interview family members and friends. Ask their opinions about the problem. Ask them for their solutions.
 - Write a letter to the editor or a blog post discussing how the other solutions are different from yours.

- The editorial page of the newspaper provides readers with differing opinions about news events. Editorials present the views of the newspaper. Opinion columns present the views of individuals who comment regularly on news topics. Letters to the editor present the views of the newspaper’s readers. Read your newspaper’s editorial on a national topic that interests you. Identify the standard editorial elements in the editorial you read and note the following points. Then explain your reaction to the editorial.
 - Presenting opposing points of view
 - Refuting opposing points
 - Presenting details supporting the newspaper’s position
 - Urging readers to make a decision

What do you consider to be the most persuasive points made in the editorial?
Did the editorial change your mind or strengthen your original position?
Why or why not?

- Your newspaper keeps you informed about events and changes in the world of business. Events that affect national companies can influence the country's economy. Decisions made by local businesses can affect the financial health of your community. Read a news story about a change in a business product or service. Think about the causes and effects of the change. Write down your responses to the following questions:
 - What is your reaction to the change?
 - What is the headline?
 - What product or service is being changed?
 - Why did the company make the decision to change the product/service?
 - What is the headline?
 - What product or service is being changed?
 - Why did the company make the decision to change the product/service?
 - Why wasn't this change made before?
 - Do you believe this is a change for the better or the worse? Why?

Visit the website of the company involved in the news story. Read what the company says about the change. Does the site discuss potential negative effects of the change or does it present only a positive picture? Where would you go to get a different point of view? Collect business opinion columns that address this news. How do the commentators evaluate the decision made by the company?

▪ **Newspaper Scavenger Hunt**

Go through the newspaper and find each of the following items.

1. Color photograph
2. Black and white photograph
3. Full page advertisement
4. Advertorial
5. Capital letter
6. Number with double digits
7. Symbol
8. Hyphenated word
9. Common noun
10. Verb
11. Adjective
12. Adverb
13. Cartoon
14. Map
15. Index
16. Page number
17. Date line
18. Classified advertisement
19. Continued article
20. Obituary
21. Name of a county
22. Sports team
23. Punctuation mark
24. Name of a business
25. Statistic

Application

Students use previously learned information in new situations.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
National, international news	Read a news story about a proposed new federal law or Supreme Court decision. Discuss the different ways the new law or court decision will affect individuals, groups and current laws.
Local news	Read a news story about a citizens' group that is proposing some change in your community. Describe how the proposed change would affect the social, economic and political situation in your community.
Feature story	Read a feature story about an individual who has achieved a major accomplishment. What lessons could you learn from this individual?
Editorials	Identify a problem discussed in an editorial. What existing law or ethical principle would you use to address the problem? What recommendations would you make?
Sports	Look at the past statistics of several teams in a professional sports league or conference. Which two teams do you think will be the league/conference leaders at the end of the season? Why?
Entertainment	Look at the television section of the newspaper. Develop a viewing schedule that would give you information about one of the three branches of government. Use at least two different newspapers.
Science/technology	Read a story about a scientific/technological advance. Write a story explaining how the advance will benefit individuals and/or businesses.
Comics	Find a personal problem illustrated in a comic strip. Write a letter advising the character on how to solve the problem. Base the solution on your personal experience.
Display ads	Locate an ad for an existing service. Suggest ways to expand the service and provide new uses for it.
Classified ads	Identify a problem presented in a news story. Find someone in the classified section of the newspaper who could help solve the problem.

Analysis

Students break down information into component parts and use the information to solve problems and make decisions.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
National, international news	Read several news stories about a major national or international issue. Discuss the historical, economic and social elements that have created the situation that exists today.
Local news	Read news stories about a community concern and identify elements that contribute to it. Determine where you might look for ideas that address that concern—like other communities that have a similar geography, social structure or history. What can you learn from those communities?
Feature story	Read a feature story and identify the way it addresses these elements: (1) is timely, (2) has human interest, and (3) has a special interest for at least one group of newspaper readers.
Editorials	Read an editorial on a topic that interests you. Discuss how the editorial employs these elements: (1) statement of the problem, (2) opposing arguments, (3) refuting opposing arguments, (4) recommendations for solution, (5) call to action.
Sports	Read newspaper stories about two major teams in a sport. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of the two teams. What strengths would give one team the advantage over the other?
Entertainment	Look at the movie ads in the newspaper. Based on the ads and ratings, select an appropriate movie for each of these age groups: 7 and under, 8–13, 14–17, and adult.
Science/ technology	Collect several stories about scientific advances or breakthroughs. In which area is the progress being made - biology, chemistry, physics or technology? Which advances represent contributions from more than one branch of science?
Comics	Examine the comics page of the newspaper. Classify the strips by these types: jokes, relationships, family/home, workplace, school, politics and other. Which type of strip do you like the best? Why?
Display ads	Examine a large display ad for a product in the newspaper. Determine how the ad: (1) attracts attention, (2) provides information, (3) develops interest, and (4) encourages the reader to make the purchase.
Classified ads	Make a column or bar chart showing the numbers of different positions advertised in the classified ads. Which types of skills are in greatest demand? Which types are in least demand? What do the advertised positions tell you about your community?

Synthesis

Students use prior learning and skills to create something original.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
National, international news	Select a news story about an important problem facing the international community. Select people you read about in the newspaper to create a commission that could find a solution to the problem.
Local news	Select a news story about a concern facing your community. Identify different individuals or groups who have ideas for addressing the concern. Write three possible scenarios for the outcome of the situation.
Feature story	Select a feature story about an unusual individual. Write a letter to that individual commenting on his/her achievements and asking questions you have that were not answered in the story.
Editorials	Collect opinion columns and letters to the editor about a particular topic. List the points made in the columns and letters. Add your own points and write your own editorial.
Sports	Read stories about two or three different sports. Create a new sport that borrows elements from each one. Be sure the rules for your new sport encourage participation from all team members.
Entertainment	Look at the movie ads in the newspapers. Combine elements from two movie titles to create a new title. Write a story to go with the new title.
Science/technology	Locate a news story about a problem in your community. List different ways science could contribute to a solution. Write your own solution to the problem using these scientific ideas.
Comics	Select a comic strip that reflects something in your life. Use the strip as a model to create your own comic strip about your family, friends or school.
Display ads	Select three related products and/or services advertised in the newspaper. Create a new ad that puts the products/services together in a package deal.
Classified ads	Read a national or local news story about a current problem. Write a classified ad, offering work to someone who has the skills to solve the problem.

Evaluation

Students judge situations based on their personal knowledge, values and opinions.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
National, international news	Select a news story about a national or international issue about which people take different sides. Discuss the consequences of each side's position. Take a stand on the issue and explain why you support that position.
Local news	Use newspaper stories to identify the three most important issues facing your community. Rank them from most important to least important. Explain how each issue impacts individual citizens, businesses and government institutions.
Feature story	Select a news story about an individual or community group that supports a particular cause. Write a letter to the editor expressing your opinion about the actions of that individual or group.
Editorials	Select an editorial with which you disagree. Write a rebuttal to the editorial responding to the editorial writer's ideas point by point.
Sports	Select newspaper sports stories profiling two athletes in the same sport. Which athlete do you find most admirable? What professional and personal qualities stand out in that individual?
Entertainment	Read the weekly entertainment section of your newspaper. Look at the fine arts and performing arts events taking place in your area. What type of entertainment do you think is underrepresented? What recommendations would you make to a local arts council to improve the cultural climate in your community?
Science/technology	Select a news story about a medical breakthrough or advance. Evaluate the benefits of the new medicine, product or procedure in terms of cost, ease of use, and side effects.
Comics	Examine comic strips about school or family life. Select the one you think is most realistic. Explain how that strip portrays real life.
Display ads	Compare and contrast ads for two brands of a product or service. Select the product/service you think is best. Explain your selection.
Classified ads	Read all of the classified ads related to a particular job. Which of the ads would you choose? Why? What makes that ad the most attractive?

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