



The Relevance of Newspapers



**NATIONAL
NEWSPAPER
WEEK** OCT. 2-8, 2022

#newspaperpower

National Newspaper Week: *Why Newspapers Remain Relevant*

By Jodi Pushkin, President Florida Press Educational Services

Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) is proud to commemorate **National Newspaper Week 2022** 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 Newspaper Association Managers in commemorating and celebrating National Newspaper Week.

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 standardize 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 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, Pasco Hernando State College and Hillsborough Community College.

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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.

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 four through twelve.

Language Arts: ELA.612.C.1.2; ELA.612.C.1.3; ELA.612.C.1.4; ELA.612.C.1.5; ELA.612.C.2.1; ELA.612.C.3.1; ELA.612.C.4.1; ELA.612.C.5.1; ELA.612.C.5.2; ELA.612.R.2.1; ELA.612.R.2.2; ELA.612.R.2.3; ELA.612.R.2.4; ELA.612.R.3.1; ELA.612.R.3.2; ELA.612.R.3.3; ELA.612.R.3.4; ELA.612.V.1.1; ELA.612.V.1.3; ELA.612.F.2.1; ELA.612.F.2.2; ELA.612.F.2.3; ELA.612.F.2.4; ELA.612.EE.1.1; ELA.612.EE.2.1; ELA.612.EE.3.1; ELA.612.EE.4.1; ELA.612.EE.5.1; ELA.612.EE.6.1

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@flpress.com or jpushkin@tampabay.com. Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nie_fpes.

Social media may be fun, but for the facts, we need newspapers

By Al Cross

I love social media.

They keep me in touch with dozens of friends, whom I might otherwise have contact with just every few years, or every few decades.

They let me share articles that I think bring greater understanding of a subject, usually with a comment of my own, and enjoy similar sharing by others.

They let me share my own writing, reaching a wider audience than I did when I worked for newspapers, and be part of national, even international, conversations.

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I hate social media.

They have become the default sources of information for most Americans, and major sources of misinformation – even disinformation – that polarizes the country and drives us into media echo chambers.

They have added to the confusion between fact and opinion, and to our natural desire for information that confirms what we believe, rather than information that may challenge those beliefs.

They have led Americans to spend more time online in virtual communities instead of the geographic communities where we live, pay taxes and elect local leaders.

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My love-hate relationship with social media stems mainly from the fact that I am a journalist who believes that freedom of information is essential to our democratic republic, and who has done most of my journalism for newspapers – which are the main fact-finders in our society.

Newspapers are finding it more difficult to perform that essential function, mainly because much of their audience and more of their advertisers now prefer social media.

Newspapers have as many readers as they ever did, but the audience is mainly online, and reached through social-media posts that bring them no income. There's a bill in Congress to address that, called the Journalism Preservation Act, but what news media also need is more citizens who appreciate and support their work.

Newspapers are not only the main fact-finders for citizens; they are institutions that speak truth to power and hold it accountable. That's why our founders put the First Amendment into the Constitution, to guarantee freedom of speech, press, petition, assembly and religion.

Freedom of the press demands certain responsibilities of those who exercise it. Too many citizens don't realize that journalists have a set of generally agreed-upon ethics, and that journalism is a collective enterprise, with editors and other colleagues who help each other deliver a fair report.

My favorite description of how journalism is supposed to be practiced is in *The Elements of Journalism*, a book by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel. They list 10 elements; here are the first five, which are the most fundamental:

1. Journalism's first obligation is to the **truth**.
2. Its first loyalty is to **citizens**.
3. Its essence is a discipline of **verification**.
4. Its practitioners must maintain an **independence** from those they cover.
5. It must serve as an independent **monitor of power**.

The element I quote most often these days is No. 3, about the discipline of verification. It means that we tell readers how we know something, or we attribute it to someone.

Social media have no discipline and no verification.

And they're mainly about opinion, not facts.

Journalism, especially in newspapers, is mainly about facts, not opinion.

Opinions are the heartbeat of a democracy, but they should be based on facts. And for the facts, we need newspapers.

Al Cross is professor of journalism and director of the Institute for Rural Journalism at the University of Kentucky. He was a weekly newspaper editor and manager, political writer for the Louisville Courier Journal and president of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Read the article by Al Cross

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

Media _____

Default _____

Misinformation _____

Virtual _____

Ethics _____

Citizen _____

1. What is the main point of the article?

2. Why does the author love social media?

3. Why does the author hate social media?

4. In your own words, explain the five elements of journalism listed in the article.

5. In a brief paragraph compare and contrast journalism and social media.

Newspaper Connection:

Look through the newspaper for one example of one of the elements of journalism explained in the article. In a paragraph, briefly summarize the article and explain which element or elements are relevant to the article.

The relevance of newspapers

By Brett Wesner, Chair

National Newspaper Association

Newspaper reporting and content have never been more relevant.

We all have stories of readers desperately seeking reliable information about COVID-19 during the pandemic and turning to us to deliver accurate national and state health departments' evolving assessments as well as local reporting on treatment options in our communities.

We at NNA see it in our daily government affairs work with members of Congress, who almost uniformly admire their local community papers regardless of how they might feel about the national press.

We see it in the example of the civic leaders in Mineral Wells, TX, who were so distraught over the closing of their newspaper that they reached out to Jeremy Gulban and his CherryRoad group to open one. That he did, as he has in other communities.

And these examples of relevance are borne out by the hard numbers. In March, the National Newspapers Association and NNA Foundation commissioned a survey of readers from across the country, conducted by the highly regarded Susquehanna Polling and Research team. The results confirmed our daily experiences.

The study found local newspapers as the most trusted source when it comes to learning about candidates for public office. On a 10-point scale (with 10 being the "highest"), local newspapers are rated a 7.38, higher than TV stations (6.45), radio (5.58), political mailings (4.63) or social media platforms (2.65).

And our trustworthiness is growing. Compare this year's results to our 2019 study, when on the issue of trustworthiness, community newspapers represented a more trusted news source (5.77 on a 10-point scale) than other news sources, rating higher than national network TV news (5.13), cable TV news shows (4.60) and all others. Social media sources like Twitter or Facebook were rated lowest, at 2.92.

The study confirms there is a strong correlation between those who read community newspapers and those who cast ballots in elections. A combined 96% of readers of local newspapers say they plan to vote this November—either "very" or "somewhat" likely.

"It seems to us," Jim Lee, president, Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc., said, "that voters are increasingly hungry for a higher level of professional integrity when it comes to journalism (both local and national) in today's age of constant cable TV news and partisan leaning news media outlets."

TV stations (70%) and local newspapers (68%) are most often relied on as news sources to make decisions about elections compared to much lower scores for direct mailings from candidates or political parties (44%), radio stations (40%) or social media platforms (19%).

A combined 77% of respondents say they read a newspaper that covers their local community (a nice increase from a 65% average, 2017-2019), consumed via printed edition and online edition, as well as these additional online options that were not in previous surveys: Facebook, YouTube, TikTok or other social media platform.

Local newspapers also continue to receive high metrics on things like “[it] informs me” (93% agree), “[it] provides valuable local shopping and advertising information (81% agree), and “my household relies on [it] for local news (83%).

The trust quotient is easy to understand. While some readers may think they get news from social media, who knows the source of that news? But readers know where their local newspaper is and how to ask questions or challenge the editor’s news judgment when they disagree.

The difficulty, as most in the industry realize, is not in the relevance of our content, but in our revenue models.

Most local newspapers are experimenting with technology to enhance our readers’ experience and provide new ways for our advertisers to reach our still-strong audience, including newsletters, video, e-editions, and social media publishing, both for our own publications as well as our advertisers. But the reliance upon the revenue from the print newspaper remains the backbone of the newsroom. Too many have written the obituary of the print newspaper when, instead, they should be supporting its mission.

Readers can help with their subscriptions and contribution. More critically, Congress can help by creating a level playing field for newspapers through the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act. It also can ensure that the valuable federal advertising dollar reaches America’s smaller communities through local newspapers.

Americans believe in and rely upon community newspapers. Are we in a crisis of revenue, yes, most certainly. But relevance? We have that hands down.

Read the article by Brett Wesner

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

Relevant _____

Distraught _____

Trusted _____

Correlation _____

Integrity _____

Partisan _____

1. What is the main point of the article?

2. Give an example of how newspapers are trustworthy from the article.

3. What examples of other news sources are given in the article?

4. In your own words, explain how readers can support newspapers.

5. Explain why newspapers are relevant.

Newspaper Connection:

Look through the newspaper for examples of a local news story. Write down the main components of the newspaper article – Who, what, why, where, when, and how – and why this is an important local story.

First Amendment binds all American freedoms



By Jack 'Miles' Ventimiglia

Jack "Miles" Ventimiglia is executive editor of The Richmond Daily News and The Excelsior Springs Daily Standard. For nearly 40 years, he has worked as a print reporter and editor at dailies and weeklies in Illinois, Kansas and Missouri. He is a former member of the Missouri Press Association Board of Directors and has served on numerous press committees.

Freedom of the press, of speech, of religion, of assembly and to petition the government are woven, like stars in the flag, into the fabric of the First Amendment.

The blood of patriots is the seed of the Republic. The founders and those who followed in their footsteps invested their lives in this country. They assured there would be freedom of religion, and from religion, so the government could neither bless nor ban what anyone believes, as occurs under radical theocracies and communist regimes. The founders secured freedom of speech, to assemble and to petition the government to redress grievances, which is denied by China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and others that fear opposition. They also created one freedom that binds and protects all others, and has done so from before the founding of the republic – freedom of the press.

More than four decades prior to the day when Congress ratified the Constitution, colonial printer **John Peter Zenger** in 1733 began to publish scathing-but-true stories about the misdeeds of New York's haughty royal governor. Zenger languished in prison for nearly 10 months for the crime of truth telling about a politician. But Zenger and his attorney made jurors understand a new concept – truth is a defense – and Zenger went free.

Shielded by truth, journalists for nearly three centuries have been free to jab their pens at those who threaten the First Amendment. There are myriad examples involving religion alone. They include news reports about Congress trying to disenfranchise Mormons in the late 1880s and extend to modern times and the painful recognition that even vile speech, such as that practiced by Westboro Baptist Church, must be permitted as a religious liberty.

Journalists help keep us free to question, learn and disagree.

Now, as in the beginning, freedom of the press abides in the courage of men and women who report the news, whether those reports arise from between white columns in Washington, D.C., or beside the fountain at Lions Lake in Washington, Missouri. A reporter's work is often more routine than grandiose. On most days, reporters gather police and fire statistics; they report on the scandal de jour and the zoning board meeting; and they describe a range of human experiences, from a walk through a conservatory alive with iridescent blue morpho butterflies to a father and daughter found drowned on the Rio Grande's muddy banks.

But not all journalists complete routine days. A bullet killed **Ernie Pyle** in a safe zone on Ie Shima during World War II; he is one of many reporters who died to bring the public truth about war. Last year, in Annapolis, Maryland, a man who rejected having his criminal record reported walked into The Capital Gazette and killed five employees. Routine days are not guaranteed.

Seasoned reporters understand the importance of safeguarding the First Amendment. They know, also, that though telling the truth is made more difficult in these topsy-turvy times – when truth is flippantly called “lies” and lies are defended as truth – if they do not do their duty, then no one will. From time to time, explosions of criticism and unfettered hate may around them rage, but because reporters are loyal to the duties of a free press, including to challenge government leaders and policies, each of the First Amendment freedoms continues to wave like stripes in a flag emerging in the dawn's early light.

Read the article by Jack ‘Miles’ Ventimiglia

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

disenfranchise _____

theocracies _____

communist _____

regime _____

guaranteed _____

unfettered _____

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

2. What do journalists understand is important to safeguard? _____

3. Why was John Peter Zenger freed from prison? _____

4. In your own words, explain how freedom of the press binds all other freedoms. _____

5. What does the following statement mean: “Journalists help keep us free to question, learn and disagree”?

Newspaper Connection:

- Look through the newspaper for examples of a reporter challenging local, national or international government leaders and policies. Write a letter to the reporter defending or arguing against the importance of the information being shared in the article versus the public’s right to know.

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 Rusty Cunningham

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

journalism _____

watchdog _____

theme _____

corruption _____

tributary _____

malfeasance _____

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

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?

“Times may change, but the need to support a free press has not”



By Kathy Kiely

Kathy Kiely is the Lee Hills Chair in Free Press Studies at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. She is a veteran reporter and editor with a multimedia portfolio and a passion for transparency, free speech and teaching. After a long career covering politics in Washington, Kiely moved into the classroom full-time because, she says, universities are the laboratories that will discover the formula for making fact-based journalism viable again.

Once upon a time, having a job at a newspaper meant working in one of the most imposing buildings in town, inhaling the acrid aroma of fresh ink and the dusty breath of cheap newsprint and feeling mini-earthquakes under our feet every time the presses started to roll. For those of us old enough to remember those days, National Newspaper Week 2019 could be one big, fat elegiac nostalgia trip.

Today, many newspapers are ditching the imposing buildings for low-rent storefronts and have outsourced the printing. Those could be the newspapers that are left. My hometown had three daily newspapers when I was a kid. Now it's down to one that shows up in print [just three days a week](#). Youngstown, Ohio just became the first major American city [without any newspaper](#) at all. As University of North Carolina professor Penny Abernathy has documented in her [groundbreaking research on the news desertification](#) of America, upwards of 1,300 communities that had newspapers of their own in 2004 now have none.

But if we ink-stained wretches fall prey to the temptation to spend National Newspaper Week crying in our beers, we'd be wasting an opportunity.

Real newshounds don't wallow in the cozy memories of a sepia-stained past. We are about the now and the next. Our job has always been to help our communities recognize the today's challenges of today and turn them into the tomorrow's promise.

Yes, it's awkward that of today's biggest challenges involves us —the newshounds. We've always been better at telling your story than telling our own. Yet this is your story too: The future of democracy is inextricably bound up with the future of a free press.

So here, dear readers, are some facts you need to know:

Newspapers are more than a medium

Increasingly, for both younger and older readers, that low-grade paper with come-off-on-your-hands ink is being replaced by bits and bytes that light up your phone or tablet or computer.

What can't be replaced, however, and what should never be made obsolete is the primary function that newspapers have traditionally performed: Deploying small armies of reporters, photographers and editors to find and produce stories on everything from natural disasters to political scandals to your neighbor's golden wedding anniversary, to catch the mistakes before they make it into print and to correct them when they do (hey, we're human).

You never paid for news

That 25 or 35 cents you used to plunk into a newspaper box didn't come close to covering what it cost to produce what we newsroom denizens like to call “the daily miracle.” The high cost of public service journalism has always been subsidized by advertisers. And the big dogs in the economic equation were not the car dealers or department stores who bought those big, full-page displays. At most newspapers, classified ads produced the lion's share of revenues.

[The internet broke that model.](#) Newspaper advertising revenue has nosedived to levels that are less than one-third of what they were in 2005, a [study from the Pew Research Center](#) found. The result is all too sadly predictable: newspapers employed fewer than half the number of people in 2016 that they did at the beginning of this century, [according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.](#)

Social media ≠ news. And it's not free

Readers might not notice the hollowing out of newsrooms because today, we have, if anything, too much information at our disposal.

The same digital revolution that blew a hole in newsroom budgets and turned Craigslist and eBay into advertising behemoths also created new paths to publication. According to [a 2018 survey](#) by the Pew Research Center, more Americans now get their news from social media than from newspapers.

There's something to be said for no longer having to work for a company that could afford an army of editors and truck drivers to get your voice heard. Historically, the owners of imposing buildings and giant printing presses have been rich white guys, and that had an unquestionably distorting effect on the news.

But not everyone who's publishing via smartphone and YouTube is a promising writer or videographer giving voice to underserved communities. A lot are peddlers of propaganda, snake oil, disinformation and dissension.

Nor is social media as free as it seems: We [pay by providing our personal data](#) every time we log on and, often, every time we make a purchase IRL (in real life). Social media sites that [data to deliver information that's likely to keep you on their sites](#): A resident of Moberly, Missouri who shops at Cabela's and is Facebook "friends" with Donald Trump supporters is likely to get a very different news feed on Facebook than one who lives in New York City, listens to NPR and "likes" former President Barack Obama's page. It's a recipe for never having your received opinions challenged or your mind changed.

You *can* do something about this

OK, I will cop to waxing sentimental for the rumble of the printing presses underfoot. But I'm not arguing that we should turn off the internet and replace it with ink and paper. What I do think readers can do this National Newspaper Week is become more mindful about their information diet. Right now, a lot of us are living on nutrition-free snacks.

There are still plenty of sources of whole-grain news out there. Some of them, are non-profit news organizations; some are launching web start-ups to fill the gap left when legacy media outlets folded. And some are still at those legacy outlets, trying hard to find new revenue streams.

Here are some ways to recognize purveyors of *real* news: Do they sometimes make you a bit uncomfortable by raising doubts about what you thought to be true? Do they make it easy for you to reach a real human being if you have a question or a complaint? Do they correct their mistakes? Do they ask you to subscribe or donate? Because gathering facts costs.

Yes, supporting real news is a more expensive proposition for readers than it used to be, but it's cheap when you consider what you're really paying for.

As my former Gannett News Service colleague, University of Kentucky journalism professor Al Cross put in a bumper sticker he had commissioned a couple years back, "Support democracy: Subscribe."

Read the article by Kathy Kiely

Vocabulary – write a brief definition of the following words:

nostalgia _____

outsourced _____

inextricably _____

subsidized _____

behemoths _____

propaganda _____

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

2. Why does Kiely claim newspaper readers never paid for news? _____

3. What is the primary function of newspapers? _____

4. Why isn't news on the Internet really free? _____

5. How can you become more mindful of your digital diet? _____

Newspaper Connection:

- Look through today's newspaper and make a list of all the information contained in the newspaper including articles, advertisements, cartoons, photographs and editorials. List all of the facts you have learned and create an infographic to share with your classmates depicting what information is contained in the daily newspaper.

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 *lutfisk* — 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 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 the article? _____

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.

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.

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 the article? _____

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.

Power of the press is in being the Way to Know for news consumers



By Gene Policinski, 2015

[Gene Policinski, a founding editor of *USA Today*, is chief operating officer of the Freedom Forum Institute and of the Institute's First Amendment Center. A veteran multimedia journalist, he also writes, lectures and is interviewed regularly on First Amendment issues.]

WASHINGTON – The power of the press rests in the ability of journalists to hold government accountable, to mobilize public opinion on matters that are important to individuals, communities or the nation, and to provide necessary information of value.

Notice in those words not a mention of celebrity content, mobile devices nor “aspirational” reportage that feels good without doing any good.

But also notice in those words the key to the future for newsrooms across the nation: A visible role in the daily life of the nation rooted in real benefit and sustained credibility.

Newsprint may not be the medium-of-choice today for many readers, and perhaps certainly not the one for the desired next generation of readers. But the news organizations behind what certainly will be a blend of printed and electronic pages *must* be again the mediums-of-choice for that group, whether they be thought-leaders in society, officeholders in government or voters.

The nation – our audience – needs facts, presented clearly, accurately and completely. For those who are help rapt by the comings and goings of the Kardashians and turn away from discussion of policy in the Keystone Pipeline System debate: Well, perhaps it's time to say “goodbye” and leave them to vacuous talking heads, unreal “reality” shows and the assortment of cable TV geek-fests that offer a chance to feel superior just by sitting on a sofa.

“Targeted circulation” indeed. Let's leave behind the prideful ignorant who proclaim little faith and demonstrate even less actual consumption of news, and target those readers and users who want news and data and informed decisions – and who will pay a reasonable fee to get it.

Ok, not as easy to gather in and report out as feature items and single-interview chats. It means bucking the system to place journalists in seats where daily decisions are made and social issues discussed – from City Hall to church pews. It means bringing the news of the day in new ways, but with the same old standards that separated opinion from fact, news pages from editorials and commentary from reporting.

The Newseum Institute's latest State of the First Amendment national survey, published on July 4, showed that 70% of respondents disagreed with the statement that “overall, the news media tries to report the news without bias.”

To be sure, the change of bias has been leveled at journalists since the nation began – and was, in fact, welcomed by many in the first “journals of opinion” and later by media moguls making no pretense at publishing anything but “news” filtered through their own views.

But over time, and by dint of the hard work and credible reporting by tens of thousands of journalists – in newspapers, and later in radio, television and now online – readers, listeners, views and users gave their loyalty to news operations that brought them what they needed.

As emotional as one can be when waxing about ink-on-newsprint, it was the information that was printed with that ink, on those pages, that made newspapers strong and powerful – and that information was the stuff – not the fluff – of life.

Of course there is room for entertaining, uplifting stories and reports on that part of the day that makes us chuckle, smile or simply shake a head. But editorial decisions ought not to start and end there. “Click-bait” ought not to squeeze out real debate. “Metrics” ought not to rule over meaning. And the challenge in thorough reporting on the county’s budget next year ought to mean finding a new way – perhaps through the new studies of gaming technology as applied to news reporting – of telling a complex story. Decades ago, USA TODAY showed us how color weather maps and national sports rankings could be fun while still bringing needed information to commuters, gardeners and golfers – and while also reporting on AIDS, national security issues and unsafe military vehicles.

Consider that most news today still originates with mainstream media – and that the value for those aggregators was simply in finding a new way to package and deliver the content. A simple text-and-photo site called Craig’s List wreaked havoc on the financial underpinnings of a massive industry just by finding an easier way to post and peruse the same information. Cannot we collectively continue to find such innovation within newsrooms as well?

Journalists have learned many hard lessons over the last two decades: Nobody really loved us because of our nameplates, innovation was not just a good idea but a daily consideration on survival, and we no longer are the gatekeepers anymore between news makers and news consumers.

But in those tough, even brutal, decades, we’ve also discovered how to make our pages come alive – literally, via the Web – and found new ways to know about and be in contact with those interested in news and information. To the old axiom about being “Clear, concise and accurate” those who have survived have added “responsive.”

The power of the press was, is now, and will be in the future, bringing consumers the news they need – and having the fortitude to seek and report the news they don’t even yet know they need, but will.

Ignorance and apathy is the challenge. Credibility and necessity are the means to overcome those challenges.

Read the article by Gene Policinski

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

accountable _____

mobilize _____

sustained _____

credible _____

bias _____

aggregators _____

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

- What are your thoughts about this article?
- Do you agree with the author's ideas? Why or why not?
- Do you think the press is biased? Why or why not? Can you provide examples to support your ideas?
- What is mainstream media?

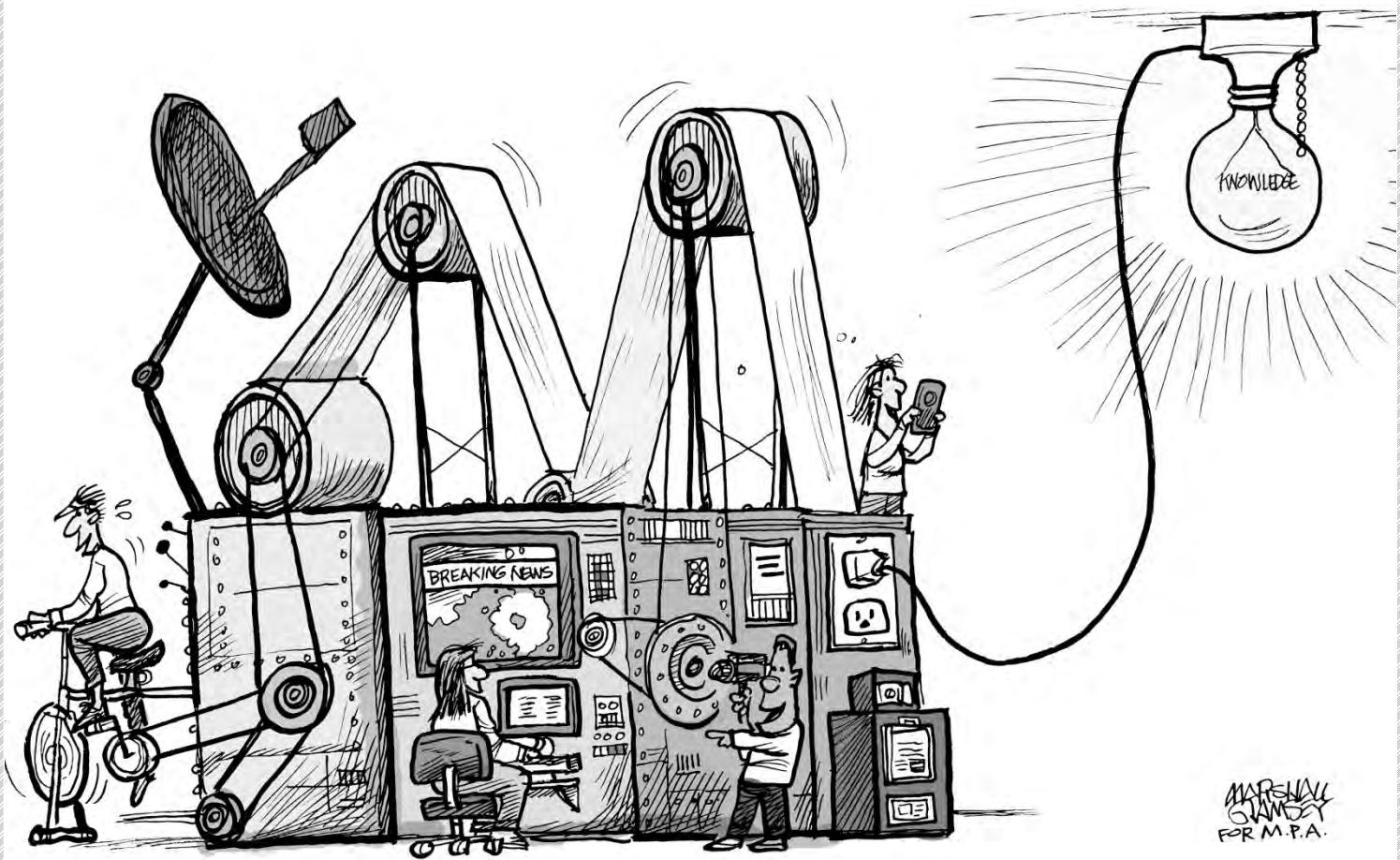
Newspaper Connection:

- The author uses the phrase “Clear, concise and accurate” in his article. What exactly does that mean. Look for examples of this statement in the newspaper. Look in the news, opinion and advertisements for examples. Share what you find with your class.
- Is there still “power in the press.” There has been a lot of challenges to the press lately, especially in America. The U.S. Press Freedom Tracker is a database of press freedom incidents in the United States — “everything from arrests of journalists and the seizure of their equipment to interrogations at the U.S. border and physical attacks. The Press Freedom Tracker documents incidents across the country, involving national, state and local authorities.” Check out the website, <https://pressfreedomtracker.us>. Choose one of the articles listed on the website and analyze it in a fully-developed paragraph. Share the information you have learned with your class. Write a Letter to the Editor of your newspaper about your thoughts about this information.

Interpreting cartoons

Students can determine the meaning of cartoons through the analysis of the literal, symbolic and figurative meanings of the elements the artist used and their effect. Students are asked to describe the overall effect of the cartoon, and how the artist's choices combine to create that effect.

Finally, students can determine the purpose of the cartoon and how it relates to current issues through discussion questions.



THE POWER of the PRESS

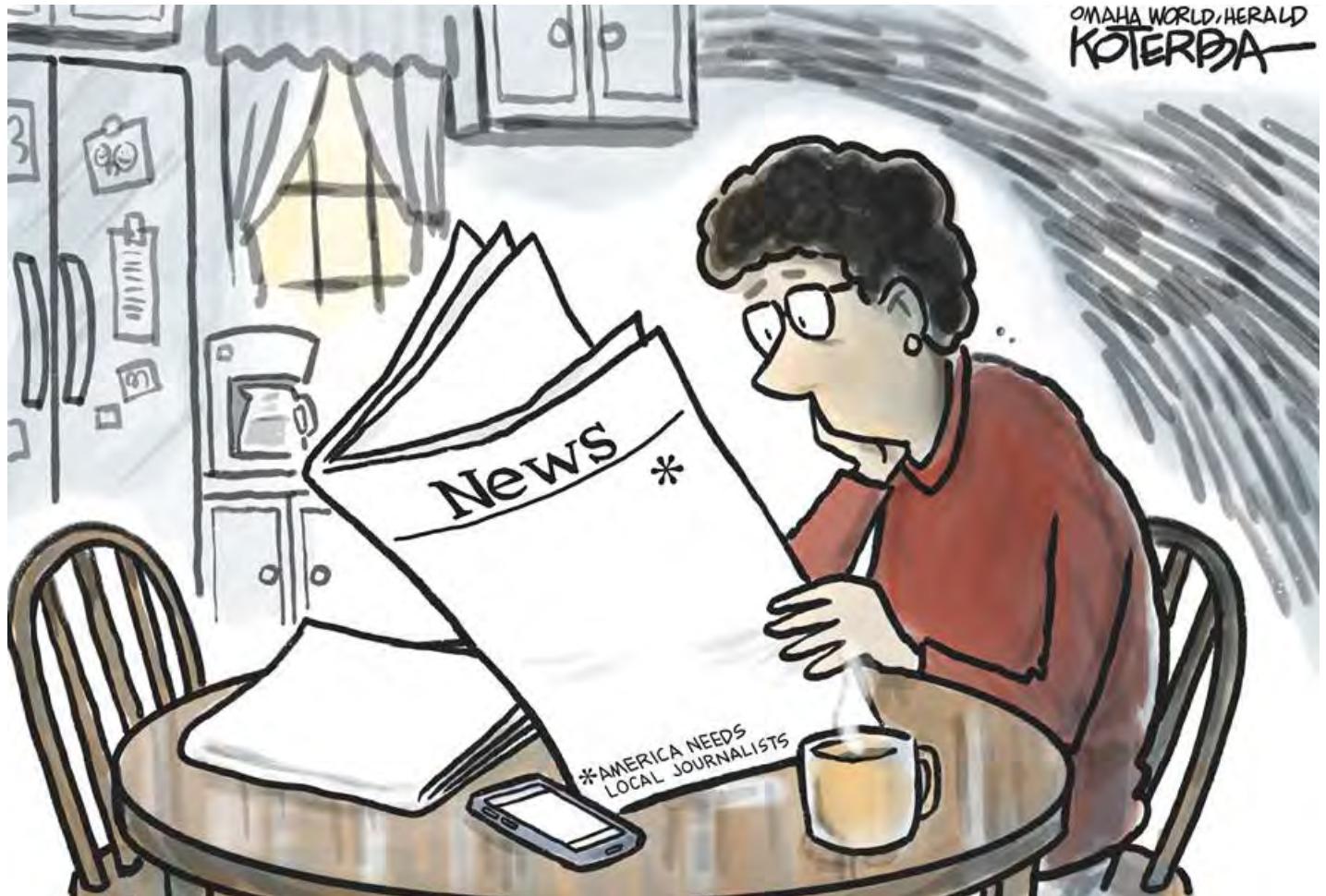
Still bringing communities together!



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegrlund.com



OMAHA WORLD HERALD
KOTERPA

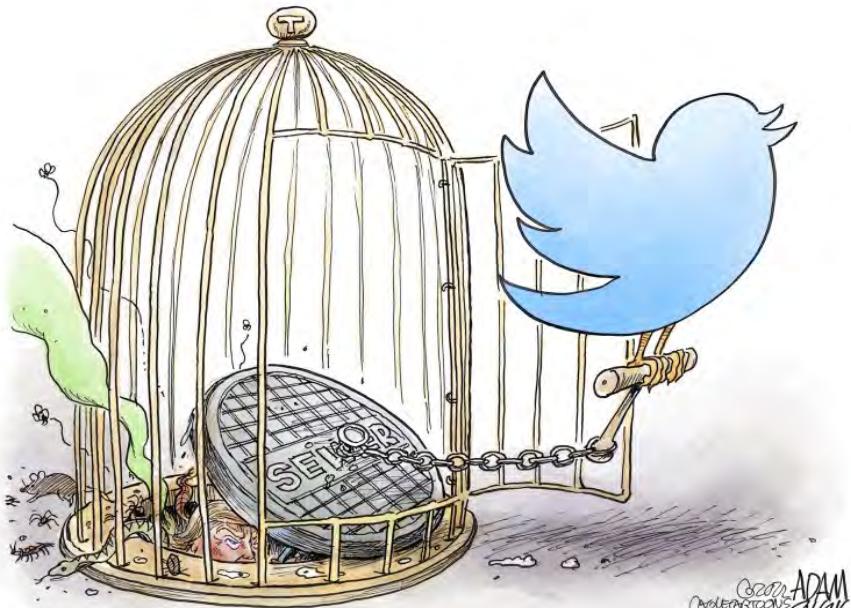


Cartoons for the Classroom

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



Will new owner 'free' Twitter speech?



Adam Zyglis, The Buffalo News / Courtesy of Cagle.com

1. What do these cartoons say about billionaire Elon Musk, a self-described “free speech absolutist,” buying Twitter?
2. Musk has said that social media should allow all speech permitted by law. How would that work in countries where criticizing leaders, questioning religion or disagreeing about history can result in a lengthy prison sentence or even death?
3. Are threats or calls for violence covered by free speech rights?
4. What is misinformation? Who gets to decide what it is? Could it be dangerous? Any examples of obvious misinformation online?

Between the lines

“Dis- and misinformation are hardly absent from Twitter, but removing the restraints that have been applied will flood the zone.” - Cheryl Rofer, physicist and Twitter user.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/twitter-elon-musk-and-free-speech-absolutism/>

Additional resources

- [More by Adam Zyglis](https://www.cagle.com/author/adam-zyglis/)
<https://www.cagle.com/author/adam-zyglis/>
- [More by Gary McCoy](https://www.cagle.com/author/gary-mccoy/)
<https://www.cagle.com/author/gary-mccoy/>
- [Association of American Editorial Cartoonists](http://editorialcartoonists.com/)
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>



Gary McCoy / Courtesy of Cagle.com

Going beyond the text

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 the *Tampa Bay Times* editorial titled "Striving to keep the truth" and the opinion article "Stop Attacking the press."

Identify the main purpose of each article and the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, why) of the article. Identify the standard editorial elements in each article and note the following points.

- Presenting opposing points of view
- Refuting opposing points
- Presenting details supporting the newspaper's position
- Urging readers to make a decision

Next, explain your reaction to the editorial. 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?

Going Beyond the Text

Newspaper in Education Activities

- 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 actions might have been taken 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 the 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 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?
 - What is your reaction to the change?

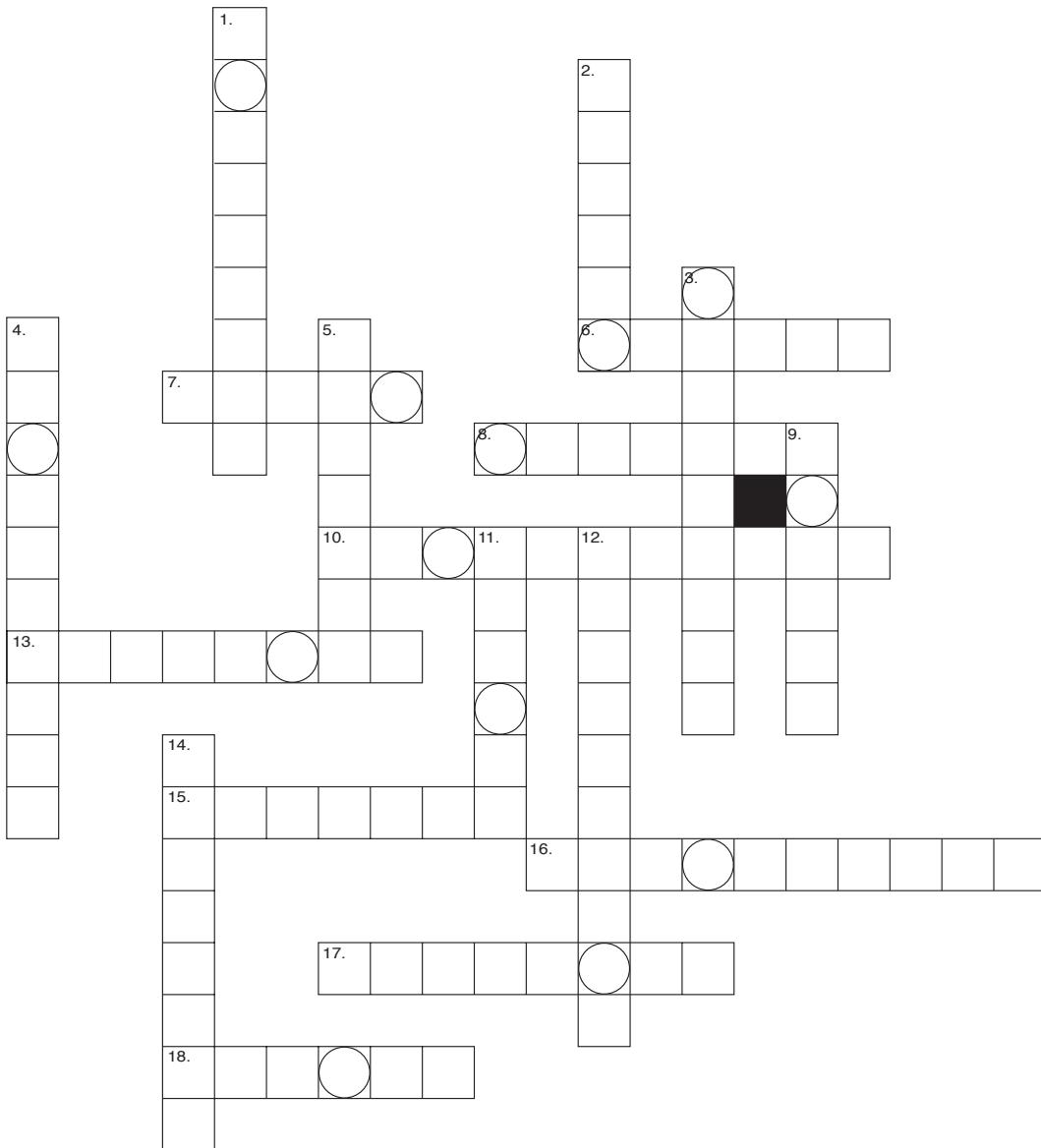
Visit the website of the company involved in the news story. Read what the company says about the change. Does the site discuss potential negative effects of the change or does it present only a positive picture? Where would you go to get a different point of view? Collect business opinion columns that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

National Newspaper Week Crossword



Unscramble the circled letters to find out what brings these together.

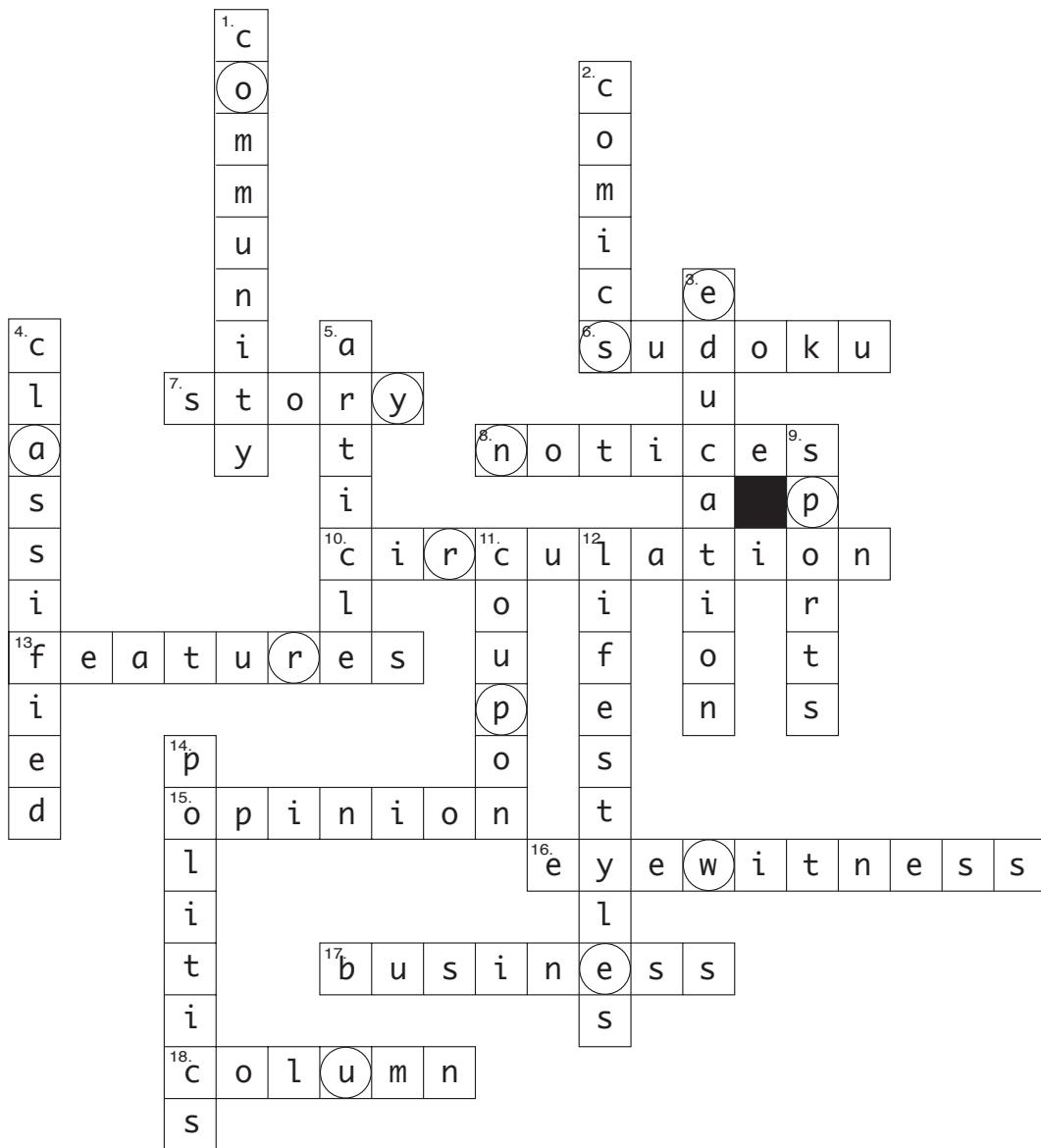
Down

1. friendly neighbors
 2. upright entertainers
 3. the three R's
 4. secret knowledge
 5. *a, an or the*
 9. competitive play
 11. shopper's friend
 12. "champagne wishes and caviar dreams"
 14. pundit's bread and butter

Across

- 6. numbers all in a row
 - 7. from floor to ceiling
 - 8. becomes aware
 - 10. library desk
 - 13. cinema offerings
 - 15. court's statement
 - 16. observer
 - 17. daily occupation
 - 18. rank and file formation

NNW Crossword Answer Key



Unscramble the circled letters to find out what brings these together.

y o u r n e w s p a p e r

Down

- friendly neighbors
- upright entertainers
- the three R's
- secret knowledge
- a, an or the
- competitive play
- shopper's friend
- "champagne wishes and caviar dreams"
- pundit's bread and butter

Across

- numbers all in a row
- from floor to ceiling
- becomes aware
- library desk
- cinema offerings
- court's statement
- observer
- daily occupation
- rank and file formation

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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