

# FPES

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EDUCATIONAL SERVICES INC.

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# 2022

# Newspaper in Education Week



## **Celebrating Newspaper in Education Week**

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

Florida Press Educational Services (FPES) is proud to commemorate Newspaper in Education Week 2021 and encourages teachers, parents and students to read the newspaper daily in school and at home to enrich their lives. FPES and its member Newspaper in Education programs join the American Press Institute in commemorating and celebrating Newspaper in Education Week the first full school week in March.

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

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

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

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

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

Using newspapers as a teaching tool can improve reading skills and student performance on 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)**.

**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, Hillsborough Community College and Pasco Hernando State College. Contact Pushkin via e-mail at **[jpushkin@tampabay.com](mailto:jpushkin@tampabay.com)**.

# Florida Standards

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

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

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

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

**B.E.S.T Language Arts:** ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.4.F.1.3; ELA.4.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.1; ELA.412.R.2.3; ELA.412.R.2.4; ELA.412.R.3.2; ELA.412.R.3.4; ELA.412.V.1.1; ELA.412.V.1.3

## 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@fpress.com](mailto:ktower@fpress.com) or [jpushkin@tampabay.com](mailto:jpushkin@tampabay.com). Follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/nie\\_fpes](https://twitter.com/nie_fpes).

## **Enhancing your curriculum; Engaging your students**

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

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

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

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

# Informational Text and the Newspaper

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

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

# Fiction and Informational Text: Reader Expectations

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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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**Read “Educate the Public, Keep Democracy Thriving”**

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

Corruption \_\_\_\_\_

Hallmark \_\_\_\_\_

Pertinent \_\_\_\_\_

Pillar \_\_\_\_\_

Thriving \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main point of the article? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why are educated citizens important for democracy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What information can be found in the news section of a newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What information can be found in the opinion section of a newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How does a newspaper “give back” to democracy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Newspaper connection:**

When the forefathers of the United States of America decided to form a new government, it was a bold, radical and dangerous idea. It was feared that a country could not survive without a king. A democratic society could not work. In his Gettysburg Address, President Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as being “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” What does that phrase mean? How have the people changed the United States throughout the decades? Citizen involvement is essential for a democracy to work properly. From Thomas Jefferson and George Washington to Martin Luther King, Jr. and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, political ideals, principles and people’s rights have evolved. In small groups, make a list of all the different ways citizens can be involved in society, their communities and government. Next, look through your local newspaper to find more ways citizens can participate in society. Find examples of people who contribute to democracy in your community. Who are these people? What makes them good citizens? Where are they participating? How are they contributing to society and the community? What can you do to contribute to your community? Choose one of the activities you have read about to participate in with your friends and family. Go to the following websites for more ideas: [volunteerflorida.org](http://volunteerflorida.org) and [nationalservice.gov/serve](http://nationalservice.gov/serve). Share what you have learned with your classmates and on social media.



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### COLLEGE ESSAY

## Educate the Public, Keep Democracy Thriving

By SCOTT JASON

The United States' democracy is a system based on the principle of rule of the people by the people. Citizens who are educated are a pillar of an effectively functioning democracy. In a democracy, the newspaper that remains free from any governmental control has proven to be the single most valuable tool for informing the public.

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The public is educated through newspapers' news and opinion sections, which create a marketplace of ideas and a forum to debate issues pertinent to communities. A democracy demands that newspapers inform the public of pertinent local, state and national issues. Everything from state fairs to murders can be found in A-sections across America. In the opinion sections, citizens write letters expressing their feelings, spurning discussion on social and political topics. A hallmark of American democracy is debate, which leads to understanding and creates compromise.

There is no time more important for newspapers to accurately report than when a country is debating going to war--or when it is in a war. During the Vietnam War, the media was largely credited for shifting the public's view on whether or not the United States should continue its involvement. Without newspapers that were free to publish photos and stories without government censorship, the United States may have kept sending troops to Vietnam. Additionally, newspapers play a role in making sure the public chooses the best politicians to lead the country, which can prove instrumental during a war.

Last year, while I was the news editor of my college newspaper, The Orion, the managing editor and I published a voter's guide to inform students about local city council candidates, state propositions and the presidential election. It is stories like these that keep a democracy healthy. A newspaper cannot just take freedom of the press from a democracy; it must give back. This includes allowing the public to know all its choices during an election.

A democracy that does not have an informed public is destined to decay. Unjust legislation would be passed, laws would be unequally enforced and elected officials would fall to corruption. However, newspapers offer the strongest safeguard against such rot. They are integral to the United States because they educate the public, which keeps democracy thriving.

*Scott Jason is the managing editor of The Orion at California State University, Chico.*

### Tips

To find reference information about the words used in this article, hold down the ALT key and click on any word, phrase or name. A new window will open with a dictionary definition or encyclopedia entry.

## Read “Democracy depends on a free press”

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

absolute \_\_\_\_\_

democracy \_\_\_\_\_

preserving \_\_\_\_\_

diligent \_\_\_\_\_

citizenry \_\_\_\_\_

ratified \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main point of the article? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why does the government have three branches? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

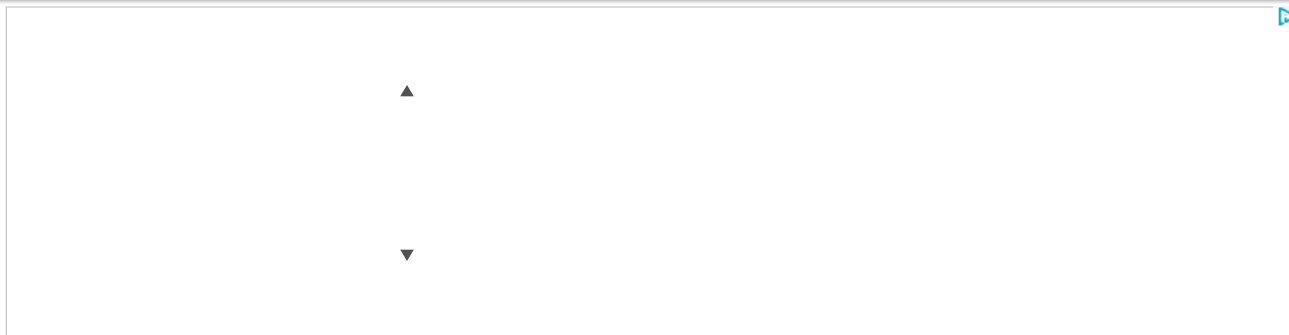
5. Why would democracy suffer without a free press? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Newspaper Connection:**

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



SPEAK UP

## Democracy depends on a free press



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

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

a government that was ruled by the people instead of one that ruled them.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



## Read “The value of freedom of press”

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

abridging \_\_\_\_\_

ensorship \_\_\_\_\_

adversarial \_\_\_\_\_

inefficiency \_\_\_\_\_

profit \_\_\_\_\_

values \_\_\_\_\_

1. Identify the who, what, why, where points of the article. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Identify the main points the author is making in this article. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. In his article, Yang writes, people have “widely accessible news and innumerable information at our fingertips.” List as many news and information sources as you can. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In your opinion, which of the reasons the author provides, do you think is the most significant for young people. Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why does the author describe the freedom of the press as being “crucial?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Newspaper Connection:

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



# High school essay winner: The value of freedom of press

## OPINION

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Hanhee Yang is a junior at Cape Coral High School.*

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

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

trustworthy \_\_\_\_\_

news \_\_\_\_\_

opinion \_\_\_\_\_

advocacy \_\_\_\_\_

partisan \_\_\_\_\_

skeptical \_\_\_\_\_

proximity \_\_\_\_\_

witness \_\_\_\_\_

hypothesis \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

### **Newspaper Connection:**

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



# Six questions that will tell you what media to trust

PUBLISHED 10/22/13 3:55 PM

UPDATED 10/23/13 11:37 AM

TOM ROSENSTIEL

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

How do you know what to trust?

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

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

## 1. Type: What kind of content is this?

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

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

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

”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence is closely related to but slightly different than source.

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

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

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“

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

”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 5. Completeness: What's missing?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

distinction \_\_\_\_\_

opinion \_\_\_\_\_

distinguish \_\_\_\_\_

news \_\_\_\_\_

clarity \_\_\_\_\_

template \_\_\_\_\_

inconsistency \_\_\_\_\_

transparency \_\_\_\_\_

dispel \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

### **Newspaper Connection:**

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

Share what you have learned with your class.



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

PUBLISHED 09/19/18 1:25 PM


UPDATED 09/19/18 3:02 PM

KEVIN LOKER

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

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

This stat alone suggests there's an issue.

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

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

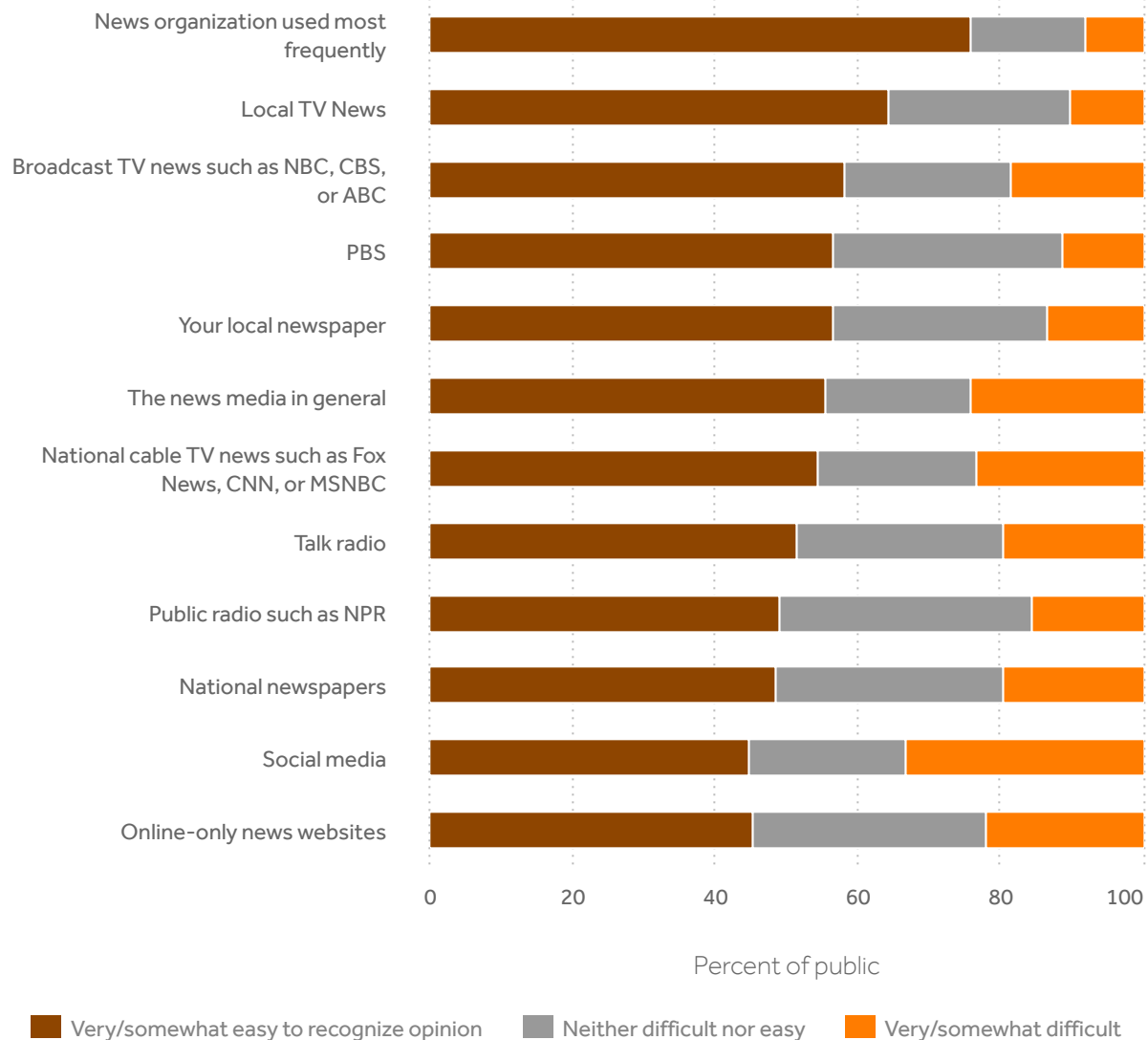
Notably, the types of media where people expressed the least clarity were digital news sites and social media.

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

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

DATA CHART

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



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

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

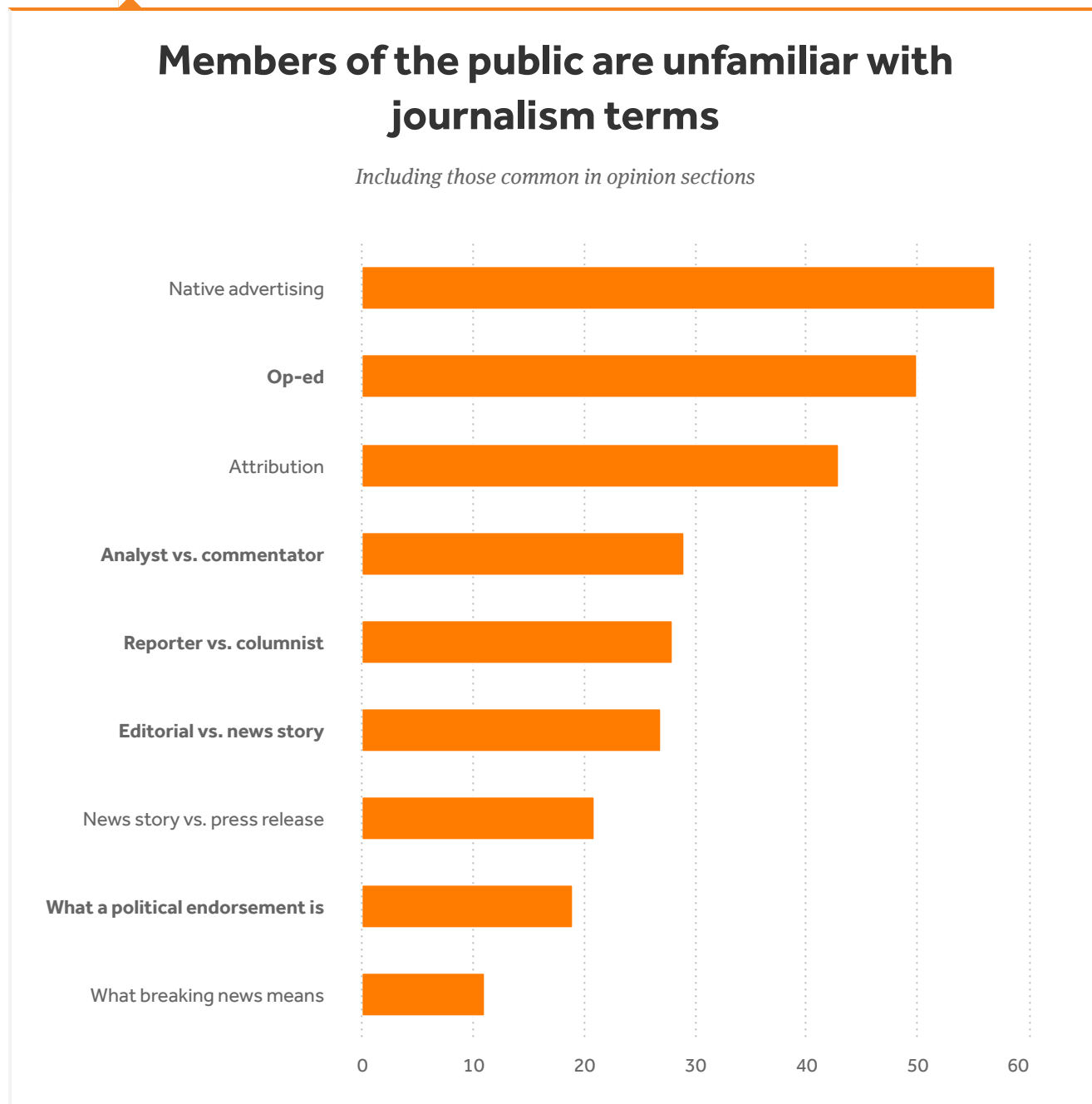
Study: "Americans and the News Media," 2018.

MEDIA INSIGHT PROJECT

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

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

DATA CHART



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notably, journalists understand that these issues exist.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Read the article by Matt Geiger

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

mantra \_\_\_\_\_

referendum \_\_\_\_\_

obituaries \_\_\_\_\_

inhabit \_\_\_\_\_

gelatinous \_\_\_\_\_

flourish \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main point of "Community journalism matters because communities matter?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. List at least three types of things weekly newspapers cover. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why are community newspapers important? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why does journalism matter now more than ever? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why does community journalism matter now more than ever? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Newspaper Connection:

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

## Community journalism matters because communities matter



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Read the article by Dave Zweifel

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

investigation \_\_\_\_\_

proliferation \_\_\_\_\_

investigation \_\_\_\_\_

pollution \_\_\_\_\_

democracy \_\_\_\_\_

hinder \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main point of "Journalism matters because democracy matters?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the result of the investigation into the state-operated home for aged military veterans? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What caused governmental agencies and citizens have since come together to act regarding the community's stormwater runoff problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did the Founding Fathers create the First Amendment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why are democracy and journalism inseparable? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Newspaper Connection:**

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

## Journalism matters because democracy matters



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Journalism matters because democracy matters. The two are inseparable.

## 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.

## 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 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.

## “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.

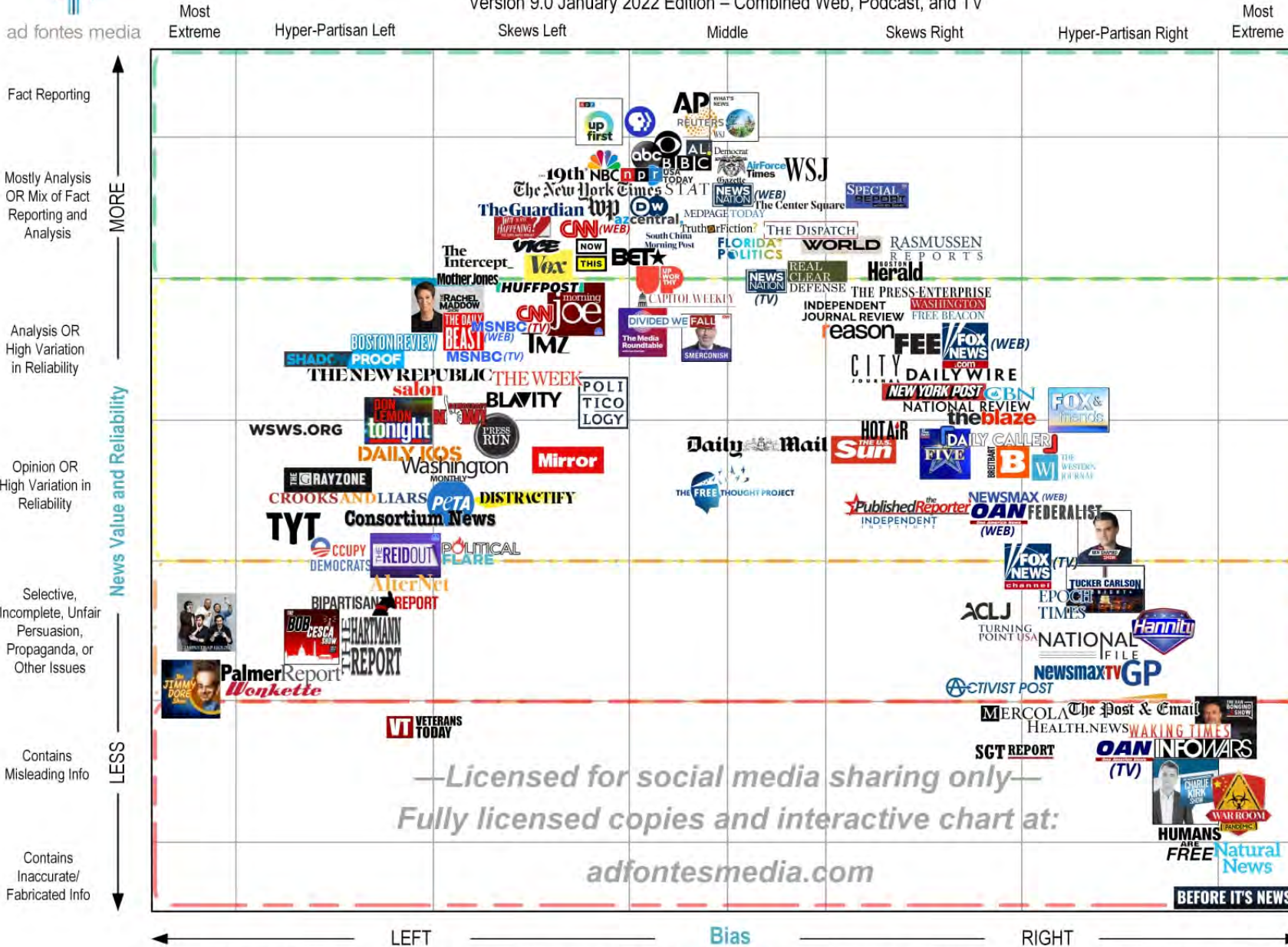
As my former Gannett News Service colleague, University of Kentucky journalism professor Al Cross put in a bumper sticker he had commissioned a couple years back, "Support democracy: Subscribe."





# The Media Bias Chart®

Version 9.0 January 2022 Edition – Combined Web, Podcast, and TV



—Licensed for social media sharing only—  
 Fully licensed copies and interactive chart at:  
[adfontesmedia.com](http://adfontesmedia.com)

Not all media is created equal

Interpret this chart with your classmates.



## **Interpreting cartoons**

Students can determine the meaning of cartoons through the analysis of their 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 following chart and questions are from the Library of Congress Cartoon Analysis Guide. Have your students use this chart and the questions to interpret the cartoons.

## Cartoon Analysis Guide

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

### Cartoonists' Persuasive Techniques

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

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

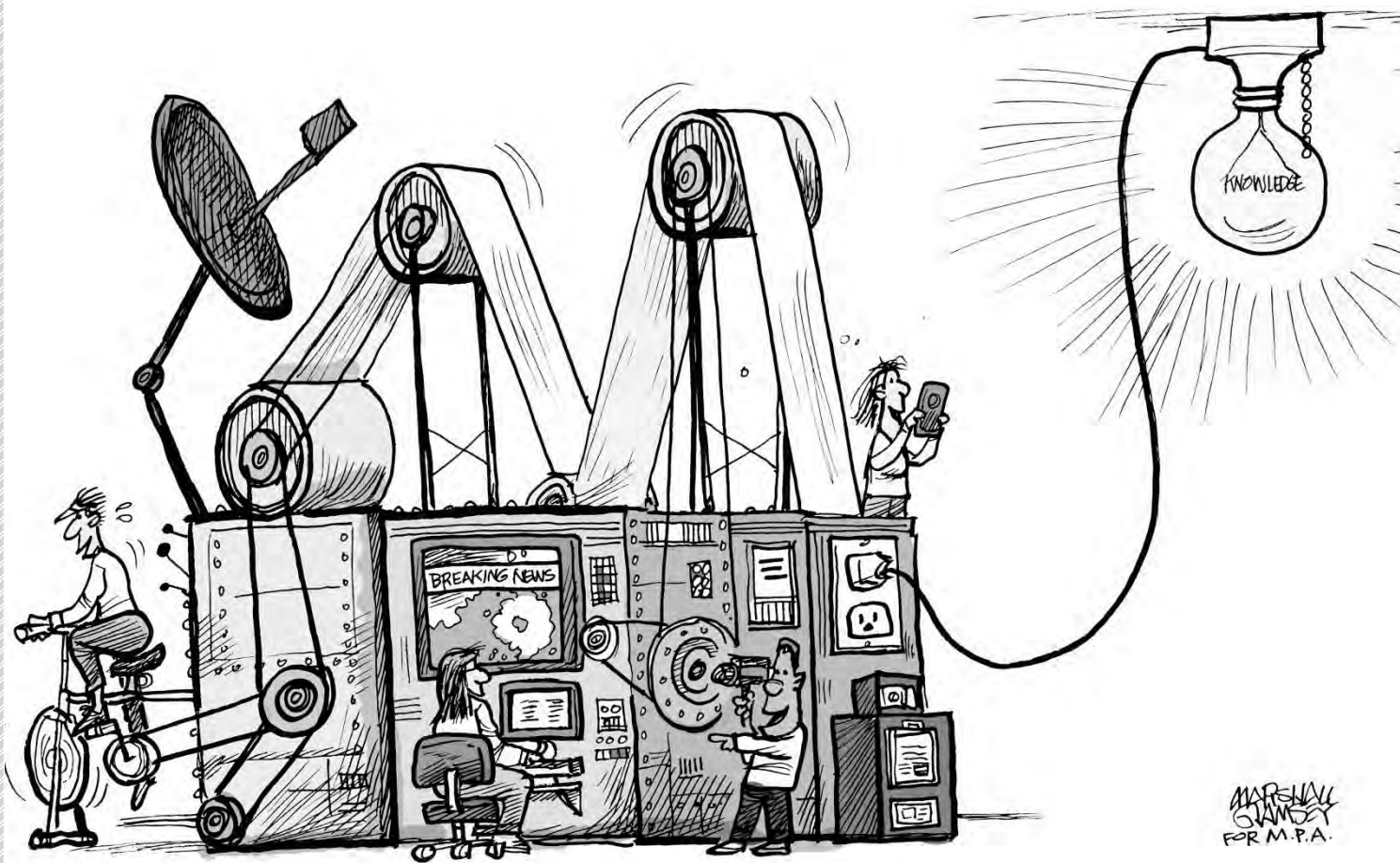
What issue is this political cartoon about?

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

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

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

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

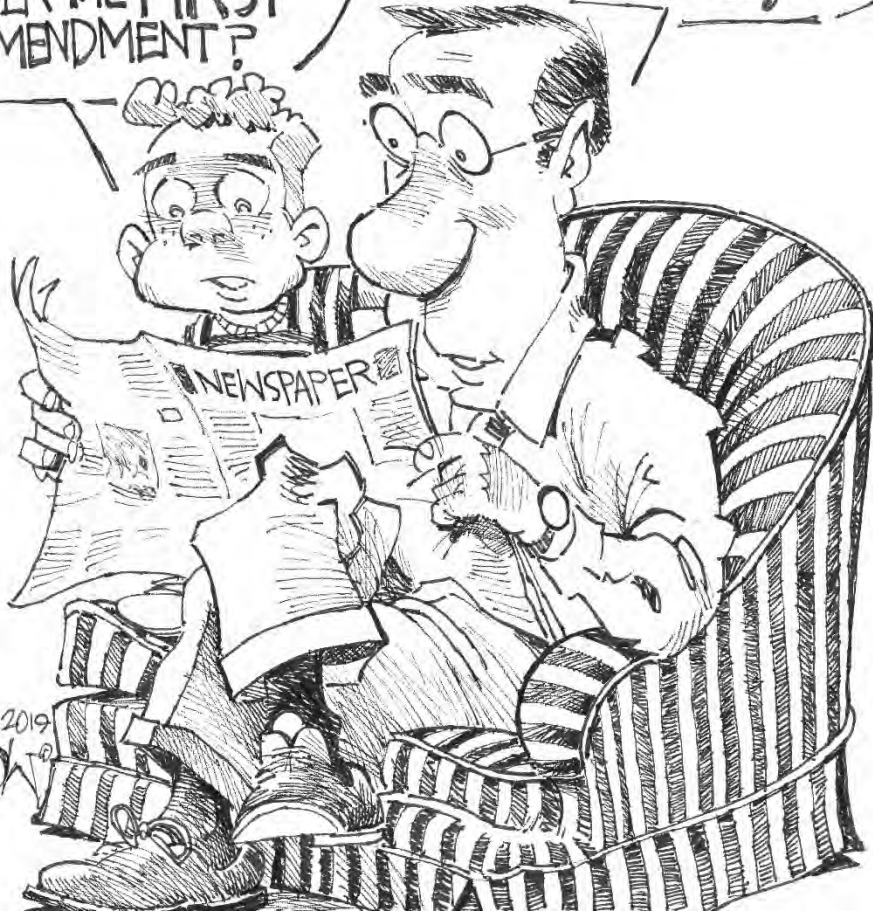


MARSHALL  
STANLEY  
FOR M.P.A.

THE POWER OF THE PRESS

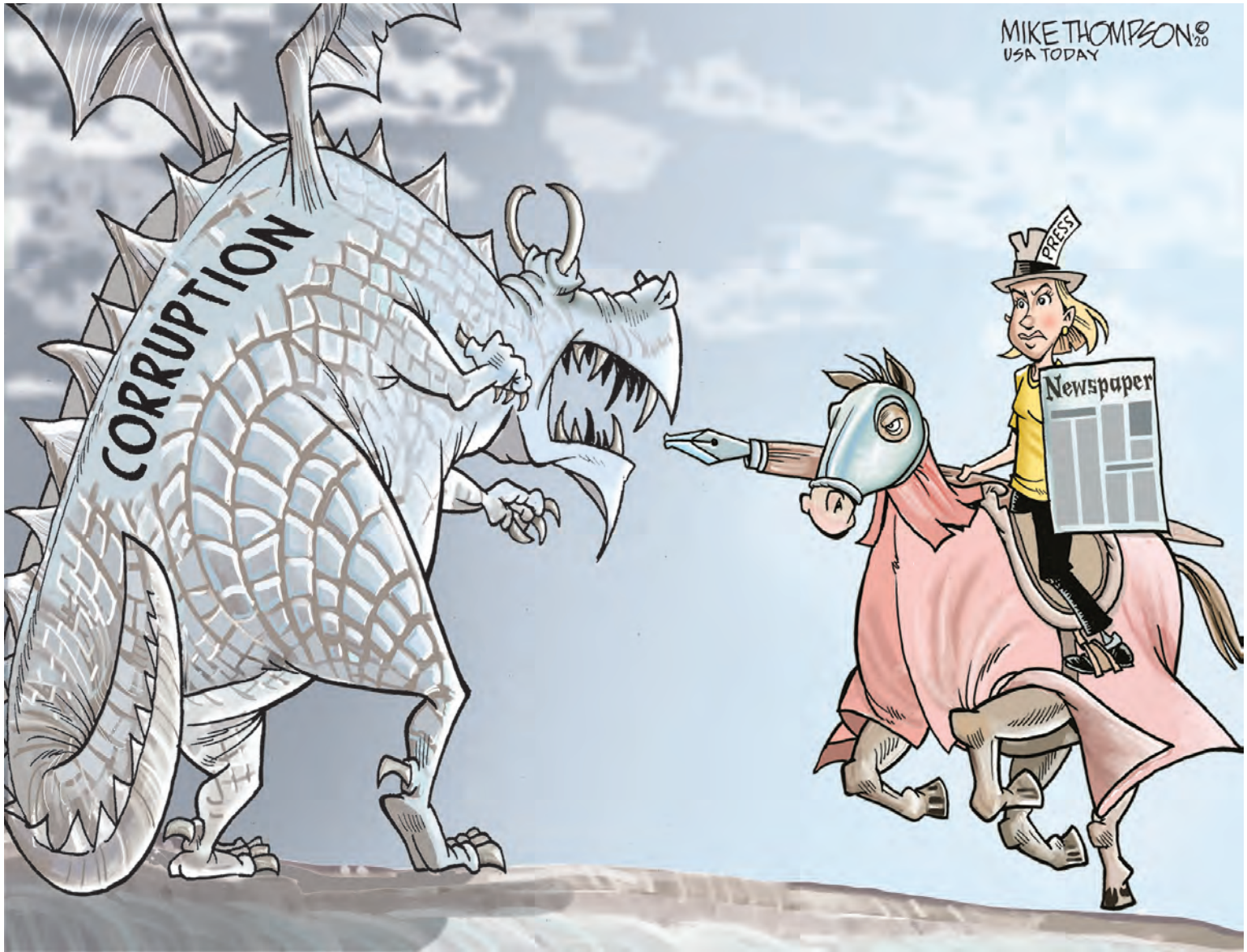
DAD, WHY IS THE  
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS  
UNDER THE FIRST  
AMENDMENT?

BECAUSE IT'S THE  
MOST IMPORTANT  
ONE!



DARK 2019

MIKE THOMPSON ©  
USA TODAY





A.G.  
8/27/20



# Cartoons for the Classroom



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

SUNSHINE WEEK

## Spotlighting government secrecy

### Talking points

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

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



Etta Hulme / Fort Worth Star-Telegram



Tom Toles / Washington Post: Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

### Get out your newspaper

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

### Additional resources

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

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

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

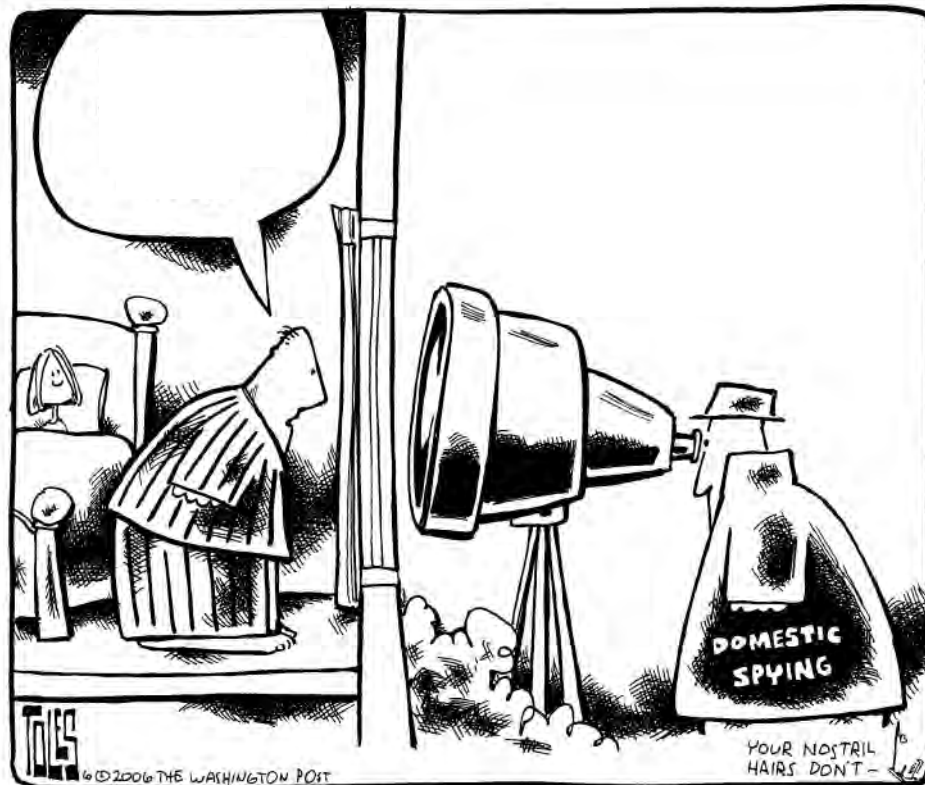
More Sunshine Week resources online  
<http://www.sunshineweek.org/>



# Cartoons for the Classroom



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



Tom Toles / Washington Post: Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

## Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

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

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

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# Cartoons for the Classroom

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



## Drawing attention to government secrecy



Courtesy Etta Hulme / Fort Worth Star-Telegram

### Sunshine Week

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

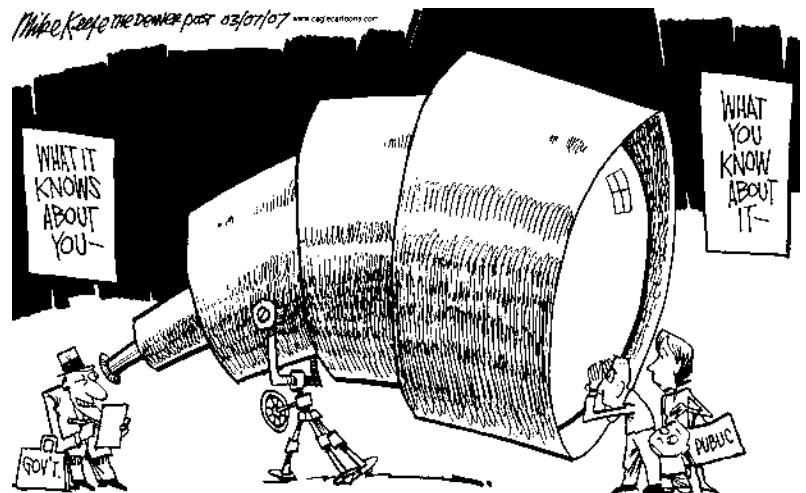
Though spearheaded by journalists, Sunshine Week is about the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why.

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

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

### Talking points

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



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

### Additional resources

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

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

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

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

# Cartoons for the Classroom

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

## Sunshine Week

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



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette



Courtesy Signe Wilkinson / Philadelphia Daily News

## Additional resources

More by Joe Heller

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

More by Signe Wilkinson

<http://www.philly.com/dailynews/opinion/signer/>

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

## Shine the light on your government

### Talking points

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



# Cartoons for the Classroom



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



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette

## Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

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

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

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# Cartoons for the Classroom



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

## Between the Lines

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

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

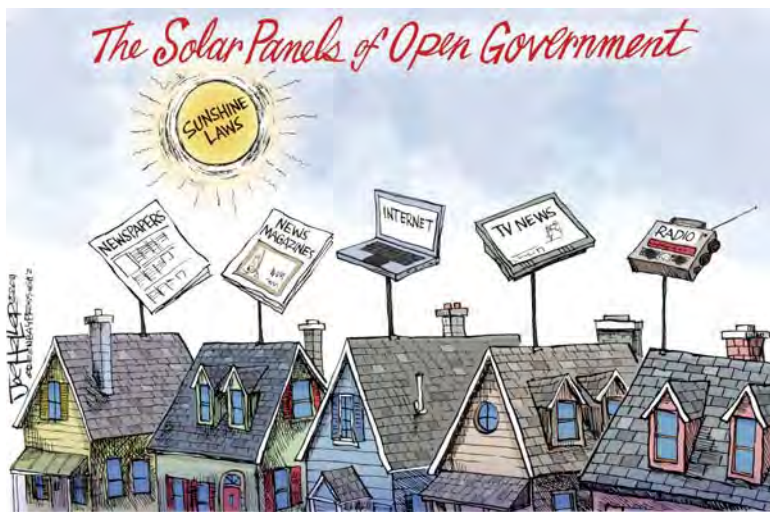
This year Sunshine week is March 13-19.

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



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

Courtesy Jeff Parker / Florida Today



Courtesy Joe Heller / Green Bay Press Gazette

## Additional resources

More by Joe Heller

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

Jeff Parker

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

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

## Sunshine Week: A bright idea

### Talking points

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



# Cartoons for the Classroom



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



Courtesy Jeff Parker / Florida Today

## Draw your own conclusions

Study the drawing and come up with your own caption.

It can be funny or serious.

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

Try out different captions

Write your captions here.

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# Cartoons for the Classroom

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



Courtesy Ben Sargent / Austin-American Statesman

## Draw your own conclusions

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

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

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## Going beyond the text – Logical fallacies

### Analyzing Advertisements

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

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

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



## Going beyond the text – PolitiFact FL

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

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

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

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

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

**FALSE** – The statement is not accurate.

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

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

### Going beyond the text

#### Fact checking

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

## Going Beyond the Text

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

- Look up the words “hero” and “celebrity” in a dictionary. Once you know the dictionary definition (denotation), discuss with your class what the connotations of these words are. Look through the newspaper to identify people who you would consider to be heroes and others who you would define as celebrities. List the names of these people and the newspaper section in which you found their names or pictures. Be sure to note why you categorized each person the way you did.
  
- Conflict is something that is inevitable in real life. It happens every day: at home, at school, in the neighborhood, in the world. Conflict is represented in all sections of the newspapers, as well. Look through the newspaper to find examples of conflict. Determine the types of conflicts and possible solutions for each incident that you find. For each conflict, determine what techniques could have been done to avoid the conflict.
  
- The comic strips in the newspaper often reflect real life. We can be pleased with this because there is much honesty that can be found among the characters in various comic strips. Read through the comic strips in the newspaper. As you read, look for examples of honesty or truthfulness in each character’s speech and actions. Write a brief paragraph about the comic strip and the qualities you have discovered in the character or characters. Share your thoughts with your classmates.
  
- Knowing the difference between fact and opinion is very important, especially when it comes to information about your community and world. Oftentimes, leaders try to influence young people by providing propaganda or false information to persuade the young people to join their side in an argument, cause or for an event. Look through the news sections of the newspaper. Select a few articles of interest and evaluate those articles for facts and opinions. Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. Label one side Fact and the other Opinion. List statements in each category and discuss with your family and class why these statements fall into that category. Think about the content of the articles and the information on your chart. Thinking about the idea that facts can be persuasive, write an essay or blog post discussing the ideas you have read about and learned.

- Evaluating advertisements is an important skill. One of the biggest advertisers is the diet industry. The diet industry is big business in the United States. Why does the diet industry tend to make big promises about quick results? Television commercials, radio spots, newspaper ads ... the focus is always on losing weight quickly without any effort. The Purdue Online Writing Lab defines fallacies as “common errors in reasoning that will undermine the logic of your argument. Fallacies can be either illegitimate arguments or irrelevant points, and are often identified because they lack evidence that supports their claim.” Research the types of logical fallacies. Then find an ad or article in the newspaper that focuses on a diet or diet product. Apply your new knowledge to the information in the ad and analyze the points presented. Create a chart or infographic with the information you have read and learned about. Share your information with your class.
  
- Science plays an increasingly important role in our lives. Science stories today involve more than news of the latest invention or medical advance. Every science issue has implications on many levels: personal, social, economic, political, religious and ethical. There are multiple sides to every science story. Technological advances, for example, may increase communication but may also raise questions of privacy rights. Stem cell research may hold the answers to many devastating medical conditions, but it raises religious questions as well. Science stories are found on national news pages as well as in special science news pages. Many newspapers dedicate a weekly section to science.
  - Find an article about a recent science breakthrough or advance.
  - List the benefits of the advance.
  - List any negative consequences of that breakthrough.
  - Putting these ideas together, write a fully-developed paragraph discuss the fact that every new scientific advance has consequences people may not have considered. Share what you have learned with your class.

- Your local newspaper’s mission is to serve your community. When there is a situation that requires community action, the newspaper reports on the problem and all the different individuals and groups that have an interest in the problem. People who are affected by a situation are often called “stakeholders.”
  - Read news stories about a problem or concern in your community.
  - Identify the different stakeholders who are proposing different solutions to the problem.
  - Collect the information and write it down on a piece of paper.
  - Then develop a solution of your own. What solution would you propose that is different from any of those proposed by the stakeholders?
  - Interview family members and friends. Ask their opinions about the problem. Ask them for their solutions.
  - Write a letter to the editor or a blog post discussing how the other solutions are different from yours.
  
- The editorial page of the newspaper provides readers with differing opinions about news events. Editorials present the views of the newspaper. Opinion columns present the views of individuals who comment regularly on news topics. Letters to the editor present the views of the newspaper’s readers. Read your newspaper’s editorial on a national topic that interests you. Identify the standard editorial elements in the editorial you read and note the following points. Then explain your reaction to the editorial.
  - Presenting opposing points of view
  - Refuting opposing points
  - Presenting details supporting the newspaper’s position
  - Urging readers to make a decision

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

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

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

▪ **Newspaper Scavenger Hunt**

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

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

# Application

Students use previously learned information in new situations.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
<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.

SECTION	ACTIVITY
<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.**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
<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?

## Online Scavenger Hunt Bingo!

Using the *Tampa Bay Times* website, find something that fits each category in the boxes below. <https://www.tampabay.com/>  
Copy the URL link into the box once you find it – submit once you have BINGO (5 across/diagonal, up/down, or side/side)

*You MUST include the entire link to get credit (so that I can confirm!)*

An article about the president	An article about a young child	A story about a local sports team	A story about someone famous who died	A recipe with no meat
A link to info about garage sales	An article about food safety	Information about health concerns	Information about the weather	A story about a theme park or a live show
A story about a hero	Suggestions for fun things to do with the family	A story about schools	A story about a band or a concert	Information about a traffic problem
A story about something historic	A link to some valuable coupons	A story about a new restaurant	A letter to the editor	A picture from a sporting event
An article about another country's problems	One of the top 5 "Most Read" articles	An advertisement about puppies	A story about something good	Advice from a trusted source

# “Found” Poetry

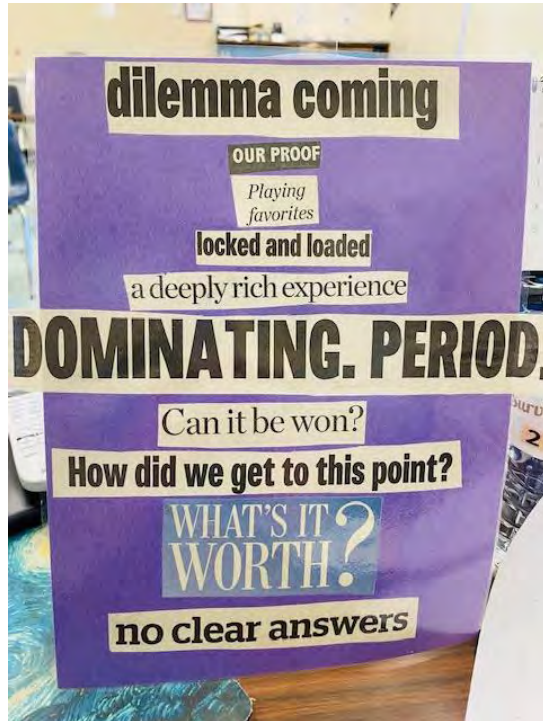
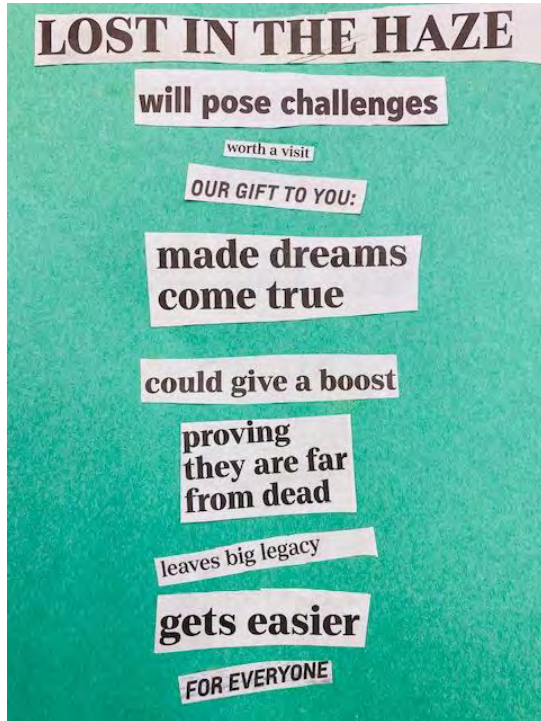
*Activity created by Elizabeth Crawley, 2021 Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education Teacher of the Year*

Poetry is a gift for those who pay attention. The lyrics and the song are all around us if we are keen enough to notice. The purpose of this assignment is to unlock the simple beauty of poetry using a familiar object like the newspaper.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In your group, look through the different sections of your newspaper. Determine a common theme, and then cut out phrases/sentences you find throughout the paper. Then, as a team, assemble your phrases into a cohesive poem and glue them onto your construction paper. Your poem needs to be at least 10 lines long.

## **PRO-TIPS!!!**

- Using headlines and advertisements is a lot easier than using the text of the articles!
- Try to avoid cutting out single words individually, but stick to longer phrases instead
- After you see what phrases you can use, you can narrow down your focus and try to find phrases that will work with your chosen topic.



*“Found Poetry” Samples*

## Analyzing Photos

### **Writing about Images**

Images are visual texts. They speak through visual signs and are representations of the human world in which we live. As you begin to explore how a specific image communicates, you might want to think about where the dominance is located in the text and how it speaks. What is the relationship of the dominance to the other objects in the image? Think about the elements in the text and identify how the narrative is displayed. Is it a narrative of phenomenon (a monumental occurrence) or is it a narrative of pathos? Is the narrative told through the setting, the action, or a relationship? Maybe it is a combination of all the above.

Once you establish the organizational scheme of the text, then you want to begin to employ your critical thinking to explain what and how the image communicates. You might begin with two simple questions:

1. What do I see?
2. What do I wonder?

As you begin to wonder about the image, ask yourself what leads you to this questioning:

1. Where is your eye drawn?
2. What stands out for you?
3. What details seem interesting and why?
4. How does the image make you feel?
5. What is in the foreground and the background?
6. How do the elements of the image compliment or critique each other?
7. To what issue does the image seem to speak?
8. What does the image say, and how does the image say it?

For more information about writing about images, see Chapter 4.1.

### **Rhetorical Analysis**

Select one of the following images and write a well-organized paragraph discussing what idea is presented in the image and how this idea is presented. As you make your conclusions, please ask yourself the following: Why did I say that? How can I qualify that? As you do so, you will begin to clarify your thoughts and present them with concrete reasoning. Be sure to begin with a clear topic sentence, followed by specific details to explain that introductory sentence.

# Tell the Story

In your groups, select ONE of the images provided.

Examine the picture. What do you notice about it?

Fill out the chart below with your preliminary observations:

<b>WHAT do I SEE? (List at least three in the boxes below)</b>	<b>WHAT does it MEAN or HOW does it make me FEEL?</b>	<b>WHY do I think that? (Justify your answers!)</b>

Now, in your groups, come up with your OWN story behind this image. Write in no fewer than 2 well developed paragraphs what is going on here. The style is up to you: write it as a newspaper article, a short story, a poem, a report, etc. Be sure to include as many details as possible! Remember – it's not what you say, it's how well you can back it up!!!

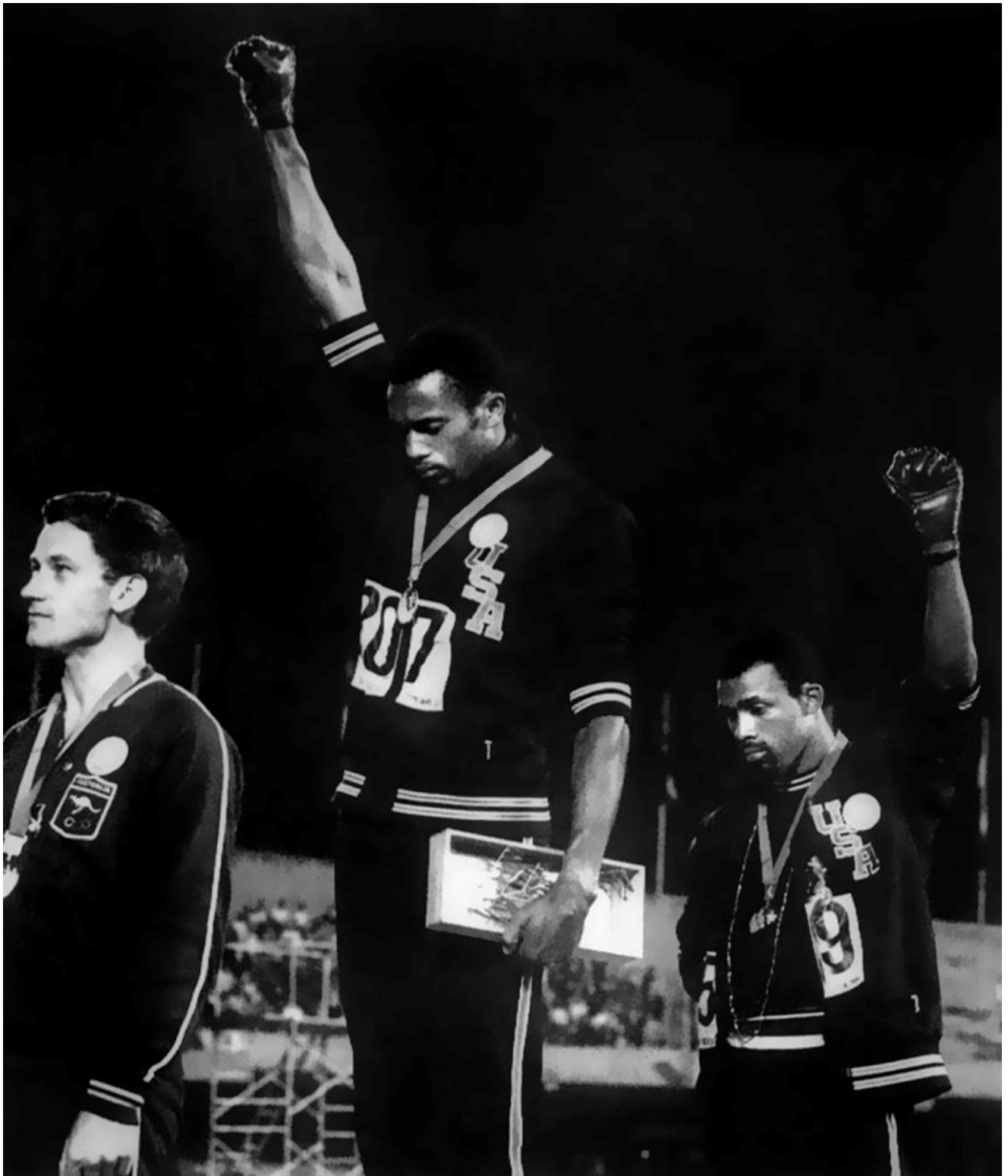
You will be sharing your story with the class when completed.





















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