

**FPES**

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# Getting to Know Your Newspaper

JOURNALISM

## MATTERS

NOW MORE THAN EVER

*National Newspaper Week · Oct. 7-13*

Tampa Bay  
**Times**

**NIE**

newspaper in education

tampabay.com/nie

## **National Newspaper Week: Journalism Matters, *Now More than Ever***

**By Jodi Pushkin, President Florida Press Educational Services**

Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) is proud to commemorate **National Newspaper Week 2018: Journalism Matters** 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.

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 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 the Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) Web site at **[fpesnie.org](http://fpesnie.org)**.

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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](http://cpalms.org).

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

**Language Arts:** LAFS.612.RI.1.1; LAFS.612.RI.1.2; LAFS.612.RI.1.3; LAFS.612.RI.2.4; LAFS.612.RI.2.5; LAFS.612.RI.2.6; LAFS.612.RI.3.7; LAFS.612.L.1.1; LAFS.612.L.1.2; LAFS.612.L.2.3; LAFS.612.L.3.4; LAFS.612.L.3.5; LAFS.612.L.3.6; LAFS.612.R.1.1; LAFS.612.R.1.2; LAFS.612.R.1.3; LAFS.612.R.2.4; LAFS.612.R.2.5; LAFS.612.R.2.6; LAFS.612.R.3.7; LAFS.612.R.3.8; LAFS.612.R.3.9; LAFS.612.R.4.10; LAFS.612.SL.1.1; LAFS.612.SL.1.2; LAFS.612.SL.1.3; LAFS.612.SL.2.4; LAFS.612.SL.2.5; LAFS.612.SL.2.6; LAFS.612.W.1.1; LAFS.612.W.1.2; LAFS.612.W.1.3; LAFS.612.W.2.4; LAFS.612.W.2.5; LAFS.612.W.2.6; LAFS.612.W.3.7; LAFS.612.W.3.8; LAFS.612.W.3.9; LAFS.612.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](http://fpesnie.org), or email [ktower@flpress.com](mailto:ktower@flpress.com) or [jpushkin@tampabay.com](mailto:jpushkin@tampabay.com). Follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/nie\\_fpes](https://twitter.com/nie_fpes).

# 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

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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>	

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## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

malfesance \_\_\_\_\_

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?

## 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 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.

## 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 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

# Striving to keep truth flowing for democracy

**I**t is real news that the Hillsborough County School District said this week it will accelerate testing for lead in drinking water and release the results after the *Tampa Bay Times* reported testing would take years, and that until we asked, families weren't told about lead levels that already had been discovered.

It is real news that Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County announced this week it would try to buy back a dozen mortgages, a day after the *Times* reported the mortgages were sold to a Tampa company with a history of flipping foreclosed houses.

It is real news that the Clearwater man who shot and killed a father in a dispute over parking in a handicap-reserved space has a history of road rage, a history the *Times* first reported and law enforcement cited as the shooter was charged with manslaughter this week in a stand your ground case that has attracted national attention.

Yet from Washington, President Donald Trump attacks the media that provides fact-based, independent journalism and holds the powerful to account in communities around the nation.

Trump calls journalists "the enemy of the American people." He regularly refers to "fake news" and the "fake news media." Those assaults by the president cannot be brushed aside as theatrics, particularly when they are embraced by some of his strongest supporters and copied by politicians in Florida and elsewhere. That's why the *Tampa Bay Times* joins more than 200 newspapers throughout the nation today in a rare, coordinated response to Trump's systematic effort to discredit journalists and independent news gathering.

A free press builds the foundation for democracy. Citizens depend on honest, independent media for accurate information they need about their government, their elected leaders and their institutions. That is just as important in Tampa Bay and in communities across the nation as it is in Washington, and the *Times* takes that responsibility seriously. To cite just three more examples of how factual reporting informs readers and impacts the community:

- It was real news when the *Times*

reported CareerSource Tampa Bay and CareerSource Pinellas, the region's leading job placement centers, took credit for finding work for people who never sought their help and approved monthly bonuses for staffers who didn't meet performance goals. The long-time CareerSource president and CEO has been fired, and federal and state investigations are under way.

- It was real news when the *Times* revealed that the city of St. Petersburg released hundreds of millions of gallons of partially treated sewage in 2015-16. After federal and state investigations, the city is spending \$326 million to improve the sewage system as part of a consent order with the state.

- It was real news when the *Times* reported that the Pinellas County School District failed to deliver on promised resources to five foundering elementary schools in predominantly poor, black St. Petersburg neighborhoods. The Failure Factories project in 2015 brought a fresh commitment by the school district to invest in those schools. It also won one of the *Times'* 12 Pulitzer Prizes.

The prizes are nice, but our goal is to inform readers and make a difference in our community. Far from being enemies of the people, we live in the same neighborhoods as our readers, eat in the same restaurants and shop in the same stores. Our kids attend the same schools, we get stuck in the same traffic jams and we worry about hurricanes hitting home.

Trump's assault on the news media ignores these connections, and it is having a corrosive effect in Florida. At Trump's recent rally in Tampa, some of the president's supporters directed disturbing anger and verbal attacks toward reporters. Legislators and candidates for governor have dismissed accurate news reports they don't like as fake news. A political consultant called



CHRIS URSO | Times

**At the State Fairgrounds in Tampa late last month, President Donald Trump said: "They are fake. No, I mean, do you believe — look at this: Every night, it's the same thing."**

it "fake news" when a Sarasota candidate for the Florida House lied about having a college degree; she dropped out of the race Tuesday and apologized.

Of course, public officials who don't appreciate scrutiny have long attacked the messenger. Supporters of an embattled Pasco County sheriff who was being investigated by the *Times* in the 1980s distributed bumper stickers declaring, "I do not believe the *St. Petersburg Times*." (The name of this newspaper then.) That sheriff was removed from office by the governor, and the low-tech effort to undermine that reporting sounds quaint in this digital era. A steady stream of tweets about fake news from the president of the United States has a far broader impact.

As Trump attacks established journalism institutions, there is indeed a dangerous proliferation of lies masquerading as news. What started with a tweet by a white supremacist wound up convincing some readers that Hillary Clinton was part of a child sex trafficking ring that used a Washington pizza parlor as home base — and prompted one man to

start shooting inside the restaurant. The special counsel's investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election has resulted in indictments of three Russian organizations and 13 individuals. Among the tactics: Spreading false stories on social media.

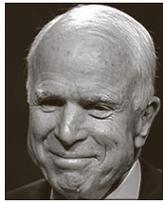
In such a toxic environment, Trump's declarations undermine not just journalists and news organizations but the communities and democracy we endeavor to serve. It is an attempt to blur the difference between fact-based news gathering, and the lies and propaganda that spread like wildfire through social media. Ultimately, engaged citizens must play the vital role in distinguishing one from the other as they choose their elected leaders and shape civic life. In a commencement speech this spring at Indiana University, *Times* Chairman Paul Tash reminded new graduates: "Fact or fake? Democracy depends on our ability to tell the difference. Journalism can help. It can be a great civic asset. But the final responsibility rests with us as Americans."

Without honest, independent journalism, where would citizens turn?



# Stop attacking press

After leaving office, President Ronald Reagan created the Ronald Reagan Freedom Award to recognize individuals who have fought to spread liberty worldwide. Nancy Reagan continued the tradition after her husband's death, and in 2008 she bestowed the honor on human rights icon Natan Sharansky, who credited Reagan's strong defense of freedom for his own survival in Soviet gulags. Reagan recognized that as leader of the free world, his words carried enormous weight, and he used it to inspire the unprecedented spread of democracy around the world.



**JOHN  
MCCAIN**

President Donald Trump does not seem to understand that his rhetoric and actions reverberate in the same way. He has threatened to continue his attempt to discredit the free press by

bestowing “fake news awards” upon reporters and news outlets whose coverage he disagrees with. Whether Trump knows it or not, these efforts are being closely watched by foreign leaders who are already using his words as cover as they silence and shutter one of the key pillars of democracy.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 2017 was one of the most dangerous years to be a journalist. Last year, the organization documented 262 cases of journalists being imprisoned for their work. Reporters around the world face intimidation, threats of violence, harassment, persecution and sometimes even death as governments resort to brutal censorship to silence the truth.

The committee's report revealed a bleak global climate for press freedom, as more governments seek to control access to information and limit freedom of opinion and expression. They do this not only by arresting journalists but also by fostering distrust of media coverage and accusing reporters of undermining national security and pride. Governments dub the press the “enemy of the people,” weaken or eliminate their independence, and exploit the lack of serious scrutiny to encroach on individual liberties and freedoms.

This assault on journalism and free speech proceeds apace in places such as Russia, Turkey, China, Egypt, Venezuela and many others. Yet even more troubling is the growing number of attacks on press freedom in traditionally free and open societies, where censorship in the name of national security is becoming more common. Britain passed a surveillance law that experts warn chills free speech, and countries from France to Germany are looking to do the same. In Malta, a prominent journalist was brutally murdered in October after uncovering systemic government corruption. In Poland, an independent news outlet was fined (later rescinded) nearly half a million dollars for broadcasting images of an antigov-

ernment demonstration.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration's attitude toward such behavior has been inconsistent at best and hypocritical at worst. While administration officials often condemn violence against reporters abroad, Trump continues his unrelenting attacks on the integrity of American journalists and news outlets. This has provided cover for repressive regimes to follow suit. The phrase “fake news” — granted legitimacy by an American president — is being used by autocrats to silence reporters, undermine political opponents, stave off media scrutiny and mislead citizens. CPJ documented 21 cases in 2017 in which journalists were jailed on “fake news” charges.

Trump's attempts to undermine the free press also make it more difficult to hold repressive governments accountable. For decades, dissidents and human rights advocates have relied on independent investigations into government corruption to further their fight for freedom. But constant cries of “fake news” undercut this type of reporting and strip activists of one of their most powerful tools of dissent.

We cannot afford to abdicate America's long-standing role as the defender of human rights and democratic principles throughout the world. Without strong leadership in the White House, Congress must commit to protecting independent journalism, preserving an open and free media environment, and defending the fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression.

We can do this by encouraging our partners and allies to review their laws and practices, including the abuse of defamation and anti-terrorism laws, to better protect press freedom and ensure that they do not unduly shrink the space for free speech. We can authorize U.S. foreign assistance to support independent media outlets and programs that create greater media pluralism. We can do more to foster conditions in which freedom of expression and information can thrive, including working to change increasingly political attitudes toward journalism. And we can condemn violence against journalists, denounce censorship and support dissidents and activists as they seek to speak the truth.

Ultimately, freedom of information is critical for a democracy to succeed. We become better, stronger and more effective societies by having an informed and engaged public that pushes policymakers to best represent not only our interests but also our values. Journalists play a major role in the promotion and protection of democracy and our unalienable rights, and they must be able to do their jobs freely. Only truth and transparency can guarantee freedom.

*John McCain, a Republican, represents Arizona in the U.S. Senate.*

## **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 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
<b>National, international news</b>	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.
<b>Local news</b>	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.
<b>Feature story</b>	Read a feature story about an individual who has achieved a major accomplishment. What lessons could you learn from this individual?
<b>Editorials</b>	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?
<b>Sports</b>	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?
<b>Entertainment</b>	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.
<b>Science/technology</b>	Read a story about a scientific/technological advance. Write a story explaining how the advance will benefit individuals and/or businesses.
<b>Comics</b>	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.
<b>Display ads</b>	Locate an ad for an existing service. Suggest ways to expand the service and provide new uses for it.
<b>Classified ads</b>	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
<b>National, international news</b>	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.
<b>Local news</b>	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?
<b>Feature story</b>	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.
<b>Editorials</b>	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.
<b>Sports</b>	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?
<b>Entertainment</b>	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.
<b>Science/technology</b>	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?
<b>Comics</b>	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?
<b>Display ads</b>	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.
<b>Classified ads</b>	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.**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
<b>National, international news</b>	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.
<b>Local news</b>	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.
<b>Feature story</b>	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.
<b>Editorials</b>	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.
<b>Sports</b>	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.
<b>Entertainment</b>	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.
<b>Science/technology</b>	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.
<b>Comics</b>	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.
<b>Display ads</b>	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.
<b>Classified ads</b>	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
<b>National, international news</b>	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.
<b>Local news</b>	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.
<b>Feature story</b>	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.
<b>Editorials</b>	Select an editorial with which you disagree. Write a rebuttal to the editorial responding to the editorial writer's ideas point by point.
<b>Sports</b>	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?
<b>Entertainment</b>	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?
<b>Science/technology</b>	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.
<b>Comics</b>	Examine comic strips about school or family life. Select the one you think is most realistic. Explain how that strip portrays real life.
<b>Display ads</b>	Compare and contrast ads for two brands of a product or service. Select the product/service you think is best. Explain your selection.
<b>Classified ads</b>	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?