

Heather Wiseman, East Lake High School, Pinellas County



"Newspaper classroom activities help my English and AVID students with reading and connect them to the world in which we live. The real skills I want my students to walk away with center around the prevalence of misinformation circulating and the limiting of the press. I work to have the students practice verifying sources and detecting bias continually, not just for our class, but in their lives."

Heather was chosen as an Honorable Mention because of her use of the newspaper to connect her students to the larger world around them.

Heather strives to make classroom learning relevant to her students' real lives by using current events of interest to teens to teach close reading, researched writing and critical thinking skills.

Recent examples include the *Times*' coverage of subjects such as:

- Amendment 3 on the 2016 ballot (which provided property tax exemptions to first responders permanently disabled in the line of duty)
- Ethan Couch, the "Affluenza Teen" who killed four while driving drunk
- The controversy surrounding NFL players' taking a knee during the national anthem
- The debate regarding arming teachers to enhance school safety

For each topic, students analyzed a *Tampa Bay Times* article through text-marking and annotations. They then found an additional resource that offered a different perspective. Finally, they held a Socratic Seminar using the source materials as evidence.